

Cosmopolitan Counterpoint

Overt and Covert Musical Warfare and Diplomacy
in the Early Cold War, 1945-1961

HARM LANGENKAMP



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COSMOPOLITAN COUNTERPOINT
OVERT AND COVERT MUSICAL WARFARE AND
DIPLOMACY IN THE EARLY COLD WAR, 1945-1961

KOSMOPOLITISCH CONTRAPUNT
OPENLIJKE EN HEIMELIJKE MUZIKALE OORLOGSVOERING
EN DIPLOMATIE IN DE VROEGE KOUDE OORLOG, 1945-1961

(met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift

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door

HERMANUS JOHANNES MACHTILDA LANGENKAMP

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te Venray

Promotor: Prof. dr. K. Kügle

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Orchestras have so long been speaking
This universal language that the Greek
And the Barbarian have both mastered
Its enigmatic grammar which at last
Says all things well. But who is worthy?
What is sweet? What is sound?...

W. H. Auden

Excerpt from
“Music is International” (1947)

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Finally, I thank my beloved parents who in the last years have barely caught a glimpse of their son. Their unfailing love and support have been a blessing for me and my work.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACC	Allied Control Council, Germany and Austria
ACCF	American Committee for Cultural Freedom
ACUE	American Committee on United Europe
AFL	American Federation of Labor
AFM	American Federation of Musicians
AIF	Americans for Intellectual Freedom
ANTA	American National Theater and Academy
ASM	Association for Contemporary Music (Soviet Union) <i>Assotsiatsiya sovremennoy muzyki</i>
ASMS	American-Soviet Music Society
BSO	Boston Symphony Orchestra
CAD	Civil Affairs Division, US War Department
CCF	Congress for Cultural Freedom
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
Cominform	Communist Information Bureau
Comintern	Communist International
CPUSA	Communist Party of the United States of America
CSCWP	Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace
DP	Displaced Person
EAG	Europe-America Groups
ECA	Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Department of State
ECC	European Center of Culture (Geneva) <i>Centre Européen de la Culture</i>
ECR	Education and Cultural Relations Division, OMGUS
EWME	East-West Music Encounter
FBI	Federal Bureau of Investigation
FF	Ford Foundation
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
FRF	Friends of Russian Freedom
HICOG	High Commission for Occupied Germany
HUAC	House Un-American Activities Committee

IACF	International Association for Cultural Freedom
ICCASP	Independent Citizens Committee for the Arts, Sciences and Professions
ICCF	Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom
ICCR	Indian Council for Cultural Relations
ICD	Information Control Division, OMGUS
IICMSD	International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation (West Berlin) <i>Internationale Institut für vergleichende Musikstudien und Dokumentation</i>
IMB	International Music Bureau, Communist Internationale
IMC	International Music Council, UNESCO
IOD	International Organizations Division, CIA
ISB	Information Services Branch, OMGUS
ISCM	International Society for Contemporary Composers
KBK	Society for International Cultural Exchange, Tokyo <i>Kokusai Bunka Kōkan Kyōkai</i>
KPD	Communist Party of Germany <i>Kommunistische Partei Deutschlands</i>
MoMA	Museum of Modern Art, New York City
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NCASP	National Council for the Arts, Sciences and Professions
NCFE/RFE	National Committee for a Free Europe/Radio Free Europe
NCL	Non-Communist Left
NDR	North German Radio <i>Norddeutscher Rundfunk</i>
NHK	Japanese Broadcasting Company <i>Nippon Hōsō Kyōkai</i>
NSC	National Security Council (United States)
NSDAP	National-Socialist German Workers' Party <i>National-Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei</i>
NYPO	New York Philharmonic Orchestra
ODIC	Office of the Director of Information Control, ICD, OMGUS
OMGB	Office of Military Government, Bavaria
OMGUS	Office of Military Government, United States
OPC	Office of Policy Coordination, US Department of State/CIA
OSS	Office of Strategic Services (United States)

OWI	Office of War Information (United States)
PCA	Progressive Citizens of America
PCF	French Communist Party <i>Parti communiste français</i>
PPS	Policy Planning Staff, US Department of State
PRC	People's Republic of China
PWD	Psychological Warfare Division, SHAEF
RAI	Italian Broadcasting Company <i>Radio Audizioni Italiane (since 1954 Radiotelevisione Italiana)</i>
RAPM	Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (Soviet Union) <i>Russkaya assotsiatsiya proletarskikh muzikantov</i>
RF	Rockefeller Foundation
SEATO	South East Asia Treaty Organization
SED	Socialist Unity Party of Germany <i>Sozialistische Einheitspartei Deutschlands</i>
SHAEF	Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force
SMAD	Soviet Military Administration in Germany <i>Sowjetische Militär-Administration in Deutschland</i>
SPD	Social Democratic Party of Germany <i>Sozialdemokratische Partei Deutschlands</i>
SRP	Silk Road Project
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
USIA	United States Information Agency
USSBS	United States Strategic Bombing Survey
VOA	Voice of America, Department of State

Preliminary Remarks

Online references

Whenever reference is made to an online source, readers of the digital version of this dissertation can proceed to this source by clicking on the title of the cited item. All hyperlinks have been last accessed in August 2014. Readers of the print version of this dissertation are referred to the URL-list in the bibliography.

Spelling name Nicolas Nabokov (né Nikolay Dmitrievich Nabokov)

In archival records and secondary literature, both Nabokov's first and last name appear in several transliterations, most commonly "Nicolas" or "Nicholas" and "Nabokoff" or "Nabokov." (Sometimes as "Nikolaus" or "Nikolai Nabokow" in German-language sources.) Nabokov signed his naturalization record (September 11, 1939) as "Nicholas Nabokoff" and his FBI clearance application (June 4, 1948) as "Nicolas Nabokoff." From the early 1950s onwards, he consistently spelt his name as "Nicolas Nabokov." Due to an erroneous (i.e., non-Russian) pronunciation which stresses the first rather than the second syllable, Nabokov's surname occasionally occurs as "Nabakoff" or "Nabakov" in English-language literature and archival inventories. For the sake of retrieval, references in this dissertation adopt the form in which his name appears in the cited item.

Reference to ideologies and political movements

Lowercase is used for reference to ideological currents of thought (e.g., "communism") and uppercase for references to political movements and institutions (e.g., the "Communist Party").

Spelling geographical names

For the spelling of geographical names, I follow *Merriam-Webster's Geographical Dictionary*, third edition (Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, 1997).

Transliteration of Japanese terms and names

This dissertation follows the Hepburn Romanization standard for the transliteration of Japanese words and names (using macrons for long "ō" and "ū" vowels), except when the term or name is common in the English language (so "Tokyo" instead of "Tōkyō"). To avoid confusion, and because most of the Japanese individuals mentioned published in English in addition to Japanese, I consistently cite names in Western-style ordering, i.e., given name followed by surname.

Use of single and double quotation marks

In accordance with the *Chicago Manual of Style* (16th edition), I use double quotation marks for citations and references. In order to avoid any misunderstandings, I use single quotation marks to indicate that a word or phrase is mine.

References to archival sources

References to items in archival collections are cited in as detailed a manner as possible, i.e., up to the folder or folio level. Most reference numbers are built up as “[name collection], box-folder,” e.g. “Nabokov Papers, 2-3.” Sometimes it is necessary to refer to a particular series within a collection, the number of which precedes the box-folder number, e.g., “Downes Papers, 2-2-3” or “CCF Papers, II-248-6.” Occasionally, folders are not stored in boxes but in drawers (for instance, at the archival collections of the Akademie der Künste, Berlin), in which case only the folder number is given. If a folder is not numbered, then the name of the folder will be given.

The following abbreviations are used:

nf = name file	sources archived by name of subject of investigation or the addressee of a correspondence.
df = date file	sources archived by chronology.
sf = subject file	sources archived by subject.
doc. = document	a document archived by number.
fol. = folio	a document bound in a volume.
sec. = section	section of a file.

Reference numbers to sources from the National Archives and Records Administration (United States) are preceded by an entry number, e.g. “Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, A1 5072, 3-East-West Music Encounter.”

An additional note for references to the records of the Office Military Government, United States (OMGUS): After the end of the American Occupation of Germany, the OMGUS records were transferred to Kansas City and later to NARA. In the 1970s, a part of the records was microfilmed for consultation in national and *Länder* archives in Germany. I consulted most of the OMGUS records in Germany. The OMGUS signatures refer to shipment/shipment box-box/folder. In each citation of OMGUS sources, the place of consultation will be indicated after the slash sign: the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), the Bundesarchiv in Koblenz (BAK), the Bayerisches Hauptstaatsarchiv (BHA), the Institut für Zeitgeschichte (IfZ), and the Landesarchiv Berlin (LB). For instance, “OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/4.”

Introduction

When the Cold War Resounds Its Dire Alarms Again...

After the tragic events of September 11th, it is more important than ever for each of us to understand and embrace new ideas and cultures.¹

Senator Edward Kennedy (2002)

The nations of Central Asia are once again joining the nations at either end of the Silk Road on a path to a better future for all. There is far to go, and the region's security, stability, and prosperity depend on critical economic and political reforms. But the Silk Road is once again a living reality, as the over 350 artists and craftspeople from 20 nations here testify.²

Secretary of State Colin Powell (2002)

In the sultry days surrounding Independence Day 2002, the National Mall in Washington, DC, provided the stage for the enactment of one of the noblest myths created in recent times, the myth of the “Silk Road.” Imbued with romantic undertones, this myth evokes an idealized past in which people of widely divergent cultures purportedly exchanged assets, creeds, arts, and knowledge freely, unimpeded by religious bigotry, nationalism or ethnocentrism.³ For a precious ten days, visitors could live this myth on America's front lawn as they intermingled with an impressive number of artists, actors, musicians, dancers, storytellers, cooks, artisans, nomads, monks, merchants, and martial arts fighters flown in from various parts of the Eurasian continent or drawn from US-based immigrant communities. There, they presented their cultural heritage against a backdrop of impressive replicas of iconic “Silk Road” monuments: Venice's San Marco Basilica, Istanbul's Hagia Sophia, a Kashgar teahouse, Samarkand's Registan Square, Xi'an's Bell Tower, and the gate to Japan's Tōdai-ji temple complex

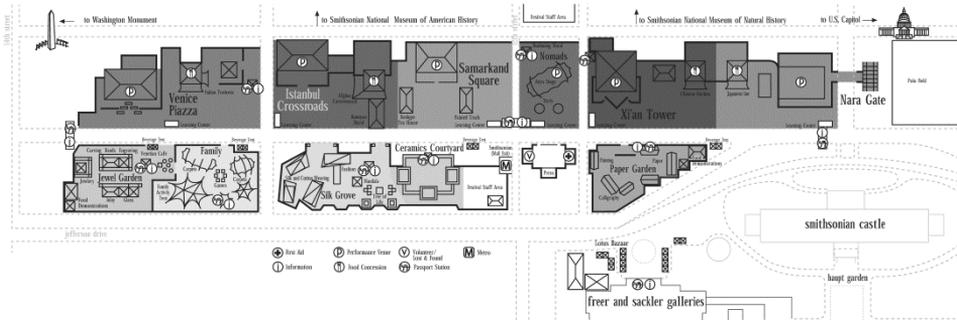
¹ George W. Bush, Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, April 10, 2006, website of *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>].

² Powell, “Remarks at the Opening of the Silk Road Festival,” June 26, 2002, published in the *Congressional Record* of the 107th Congress (Senate), July 17, 2002, S6942.

³ For more on the provenance and function of the Silk Road concept, see Marie Thorsten, “Silk Road Nostalgia and Imagined Global Community,” *Comparative American Studies* 3/3 (2005): 301–17; Tamara Chin, “The Invention of the Silk Road, 1877,” *Critical Inquiry* 40 (2013): 194–219; and my “Contested Imageries of Collective Harmony: The Poetics and Politics of ‘Silk Road’ Nostalgia in China and the West,” in *East-West Musical Encounters: Representation, Reception, and Power Politics in Sino-Western Musical Relations*, ed. Michael Saffle and Hon-Lun Yang (Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, forthcoming).

in Nara. Sandwiched between the two landmarks of US polity, Washington Monument and Capitol Hill, this vivid simulacrum of the vast cultural spectrum lying between the heart of Europe and the far reaches of Asia offered an engaging experience by which only the most adamant cynic could remain unaffected.⁴ “[O]nce again the Silk Road is a living reality,” Secretary of State Colin Powell concluded at the festival’s opening ceremony (see second epigraph).

Map 2002 Silk Road Folklife Festival, National Mall, Washington, DC.
Courtesy of the Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage, Smithsonian Institution



Indeed, no trouble and expense had been spared to put on the myth of yesterday’s “lost” multicultural civilization as the utopia of today. With nearly four hundred representatives of living traditions hailing from some two dozen different nations, a six million dollar budget, and an attendance of 1.3 million visitors, the thirty-sixth edition of the Smithsonian Institution’s annual Folklife Festival surpassed all previous editions in scope and numbers. When Theodore Levin, an ethnomusicologist specialized in Central Asian music traditions, had proposed the idea for the event four years earlier, Richard Kennedy, one of the Smithsonian festival curators, had replied jokingly that Levin was out of his mind.⁵

Little did Kennedy know what trump cards Levin had in reserve. As it happened, Levin did not approach the Smithsonian on his own behalf. A few months before, he had been one of the driving spirits behind the foundation of the Silk Road Project, a cultural and educational non-profit organization dedicated to exploring “cross-cultural influences among and

⁴ For documentation on the 2002 Smithsonian Folklife Festival, “The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust,” June 26–30/July 3–7, see http://www.festival.si.edu/past_festivals/silk_road.

⁵ Kennedy quoted by Sharon Otterman, “Silk Road Recreated on Washington’s Mall,” *United Press International* [<http://www.upi.com>], July 3, 2002.

between the lands comprising the legendary Silk Road and the West.”⁶ The brainchild of Yo-Yo Ma, the charismatic American cellist who has built a considerable part of his career on ventures beyond the confines of the Western classical music scene, the Silk Road Project (SRP) had been successful in attracting a set of private and corporate sponsors, including Ford Motor Company, Siemens, Exxon Mobil, and Sony Classical. In addition, it had found a collaborative partner in the Aga Khan Music Initiative and Trust for Culture, two agencies of the Aga Khan Development Network that seek to restore the musico-cultural heritage of Central Asian communities after decades of Soviet “modernization” policies.⁷ What if the Smithsonian, the Aga Khan Trust and the Silk Road Project would join forces and resources to translate a powerful metaphor for cultural exchange into a tangible experience? A daunting idea, all agreed, but too intriguing to give up, and thus the triple alliance embarked upon what Kennedy predicted to become “a logistical nightmare.”⁸

Again, little did the Smithsonian curator know how a fateful September morning three years later would prove him more right than he ever could have imagined. The al-Qaeda attack on the heart of America’s economic, political, and military establishment, just over three weeks after the Silk Road Ensemble—a SRP-related collective of musicians from all across the Eurasian cultural sphere who are proficient in both local and Western traditions—debuted at Germany’s Schleswig Holstein Festival, seriously complicated the preparations for the festival that was to bear, as a timely afterthought, the motto “connecting cultures, creating trust.” Under the Patriot Act, travelers from Muslim countries, particularly males between the ages of 18 and 45, were subjected to intense scrutiny, as a result of which the festival organization was confronted with a bulk of extra red tape and unexpected difficulties.⁹ On the other hand, ironically, the project received

⁶ Press release, “Yo-Yo Ma Announces Global Initiative to Explore and Celebrate the Music and Cultures of the Silk Road and Their Influence on the West,” October 25, 2000. See the Silk Road Project’s website at <http://www.silkroadproject.org>.

⁷ For more on the organization of Prince Karim Aga Khan IV, the 49th hereditary imam of the Shia Imami Ismaili Muslim community, see the website of the Aga Khan Development Network at <http://www.akdn.org>.

⁸ Kennedy quoted by Sandra Kauffman, “Cultural Connections: The Smithsonian’s 2002 Silk Road Folklife Festival Provided a Cultural Bridge between East and West,” *The China Business Review* 30/4 (July/August 2003): 59–61. At a later stage, the festival’s organizing and sponsoring team was joined by the Asian Heritage Foundation of the Indian designer and social activist Rajeev Sethi, who designed the festival’s scenography.

⁹ Jacqueline Trescott, “The Long and Winding ‘Silk Road’; Festival Planners Tangle with a World of Red Tape,” *The Washington Post*, June 17, 2002, A.01; Celestine Bohlen, “Visa Delays Give Fits to Program Planners,” *New York Times*, July 30, 2002, E1; Francine Berkowitz, Director International Relations at the Smithsonian, “Is It Visable?,” *Talk Story: Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage*, no. 21 (Fall 2002): 8, 17.

much more impetus as the fateful events of 9/11 increased public awareness of the need for continued investment in educational and cultural exchanges.¹⁰ Thus, for a brief period in a time when—in the words of Senator Edward Kennedy, a vocal opponent to the invasion of Iraq that was being hatched a few blocks away from the festival location—it was “more important than ever for each of us to understand and embrace new ideas and cultures,” Americans and tourists could show their resilience and continued commitment to a world based on tolerance and mutual respect in the face of destructive and dividing forces.¹¹ As one *New York Times* correspondent phrased it, the Silk Road Folklife Festival, whose scenery prominently featured twenty-foot-high blow-up prints of the Bamiyan Buddhas that had been blown up by the Taliban in the previous year, turned Washington’s Mall into “the ideal place to find the meaning of America during the nation’s time of trial and terrorist threats.”¹²

Opening ceremony of the Silk Road Folklife Festival, June, 26 2002.
Yo-Yo Ma’s Silk Road Ensemble, Secretary of State Colin Powell, and
Aga Khan IV. Courtesy of the Aga Khan Development Network.



¹⁰ As observed by Patricia Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs, in “People-to-People Diplomacy Needed More Than Ever, Harrison Says,” July 5, 2002, website *Washington File: East Asia and the Pacific*.

¹¹ Kennedy, “Remarks at the Opening of the Silk Road Festival,” June 26, 2002, published in the *Congressional Record* of the 107th Congress (Senate), July 17, 2002, S6942.

¹² Steven R. Weisman, “A Global Gathering on the Mall,” *New York Times*, July 6, 2002, A12.

[Cultural diplomacy] is an opportunity for us to understand each other better, to reaffirm our common humanity, and in so doing, not to blur the cultural lines but highlight them in a way that promotes peace and reconciliation and, therefore, put a real roadblock in the path of those who would like a twenty-first century dominated by culture wars instead of cultural celebrations.¹³

US President William J. Clinton (2000)

Shared Values: The Silk Road Concept in Post-9/11 US Public Diplomacy

The positive public response to the Silk Road Festival must have sounded like music in the ears of the officials at the nearby Department of State, who provided advice, diplomatic assistance, and substantial funding to ensure that everything and everyone would make it to Washington in time. The need of such a deep investment was seen as timely. Since the moment the George W. Bush administration launched its operation to “liberate” Afghanistan from “terrorists” through the universal language of bombs (October 7, 2001), various polls conducted in Muslim countries and communities throughout the world showed that among those who condemned the 9/11 attacks, a majority felt the US military operation morally unjustified.¹⁴ In addition, for all of the Smithsonian’s sincere belief that cultural diplomacy should be predicated on respect and reciprocity,¹⁵ President Bush’s conviction that the United States had the right to act unilaterally in its own security interest (that is, without the approval of the United Nations) only confirmed—as one report concluded—“stereotypes of the United States as arrogant, self-indulgent, hypocritical, inattentive, and unwilling or unable to engage in cross-cultural dialogue.”¹⁶ In the face of dwindling support for the “War on Terror,” it was imperative for the Bush administration to undertake something to demonstrate that US retribution was directed only towards those responsible for the death of nearly three thousand American citizens, and not towards the Islamic world as a whole. That a grand-scale East/West cultural event was in the making was only too fortunate.

Indeed, the Silk Road Festival provided an easy occasion in the wake of 9/11 to act upon the plethora of reports that urged US policymakers to revive what had been a neglected public diplomacy program. “As we

¹³ William J. Clinton, Remarks at the White House Conference on Culture and Diplomacy, November 28, 2000, website of *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>].

¹⁴ Pew Research Center, “America Admired, Yet Its New Vulnerability Seen as a Good Thing Say Opinion Leaders—Little Support for Expanding War on Terrorism,” December 19, 2001; Zogby International, “The Ten Nations Impressions of America Poll,” April 11, 2002.

¹⁵ Richard Kurin, Smithsonian Curator, Editorial to *Talk Story: Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage*, no. 32 (Fall 2007): 1–2.

¹⁶ Independent Task Force on Public Diplomacy (sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations), *Public Diplomacy: A Strategy for Reform*, July 30, 2002, 3.

struggle to recover from the attacks,” one early report advised, “we must ask how we can nourish a truer picture of American values, American culture, and American democracy.”¹⁷ In the climate of triumph and economic prosperity that prevailed in the West in the first decade after the downfall of the Iron Curtain, federal expenditures on cultural programs aimed at garnering support for US foreign policies from foreign audiences quickly evaporated, resulting in the dismantling and fragmentation of Washington’s once so prosperous public diplomacy capacity. “The idea after the Cold War was that we didn’t have to worry about influencing foreign publics. Everybody would simply start watching American films and buying our products,” one State Department official recalled.¹⁸ In contrast, ten years after the end of the Cold War, the cultural and economic hegemony of the United States turned out to engender global-wide anxiety about, for instance, the fate of local traditions and means of expression. To address these concerns, the Clinton administration convened in the waning days of its rule an international assembly of nearly two hundred representatives from the fields of the arts and diplomacy to discuss ways to convince the world that the victor of the Cold War should be seen as a benign power committed to nurturing cultural diversity rather than as a threatening behemoth intent on gobbling up everything that comes on its way (see first epigraph). The conclusion of the White House Conference on Culture and Diplomacy (November 28, 2000), which included Yo-Yo Ma and the Aga Khan among its speakers, was predictable: the post-Cold War reduction of America’s cultural diplomacy resources should be reversed lest the United States be left unprepared to respond to “unexpected challenges abroad.”¹⁹

That challenge came—not only abroad, but foremost *from* abroad. Seemingly overnight, the hereunto rather amorphous threat towards the post-Cold War neoliberal consensus got a face: an international network of Islamic extremists who did not shun any means of violence in their crusade against the West. Contrary to the stereotype of a tribally organized group loathing all that is modern, al-Qaeda turned out to have the most advanced communication technologies at its disposal, which it deftly employed to mobilize diffuse anti-Western sentiments throughout the world for a common purpose. “How can a man in a cave outcommunicate the world’s

¹⁷ Gigi Bradford, Executive Director of the Center for Arts and Culture, an independent organization dedicated to deepening the national conversation on culture and cultural policy, quoted in the preface to: Harvey B. Feigenbaum, *Globalization and Cultural Diplomacy*, November 2001, 5.

¹⁸ Anonymous Foreign Service officer quoted by Dan Gilgoff and Jay Tolson, “Losing Friends?,” *U.S. News & World Report* 134/8 (2003): 40.

¹⁹ State Department, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, *White House Conference on Culture and Diplomacy: Final Report*, November 28, 2000, 7.

leading communications society?,” former US diplomat Richard Holbrooke asked rhetorically, impressing on America’s leaders that “[t]he battle of ideas is as important as any other aspect of the struggle we are now engaged in,” and that this battle “must be won.”²⁰ Indeed, “[t]he role of public diplomacy in our foreign policy has been too long neglected,” the chairman of the House of Representatives International Relations Committee conceded as he urged Congress to authorize appropriations towards enhancing Washington’s public diplomacy capacity.²¹ Suddenly the recipient of Congress’s largesse on a scale which he could only have dreamed of before 9/11, Secretary of State Powell charged his Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy, Charlotte Beers, with the task of “really branding [US] foreign policy [and] marketing American values to the world.”²² A seasoned advertising executive, Beers took on the challenge of selling America with much vigor, designing a fifteen million dollar PR campaign (the Shared Values Initiative) that featured Muslim Americans extolling American life, tolerance and egalitarianism.

The Silk Road Festival fit into this strategy perfectly. It not only raised a platform on which self-defined “American values” could be showcased before the eyes of the world. It also gave the Bush administration something concrete to demonstrate its ability to tell the “good” from the “evil” Islam and show its commitment to work with representatives of the “good” Islam to eradicate the excrescences of the “evil” Islam. (Indeed, when Secretary Powell averred at the festival’s opening ceremony that “the nations of Central Asia are once again joining the nations at either end...on a path to a better future to all,” he was speaking to an audience composed of representatives of nations with whom he had just forged “War on Terror” alliances, including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Pakistan.²³) To get this message across, the State Department’s Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs (ECA) urged US missions to “provide the maximum support possible” towards the participation of artists and artisans from “Silk Road communities,” and lent “direct financial support” (\$75,000) to ensure the presence of Afghan artists and musicians who had been muffled by the Taliban. In addition, as part of the effort to illustrate “the multicultural dimension of American society” to the outside world, ECA planned to

²⁰ Richard Holbrooke, “Get the Message Out,” *Washington Post*, October 28, 2001, B7.

²¹ Henry J. Hyde, Chairman, Committee on International Relations, US House of Representatives, *The Message is America: Rethinking Public Diplomacy*, Hearings before the Committee on International Relations, 107th Congress, 2nd Session, November 14, 2001.

²² Powell in a hearing before the Committee on the Budget House of Representatives, 107th Congress, First Session, March 15, 2001, published in *Department of State Fiscal Year 2002: Budget Priorities* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2001), 16.

²³ Powell, “Remarks at the Opening of the Silk Road Festival,” June 26, 2002, published in the *Congressional Record* of the 107th Congress (Senate), July 17, 2002, S6942.

produce documentary footage of Americans “learning tangible things about the traditions of the Silk Road” to be incorporated in overseas broadcasts.²⁴ For the same reason, fourteen leading journalists from participating countries (excluding Afghanistan for unclear reasons) were invited to witness—at the expense of Powell’s department (\$90,000)—with their own eyes the “US respect and appreciation for Muslim cultural heritage” displayed at the festival.

If we may believe ECA’s evaluation, this charm offensive bore fruit. One of the guest reporters noted how “the overriding American ideas of hard work, freedom, and equality” gave him a better understanding of “what it means to be American,” another commented on the cultural diversity of US society, and yet another lauded America’s commitment to improving “mutual understanding between our nations.”²⁵ At the same time, however, multiple polls showed the opposite: a year after 9/11, nearly universal sympathy for America’s plight had drowned in worldwide outcries over America’s unilateralism, bombing campaigns, occupation of Afghanistan, and support of authoritarian regimes.²⁶ Facing severe criticism from internal and external sources, the Shared Values Initiative was suspended shortly before the Iraq invasion (March 20, 2003), followed not long thereafter by Beers’s resignation for “health reasons.”²⁷



²⁴ ECA to various US embassies in Eurasia, action cable “Smithsonian’s Silk Road Project,” March 27, 2002, released upon the author’s Freedom of Information Act request (F-2012-20906).

²⁵ Department of State, Bureau of Public Affairs’ Foreign Press Center, Brochure “The Department of State’s Silk Road Tours,” July 2002, website United States Department of State Archives 2001–2009. The invited journalists came from China, Mongolia, Turkey, Syria, Nepal, Italy, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Pakistan, India, Georgia, Armenia, and Bangladesh.

²⁶ Council on Foreign Relations, *Public Diplomacy: A Strategy for Reform*, July 2002, 3.

²⁷ Jane Perlez, “Muslim-as-Apple-Pie Videos Are Greeted With Skepticism,” *New York Times*, October 30, 2002. For evaluations of Beers’s Shared Values Initiative, see Patrick Lee Plaisance, “The Propaganda War on Terrorism: An Analysis of the United States’ ‘Shared Values’ Public-Diplomacy Campaign after September 11, 2001,” *Journal of Mass Media Ethics* 20 (2005): 250–68; and Jami Fullerton and Alice Kendrick, *Advertising’s War on Terrorism: The Story of the US State Department’s Shared Values Initiative* (Spokane, WA: Marquette Books, 2006).

Tonight, we will witness the historic reentry of Iraqi culture onto the world stage. Through long and difficult years, the dedicated musicians of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra...have demonstrated a deep personal commitment to their art and to one another. Their orchestra is comprised of many different players, each contributing his or her own unique sound to the symphony. So, too, the musicians embody the diversity of Iraq and the unity that comes from sharing a dream, the dream of performing the music they love in freedom. The orchestra testifies to the power of the arts to keep hope alive even under the cruelest oppressor. For the arts are the stuff of the human spirit, which no tyrant can crush. As it is for musicians the world over, to these Iraqi artists, music is life itself. And this wonderful orchestra is a symbol of normal life returning to the people of Iraq and their reconnection to the world of music that is a living cultural legacy for them and for all mankind....President and Mrs. Bush, ladies and gentlemen, what you are about to hear is the music of hope, the sweet, sweet sound of freedom.²⁸

Secretary of State Colin Powell (2003)

Sweet Sounds of Freedom: Music Diplomacy in the War on Terror

Somewhat more successful than the Shared Values Initiative was the CultureConnect Program, another post-9/11 initiative to—in the words of its initiator, Patricia Harrison, Assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs—“recruit people of good will in [the] ongoing war against the forces of evil.”²⁹ The prime rationale behind CultureConnect was to bring young audiences in the (Islamic) world, whose disadvantaged position in terms of un(der)employment and lack of education rendered them particularly susceptible to “the siren song of radical extremists,” under the mentorship of world-renowned exponents of American business, sports, and the arts. By offering “a vision of life beyond the narrow boundaries of despair,” the program was to dispel the “distorted view of Americans and American values” with which this specific group was supposedly afflicted. “[I]o have dialogues with people from different cultures and background,” Harrison reasoned, “[is] to break down the fear that prevents us from connecting with one another,” which will eventually “lead us to a more peaceful world, a world with more freedom in it, a world where people understand the United States and our foreign policy constitutes a force for good, a force for freedom, a force for human rights.”³⁰

²⁸ Powell, “Remarks at Performance of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra,” December 9, 2003, website US Department of State Archive 2001-2009.

²⁹ Harrison, response to a question from the public through the interactive “Ask the White House” forum, March 12, 2004, website of *The George W. Bush White House Archives*.

³⁰ Harrison, “The Importance of Alumni in Building International Understanding,” address delivered at the East-West Center, Honolulu, November 14, 2003, website East-West Center [<http://www.eastwestcenter.org>] and opening address delivered at the Annual Meeting of the

With respect to the field of music, Yo-Yo Ma was, alongside jazz and classical trumpeter Wynton Marsalis, opera singer Denyce Graves and former Supremes member Mary Wilson, one of the elected Cultural Ambassadors who under the premises of CultureConnect mentored numerous music students in and from various countries, including Lithuania, South Korea, Lebanon, Azerbaijan and China. In what was the pinnacle of the program, Ma concertized with the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra, which, just months after Saddam Hussein's statue had been toppled from its pedestal in Baghdad, was flown to Washington (partly on ECA's expenses) to perform in a joint concert with the (US) National Symphony Orchestra at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. Attending the highly symbolical event jointly with President Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, Secretary Powell praised the Iraqi musicians for "testify[ing] to the power of the arts to keep hope alive even under the cruelest oppressor" (see epigraph). In the weeks after the concert, ECA Assistant Secretary Harrison proudly imparted to her audiences the successes of this cultural exchange, relating how members of the Iraqi orchestra had been overwhelmed by the response from Americans hugging, welcoming and crying with them.³¹ In a time of unrelenting critique of its Iraq policy, State Department officials could not have wished for a better culture-connecting apparatus as this joint orchestra, as well as—to quote once more from Powell's eulogy—"the sweet, sweet sound of freedom" it produced.

This concert, as well as the Silk Road Festival, encapsulates the essence of what this dissertation is about: musical celebrations of 'togetherness'—not just any spontaneous social gathering where people celebrate their being together, but those meticulously prepared official rituals that are saturated with meaning by the words spoken, the music performed, and—as in the case of the Iraqi Symphony Orchestra—the musicians brought on stage. When I use the word 'ritual', I use it in the way Christopher Small used it to describe musical performance, namely, as "a form of organized behavior in which humans use the language of gesture, or paralinguage, to articulate relationships among themselves that model the relationships of their world as they imagine them to be and as they think (or feel) that they ought to be."³² From the perspectives of the Iraqi musicians, many of whom had been repressed under the regime of Saddam Hussein, their collective

National Council for International Visitors, February 25, 2004, website NCIV/Global Ties U.S. [<http://www.globaltiesus.org>].

³¹ Harrison, Keynote Address to the Annual Meeting of the National Council for International Visitors, February 25, 2004, website NCIV/Global Ties U.S. [<http://www.globaltiesus.org>].

³² Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 95.

performance in the capital of their liberators might have ‘articulated’ the relationships among themselves and the world as they imagined them to be. From the perspective of the ‘liberators’, the concert, too, symbolized a world order as they imagined it to be. More, it arguably functioned in the way the anthropologist Clifford Geertz described religious rituals (and here I substitute Geertz’s word “religious” by “political”), namely, as forms of “consecrated behavior [through] which [the] conviction that *political* conceptions are veridical and that *political* directives are sound is somehow generated.”³³ Construed as such, the concert emerges as a ritual through which the Bush administration could justify, for itself and others, its operation in Iraq—a war it had entered, as it turned out in hindsight, on deliberately false pretenses (i.e., Baghdad’s alleged possession of weapons of mass destruction). “It is in this sort of ceremonial form,” Geertz writes, “that the moods and motivations which sacred symbols induce in men and the general conceptions of the order of existence which they formulate for men meet and reinforce one another.”³⁴

With respect to the joint concert by the US and Iraqi National Orchestras (in itself already a symbolic union), the “sacred symbols” which Geertz mentions might be observed in both Powell’s introductory remarks and the concert program. By mouth of Colin Powell, the Bush administration imbued a non-verbal “form of organized behavior,” i.e., a musical concert, with meanings of victory: nowhere in Powell’s speech is the United States mentioned by name, but there is no doubt who should be understood as the agency that enabled “the historic reentry of Iraqi culture onto the world stage” and liberated the Iraqi people from “the cruelest oppressor.” The fundamental tone of the speech, however, is empathy and outreach: through US assistance in the preservation of Iraq’s cultural heritage and allocating twenty Fulbright scholarships to Iraqi scholars, the “noble Iraqis” were made to feel the Bush administration’s commitment to creating understanding between the American and Iraqi nations.³⁵ Michael Kaiser, the director of the Kennedy Center and initiator of the joint concert, added deed to the promise by announcing that every member of the Iraqi Orchestra would leave the United States with “a new, professional-quality instrument.”³⁶

³³ Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 112.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Powell, “Remarks at Performance of the Iraqi National Symphony Orchestra,” December 9, 2003, website US Department of State Archive 2001-2009.

³⁶ Kaiser cited by Michael Kilian, “Iraqi Orchestra Wows D.C. Crowd,” *Chicago Tribune*, December 10, 2003.

In terms of the music performed, the symbolic power of Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture with which the concert was opened is hard to miss.³⁷ Neither were the performance of an arrangement of a traditional Iraqi tune, "Over the Palm Trees," and contemporary compositions by Abdullah Jamal Sagirma (*Symphonic Poem* No. 2) and Mohammed Amin Ezzat (*Three Fragments*): Sagirma, of Kurdish descent, faced oppression under the Hussein regime, whereas Ezzat fled to Germany when the Iraqi dictator wanted him to write the score for the stage adaptation of his novel *The Gate of the City*. Many of the Iraqi musicians—of Shiite or Sunni Islamic faith, or Kurdish, Armenian, Assyrian, Iraqi Christian and Turkmen descent—had endured similar hardships, which made the presence of traditional instruments and some musicians in traditional garments particularly meaningful.³⁸ As the joint orchestra switched between the musics of Iraqi or Western origin, the verbal preludes to the concert crystallized into sound.³⁹

As CultureConnect Ambassador, Yo-Yo Ma, who performed at the Iraqi-US concert both as soloist and member of the joint ensemble, sustained the relation with the Iraqi orchestra by hosting six of its members in a workshop with the Silk Road Ensemble four months later. In addition, in the spring of 2003, the Silk Road Ensemble realized (under the aegis of the Aga Khan Foundation, whose vision for Central Asia closely matches that of Washington) the plan for a Central Asian tour that it earlier had to abort due to 9/11 and its aftermath. However, the spirit of international understanding and collaboration would not last long. Already before the Iraqi-US concert, the first reports on human rights violations perpetrated by US military personnel against Iraqi and Afghan detainees had come out, only to swell to such an extent that every sympathy cultural diplomacy initiatives might have won for the "War on Terror" vanished as quickly as it had emerged. Music, too, lost its innocence as a cultural diplomacy tool at the moment it appeared that the CIA used music as a tool to torture terrorist suspects in Abu Ghraib, Bagram and Guantánamo Bay to confession.⁴⁰



³⁷ Premiered in June 1810, when Napoleon had extended his domination over most of Europe, Beethoven's overture was part of his incidental music to Goethe's *Egmont* (1787), a eulogy of the sixteenth-century Count of Egmont, whose execution in 1568 provoked public protests against Spanish rule throughout the Netherlands.

³⁸ Johanna Neuman, "Iraqi Orchestra Plays Up Unity," *LA Times*, December 9, 2003, A15; "Iraq's National Orchestra Wouldn't Let Music Die," *Baltimore Sun*, November 30, 2003.

³⁹ Apart from the *Egmont* Overture, the Western part of the program consisted of Gabriel Fauré's *Élégie* for Cello and Piano in C Minor, Op. 24 (with Ma as soloist) and Bizet's "Farandole" from the *L'Arlésienne* Suite No. 2.

⁴⁰ Suzanne G. Cusick, "You Are In a Place That Is Out of the World...?: Music in the Detention Camps of the 'Global War on Terror,'" *Journal of the Society for American Music* 2/1 (2008): 1–26.

We live in a world of increasing awareness and interdependence, and I believe that music can act as a magnet to draw people together. Music is an expressive art that can reach to the very core of one's identity. By listening to and learning from the voices of an authentic musical tradition, we become increasingly able to advocate for the worlds they represent. Further, as we interact with unfamiliar musical traditions we encounter voices that are not exclusive to one community. We discover transnational voices that belong to one world.⁴¹

Yo-Yo Ma (2002)

In a world of diversity where often values clash, music leaps across language barriers and unites people of quite different cultural backgrounds. And so, through music, all peoples can come together to make the world a more harmonious place.⁴²

UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (2004)

Music has a unique power. It is a universal tongue. It requires no translations or explanations. Thus...it can be employed as propaganda, in the best sense of a much-abused word. For there is no ostensible propaganda in music. It does its work beneficently. It is diverting or stirring or exalting without intermediaries.⁴³

Howard Taubman (1944)

[T]here is a universal language organic to man. Today the best spirits and best hearts of mankind belong to this language which does not need any interpretation. I mean, of course, music....[Yet] all the music of our two lands cannot calm the people who want war and are raging toward destruction.⁴⁴

Ilya Ehrenburg (1946)

Music as a Universal Language: The Power of an Idea

In a time perceived by many—in the words of political scientist Samuel Huntington—as “a clash of civilizations,”⁴⁵ the above-cited statements by Yo-Yo Ma and former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan repeat the time-honored rhetoric which attributes music, by its very inarticulate nature, the power to leap boundaries erected and policed by words, and as such, to

⁴¹ Yo-Yo Ma, cited in *Musicians with a Mission: Keeping the Classical Tradition Alive*, ed. Andrew L. Pincus (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 6.

⁴² Kofi Annan, Remarks introducing Leon Botstein's lecture on “Why Music Matters,” 8 November 2004, website of the *United Nations Meetings & Press Releases* [<http://www.un.org/en/unpress>].

⁴³ Howard Taubman, “Music Speaks for America,” *New York Times*, January 23, 1944, SM12.

⁴⁴ Ilya Ehrenburg, address delivered at a meeting of the American-Soviet Music Society, cited by Olin Downes, “The Force of Art,” *New York Times*, June 16, 1946, X5.

⁴⁵ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996).

work as a force of union in a world marked by political discord. For anyone listening beyond the lofty ring of this truism, the unitary conception of “music” and “people” and the implicit distinction between “authentic” and “inauthentic” traditions that lie behind it are profoundly problematic. Neither self-evident and apolitical is Ma’s logic that through listening to the “voices of an authentic music tradition” others can grasp the essence of—and consequently, advocate for—the culture from which they originate. If this logic is as abstract as the rhetoric of ‘universality’ can be, elsewhere Ma motivated his advocacy for global awareness by explaining that “in a world of increasing interdependence[,] it is ever more important to know what other people are thinking and feeling, particularly in the vast and *strategic* regions of Asia that were linked by the Silk Road.”⁴⁶ That Ma used a politically charged qualification as “strategic” at a time when the United States operated in Central Asia does not make him a mouthpiece of US foreign policy. It simply indicates how the average Westerner has come to imagine Central Asia by mediation of political and semi-academic rhetoric, i.e., as an area “of interest.” Politically seen, however, the implications in the ‘universalism’ logic as expressed by Ma are far from innocent. If we reverse the logic underlying Ma’s call for developing what he calls “collective imagination,” it would follow that not a single “voice” can escape from being absorbed in the transnational community of the “we,” whoever that may be.⁴⁷

Indeed, for all the potential music(s) indeed has/have to inspire human beings to coordinated action and feeling in ways that verbal language often fails to accomplish on its own, it depends on the music’s sender whether this potential is used as a power to unite or to divide. Throughout humankind’s history, numerous leaderships have used music to deter or demoralize enemies, forge and entertain alliances, and ritualize and legitimate power. Reversely, testimonies of the meaning music claimed by the oppressor could have for the oppressor’s victims (for instance in Nazi or Soviet detention camps) demonstrate how music can effectuate, communicate, or mean something beyond the intention and calculation of its sender.⁴⁸ In short, particular music(s) can be appreciated by many (but rarely all) listeners and can be used in (fallible) attempts to *universalize* human beings under a political entity. But it certainly is far from intrinsically universal.

⁴⁶ Yo-Yo Ma, “A Journey of Discovery,” in the program booklet of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival, *The Silk Road: Connecting Cultures, Creating Trust* (2002). My emphasis.

⁴⁷ “A Conversation with Yo-Yo Ma,” in *Life along the Silk Road*, ed. Elizabeth ten Grotenhuis (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution; *Silk Road Project*, Seattle/London: University of Washington Press, 2002), 33–4.

⁴⁸ See, for instance, Shirli Gilbert, *Music in the Holocaust: Confronting Life in the Nazi Ghettos and Camps* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) and Guido Fackler, “Music in Concentration Camps, 1933-1945,” *Music and Politics* 1/1 (2007): 1–25.

Yet, to subject the idea of ‘universal music’ to a Derridian deconstruction would be beside the point. What intrigues me is that the idea is so persistently and ubiquitously evoked, not in the least at occasions of state or interstate rituals—as if it is the prayer of secularist governance. Indeed, that Yo-Yo Ma is awarded the highest tokens of honor by the United States (the President’s Medal of Freedom) or the United Nations (the title of Messenger of Peace) for—in Kofi Annan’s words—“demonstrat[ing] time and again your dedication to overcoming cultural differences and bridging gaps between nations and generations [through] your music,” attests to the symbolic value the idea has in contemporary political thought.⁴⁹ In fact, the notion of music as formulated by Annan traces back at least to late eighteenth-century Enlightenment discourse in which ‘good’ (i.e., ‘cultivated’) music is conceptualized as an expression of civility comprehensible to every ‘civilized’ soul on earth, and, as such, of ‘good’ citizenship in a ‘civilized’ world. Although the first German generation of Romantics took issue with the universalist implications of the French *civilisation* concept and construed culture, and music in particular, as a unique expression of a nation rather than of a generic expression of a ‘civilization’, soon the repertory of music by German-speaking composers was endowed with the same universalist values which are recognized by the general public till this very day.⁵⁰ It is no coincidence that musicians with humanitarian aspirations and cosmopolitan worldviews, like Yo-Yo Ma or his spiritual predecessor, the violinist Yehudi Menuhin, established their careers with this repertory before embarking upon their collaborations with ‘non-Western’ musicians to demonstrate that—in Ma’s words—“we human beings have much more that connects us than separates us.”⁵¹

Both Ma and Menuhin resist(ed) the political nature of their (non-)governmental ambassadorships, insisting that they intend(ed) to reach through their art listeners regardless of their political persuasions.⁵² Whereas

⁴⁹ Kofi Annan cited in “Secretary-General to Recognize Renowned Cellist Yo-Yo Ma as Messenger of Peace,” September 21, 2006, website of the *United Nations Meetings & Press Releases*.

⁵⁰ From the many studies about the intersection between music and national-building in Germany, see, for instance, David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002); Celia Applegate, *Bach in Berlin: National and Culture in Mendelssohn’s Revival of the St. Matthew Passion* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005); Matthew Gelbart, *The Invention of “Folk Music” and “Art Music”*: *Emerging Categories from Ossian to Wagner* (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Barbara Eichner, *History in Mighty Sounds: Musical Constructions of German National Identity, 1848-1914* (Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2012); Karen Painter, *Symphonic Aspirations: German Music and Politics, 1900-1945* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007).

⁵¹ “The Silk Road and Beyond: A Conversation with James Cuno and Yo-Yo Ma,” *Art Institute of Chicago Museum Studies* 33/1 (2007): 20–29.

⁵² Ma conceived his role as being one of “promot[ing] the passionate commitment I feel that music is one of the best ways humans have invented to code inner lives. By locating and advocating for

this, or course, in itself is an understandable and legitimate position to take for artists working in a private capacity, the public institutions that enlist them often have very specific political objectives. When Powell highlights in the aforementioned speech each musician's "unique" contribution to the sounding result, he seems to articulate the same cosmopolitan values as Ma and Menuhin. Yet, by connecting it in the same breath to the idea of art's intrinsic resistance to tyranny, he infuses the concept with a rhetoric that is profoundly political.

Indeed, perhaps more than ever before, the conception of music as a uniting and boundary-transcending force has been put to use in the peaceful, but often violent, processes of community-building that marked the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. During the Second World War, for instance, all warring parties resorted to music's binding quality to uplift the morale of their troops and denizens and conduct "psychological warfare" against the enemy. Statements like the one by *New York Times* music critic Howard Taubman, invoking music's "unique power" to justify the use of music as propaganda by America's wartime "information" agency, the Office of War Information (OWI), abounded in the press at the time (see third epigraph). In fact, anti-Nazi propagandists often resorted to the same 'classical' repertory as their enemy, the cultural heir to this repertory. As the project of winning the war turned into a project of reconstructing Europe and "re-orienting" the defeated enemy, the anti-Nazi allies again availed themselves of the classical repertory, stressing that their nations had protected the German, if not "universal," tradition of Bach, Goethe, and Beethoven against Nazi corruption. Yet, when within two years after the Nazi surrender the anti-Nazi alliance broke along ideological lines, the very notion of "universality" became—again—contested, and with that, the entire classical tradition. Thus, when at the height of the early Cold War Germany split in two, Bach, Handel and Beethoven could appear in West Germany as paragons of political "freedom" and in East Germany as proto-Marxist advocates of social "equality." For both sides of the Iron Curtain, music became one of the most important vehicles to convey such "shared values" and "common truths" to "hearts and minds" that had not decided

these inner lives, those who work in the cultural sphere stimulate the imagination and sense of compassion, thus are able to provide the best pre-conditions and climate for people who work in the sectors of economics and politics." Jessie Huang and Stephen Robert, "Email Interview with Yo-Yo Ma," *Life of Guangzhou*, January 12, 2012. When asked about his political philosophy, Menuhin answered: "Politics captivates crowds which are taken in by the illusion of speech. I believe that all politicians should have a job outside politics. Politicians who were also cobblers, cooks or gardeners, who had direct experience of their country at every level, would be head and shoulders above today's politicians. They would be really useful to their fellow citizens." Interview with Martine Leca, *The Unesco Courier* (November 1995): 49.

for either the West or East.⁵³ Indeed, Ilya Ehrenburg's rendition of the idea of 'universal music' at once shows how closely exclusion lies behind the appearance of inclusion. Obviously, the Soviet "truth" was that only the music of peace-loving nations, like the Soviet Union, could be universal. The shaping and execution of one of the strategies through which the Western side of the Curtain endeavored to "get its truth out" is the main topic of this dissertation.



At the start of this young century, America is once again engaged in a real war that is testing our nation's resolve. While there are important distinctions, today's war on terror is like the Cold War. It is an ideological struggle with an enemy that despises freedom and pursues totalitarian aims. Like the Cold War, our adversary is dismissive of free peoples, claiming that men and women who live in liberty are weak and decadent—and they lack the resolve to defend our way of life. Like the Cold War, America is once again answering history's call with confidence—and like the Cold War, freedom will prevail.⁵⁴

US President George W. Bush (2006)

Getting the Truth Out: (C)overt Cultural Diplomacy in the Cold War

From the start of its second term, the Bush administration increasingly evoked America's past struggle against the "Soviet threat" to legitimize its much criticized "War on Terror." Concurrently, Powell's successor, Condoleezza Rice, acted on the increasingly vocal call from experts for a public diplomacy with more teeth, commitment, coordination, and stamina. Indeed, more and more reports presented the public diplomacy from the heyday of the Cold War as a model for combating the "forces of darkness" of today and regaining the dampened goodwill of the global community.⁵⁵ As one senior Foreign Service officer put it, the United States should "re-enter the battlefield of ideas with every bit as much determination as we did during the Cold War."⁵⁶ Time had indeed come—in Secretary Rice's

⁵³ For detailed studies tracing the ideological divide with respect to Germany's musical life, see Toby Thacker, *Music after Hitler 1945-1955* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2007) and Elizabeth Janik, *Recomposing German Music Politics and Musical Traditions in Cold War Berlin* (Leiden: Brill, 2005).

⁵⁴ George W. Bush, Remarks at the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies, April 10, 2006, website of *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>].

⁵⁵ Quoted from the opening paragraph of the report of the State Department's Advisory Committee on Public Diplomacy, *Cultural Diplomacy: The Linchpin of Public Diplomacy*, September 2005, 1.

⁵⁶ Helena Kane Finn quoted in *Arts & Minds: Cultural Diplomacy amid Global Tensions*, report based on a conference presented by the National Arts Journalism Program, Arts International and the Center for Arts and Culture, April 14-15, 2003, 3; *Finding America's Voice: A Strategy for Reinvigorating*

words—“to look anew at our institutions of public diplomacy [in order to] confront hateful propaganda, dispel dangerous myths and get out the truth [about America].”⁵⁷

The Bush administration’s increasing referral to the Cold War in its assessment of the challenge the United States was facing since 9/11 is telling, as is its resort to the “truth” rhetoric, which harked back to the Campaign of Truth, launched in 1950 by the Truman administration “to promote the cause of freedom against the propaganda of slavery.”⁵⁸ Derived from the propaganda strategy designed during World War II by the Office of War Information, the assumption underpinning this campaign was that the best way to negate enemy propaganda was to simply present “the facts,” i.e., even-handed accounts about American life and intentions predicated on statistics and journalistic principles. Charlotte Beers’s post-9/11 Shared Values Initiative operated on a similar belief that America’s “distorted image” in the Islamic world could be mended by presenting adequate information about Muslim life in the United States. However, as both the Truman and Bush administration found out, their targeted audiences in Western Europe and the Arab world respectively found no use in knowing about how good life in the United States was. Their concern was what the US military and cultural presence in their vicinity would mean to them personally, their culture, and their sovereignty. In other words, to win their trust, the United States needed to do more to prove their commitment to the concerns of “freedom-loving nations” living under the yoke of “totalitarian regimes.”⁵⁹

Yet, to prove commitment is easier done by words than by deeds. As in the wake of 9/11, public and private advocates of a comprehensive outreach and public diplomacy program in the immediate aftermath of World War II, too, had a hard time eliciting from Congress appropriations befitting the size

U.S. Public Diplomacy, report of an Independent Task Force Sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations (2003); *Changing Minds, Winning Peace: A New Strategic Direction for U.S. Public Diplomacy in the Arab and Muslim World*, report of the Advisory Group on Public Diplomacy for the Arab and Muslim World (October 2003); Chapter 12 from *The 9/11 Commission Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004).

⁵⁷ Rice, “Announcement of Nomination of Karen P. Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy,” 14 March 2005, website United States Department of State Archives 2001-2009. For a detailed account of US public diplomacy during the Bush administration, see R. S. Zaharna, *Battles to Bridges: US Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy after 9/11* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).

⁵⁸ Harry S. Truman, Address on Foreign Policy at a Luncheon of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, April 20, 1950, website of *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>].

⁵⁹ Harry S. Truman, “Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine,” 12 March 1947; George W. Bush, “Remarks on the War on Terror,” May 22, 2006, website of *The American Presidency Project* [<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu>].

of the challenge as they imagined it to be. For although the Kremlin had little to offer in terms of outreach, it was very successful in organizing dissent against the United States for leaving Europe in the lurch. It took almost two years for an economic relief program for Europe to materialize (the European Recovery Program, or “Marshall Plan,” launched in March 1947); still another year before the public diplomacy objective was addressed by the Information and Educational Exchange Act (the Smith-Mundt Bill); and another five years before a coordinating body would be brought into existence that could fuse the various public diplomacy initiatives conducted by state and private actors into one single effort “to understand, inform and influence foreign publics” with a budget, zeal, and efficiency that could match those of the Kremlin and its allies: the United States Information Agency (USIA). Through a wide array of media, this agency would try to manage the foreign perception of the United States for nearly half a century, and make sure that “the truth” would come out as the US government conceived it.⁶⁰

For many actors in and outside of the Truman administration, however, this tardiness of the democratic procedure failed to meet the urgency of the time. Whereas much of Europe had been, or was being, drawn in the Soviet sphere of influence, France, Italy, and China stood on the verge of lapsing towards the Communist side, Soviet authorities in Germany and Austria incrementally adopted policies at odds with Allied agreements, the Kremlin gained more and more footholds in strategic locations in the Balkan and Middle East, and, at the top of this spiral of disaster, the United States lost its lead in the armaments race with the detonation of the first Soviet atomic bomb in August 1949. In this moment of hectic anxiety, the Truman administration resorted to a loophole in hastily adopted legislation that gave birth to what would become the most controversial exponent of America’s governmental infrastructure: the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Authorizing actions in the interest of national security without congressional endorsement, this loophole enabled the Truman administration to undertake what in the political lingo of the time was called “political and psychological warfare,” i.e., subversive interventions (espionage, infiltration, influencing elections, supporting indigenous underground resistance, etc.) and propaganda activities (broadcasting, touring exhibitions and performing groups, dissemination of booklets, posters, pamphlets, books, magazines, etc.) on non-US soil. Designed and orchestrated by State Department and CIA officials into what has been called a “state-private network,” these

⁶⁰ For a detailed history of the USIA, see Nicholas J. Cull, *The Cold War and the United States Information Agency: American Propaganda and Public Diplomacy, 1945-1989* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) and *The Decline and Fall of the United States Information Agency: American Public Diplomacy, 1989-2001* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

activities rested on the financial and moral contributions of private individuals, business corporations, philanthropic foundations, and governmental agencies united in their concern to counter Soviet encroachments in the “free world.”⁶¹

One of the principal fruits and beneficiaries of the political dynamics of the early Cold War that shaped America’s national security bureaucracy as we know it today was the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF), an international organization of intellectuals (academics, politicians, writers, journalists, opinion-makers, artists, etc.) who were convinced that the Soviet Union was a force for the worse more than the United States ever could be. A longtime dream of a select company of self-defined anti-Stalinists and realized with the support of the CIA’s channels of communication and funding, the CCF seems to be conceived as an alternative to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which by the end of the 1940s clearly could not live up to the universalist aspirations from which it emerged in late 1946. Back then, confidence prevailed that the “long-lasting [international] cooperation” UNESCO aimed at could “release energies” that would “make the atom bomb look like a dried pea on a platter.”⁶² Yet, by its very ‘universal’ constitution, the organization almost immediately became entangled in the Cold War tensions that divided what once had been “united nations.” While failure of Western member states to embrace a Marxist-based view on culture and science precluded the participation of the Soviet Union in UNESCO (until 1954), Eastern European member states (Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia) virtually blocked every effort at cultural and scholarly exchange out of suspicion for Western intentions. Worse, early 1947, intelligence officials alarmed President Truman of the appointment of known Communist sympathizers to sensitive positions within UNESCO and advised to take action to prevent the organization from turning into an instrument for Communist purposes. If UNESCO was to become an ideological tool, then it was to promote the American conception of universality, and not the Soviet one.⁶³

However, rather than to spill time, money and energy on attempting to ride the capricious UNESCO horse, somewhere along the line it must have

⁶¹ Helen Laville and Hugh Wilford, eds. *The US Government, Citizens Groups and the Cold War: The State-Private Network* (London: Routledge, 2006).

⁶² Charles J. Child, Advisor on Arts and Humanities, Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, “UNESCO and the National Music Council,” address delivered before the National Music Council, December 27, 1946, Records of the Department of State (NARA), 5-UNESCO 1946.

⁶³ Frank A. Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas: U.S. Foreign Policy and Cultural Relations, 1938-1950* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), 100–6.

appeared more practicable to set up an organization that could bypass the intricacies of a multilateral organization. The Congress for Cultural Freedom did precisely what the Truman administration deemed necessary at the time: winning the allegiance of those intellectuals in the world who, while perhaps partly in agreement, were not intent on giving their soul to US foreign policies and military actions, and certainly not on condoning American culture as it came to them via Hollywood movie pictures, Tin Pan Alley songs, and various popular magazines. At the prime of its existence in the 1950s and early 1960s, the CCF mustered a consortium of about twenty-five committees or affiliated organizations representing large non-Communist countries in all continents but Antarctica, an array of about twenty “little” magazines in the major world languages, an impressive list of scholarly publications written under its patronage, and a record of about thirty-five large-scale or small-scale gatherings including festivals, conferences, and seminars. CCF activities and publications aimed at—and to a certain extent succeeded in—the creation of (1) transnational communities of thought around problems that were deliberately presented as the *common* problems of the time, in particular problems pertaining to the relation of the state to culture, economy and society, and 2) a consensus on the “truth” that the possible solution to these problems only resided in liberal and social democratic—as opposed to socialist or communist—values.

Whereas public diplomacy initiatives targeted at audiences already attracted to the United States could operate along overt channels (the State Department or USIA) and employ specific forms of American culture (jazz in particular), those who operated the CCF realized all too well that the success of reaching intellectuals who entertained no warm feelings for American politics or culture required the absolute secrecy of the auspices under which the CCF operated. It might be called the tragedy of the CCF that, despite all efforts to appear as an independent organization by and for intellectual elites, it always and everywhere faced suspicions about its true agenda and benefactors. And in Shakespearian fashion, this tragedy was to end without a ray of hope for those who had so much invested in it when in the mid-1960s the (public) secret came out and the scope of the CIA’s involvement in seemingly private organizations in the US and beyond was exposed to the eye of the world. The truth had indeed gone out, but not the truth that those complicit in the secret had wished to send out.

Cold War Counterpoint: Harnessing “Freedom” against “Totalitarianism”

One of the greatest challenges the West, and the United States in particular, faced when it turned out that it had to enter into an ideological competition with their former Soviet ally, was a lack of know-how, if not commitment, to emulate the Kremlin’s strategies of persuasion. For both the Americans and

the British, the very thought of employing culture for political ends was problematic: such use could perhaps be legitimated in wartime, but in peacetime culture was to remain in the private domain which was considered to be its exclusive purview in a democracy. Indeed, in its severest form, Anglo-Saxon criticism referred to Hitler's Germany or Mussolini's Italy to judge the very proposal of a state utilizing or sponsoring culture as "fascist." As a result, the thirty years of experience in political utilization of culture that their former "anti-fascist" ally had cultivated by the start of the Cold War was a given to which the United States and Great Britain barely could offer an answer. The first part of the dissertation will trace the successes and failures of those who, whether in a private capacity or as civilians working for US governmental agencies, tried to convince their government or superiors of their view that, if the "free world" was to stand in the battle for the hearts and minds of the world's non-aligned intelligentsia, it was imperative to employ culture with similar propagandistic vigor as the Soviets did. Eventually, but not without struggle, the advocates of a "cultural offensive" against the Soviet Union won out. From the turn of the mid-twentieth century onward, the Truman and Eisenhower administrations were deeply invested in promoting the United States as the paragon of "freedom" and as a beacon of hope for those who found themselves "enslaved" by "totalitarian regimes."

Carrying the banner of "freedom" was not without its problems, however. The Soviet Union and its allies did not fail to seize any opportunity to exploit the constraints on liberty that were imposed on American citizens suspected of "un-American" activities, not to mention the oppression of African-American populations in the Southern states. State Department officials could not find any excuse for the suspicions to which conservative factions in Washington subjected US citizens with perceived leftwing associations. They did try, however, to show that the social position of African-Americans in US society was improving. Efforts to deflect charges of racial discrimination initially ranged from sending individual African-American artists (e.g. Marian Anderson and Leontyne Price) across the Atlantic to sponsoring a four-year global tour of Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* (1952-6), which included the Soviet Union (1955).⁶⁴ However, the mere presentation of discriminated groups by forms (such as classical recitals, operas, etc.) that were developed by, and for, the very social class

⁶⁴ For analyses of the instrumentalization of *Porgy and Bess* in the cultural Cold War effort, see David Monod, "Disguise, Containment and the *Porgy and Bess* Revival of 1952-1956," *Journal of American Studies* 35/2 (2001): 275-312 and "'He is a Cripple an' Needs my Love': *Porgy and Bess* as Cold War Propaganda," in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Frank Cass, 2003), 300-12; Ellen Noonan, *The Strange Career of Porgy and Bess: Race, Culture, and America's Most Famous Opera* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2012).

responsible for their marginalization in the first place was not enough: the form itself needed to be recognized as *of* and *for* those who from the birth of the United States had been denied the experience of equal citizenship. This insight eventually led to what would ultimately be seen as the most successful of the State Department's efforts at cultural diplomacy, the Jazz Ambassadors Program, under the auspices of which jazz icons such as Dizzy Gillespie, Louis Armstrong, and Duke Ellington from 1956 onward jammed in those spots in the world where the Cold War competition was the hottest, thus paradoxically serving as symbols of liberal democracy in a country that for a considerable part was still legally segregated in black and white.

Seen as such, the Jazz Ambassadors Program ironically shared an important rationale with the Soviet program of socialist realism in the sense that it equally expected artists to convey a culturally "integrated" reality not yet achieved. The crucial difference, however, was that the State Department could not control those it sent out to promote the United States to the same extent as the Soviet Union. Indeed, as Penny von Eschen's and Lisa Davenport's studies of the Jazz Ambassadors Program have shown, State Department officials had a hard time keeping their ambassadors in line. Wherever they came, Armstrong, Gillespie and Ellington did not shy away from freely speaking their opinions about the reality of racism in the Southern states, a reality from which their presence was supposed to divert their audiences. Equally nerve-wracking for program executives was the near impossibility to keep the Jazz Ambassadors to protocols as to whom they could meet and how they should observe conditions set by local officials. Yet it was precisely this "failure" to "control" their artists that added to the credibility of the program. After all, the very fact that African American artists *could* speak up, show the flaws *and* potential of US society, and even satirize their government (as Iola and Dave Brubeck and Louis Armstrong did in their jazz musical *The Real Ambassadors*) often contrasted sharply with the political situation in which their audiences found themselves.⁶⁵

It should be noted that the Jazz Ambassadors Program originated under the Eisenhower administration, which allocated special appropriations designated for the President's Emergency Fund for the "cultural representation" of the United States in the world. Yet, as mentioned before, there was no congressional support for such program at the onset of the Cold War in the late 1940s, with the result that the Truman administration had to resort to clandestine strategies to counter Soviet propaganda. One of these strategies was to create an international platform for anti-Stalinist critics, the Congress of Cultural Freedom, which soon seemed to have

⁶⁵ Penny M. Von Eschen, *Satchmo Blows Up the World: Jazz Ambassadors Play the Cold War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2004); Lisa E. Davenport, *Jazz Diplomacy: Promoting America in the Cold War Era* (Jackson, MS: University Press of Mississippi, 2009).

caused its sponsors similar headaches as the jazz ambassadors would a few years later. Indeed, nothing seemed to be more challenging than ensuring that none of these highly independent-minded critics, some of whom shared nothing with each other beyond an aversion of Stalinism, would step out of line. For although the CCF was to be a mouthpiece for “freedom,” none but those witting of its true auspices knew that somewhere in Washington, too, limits were set beyond which this freedom could not be extended.



It seems to me only natural that an association of intellectuals dedicated to the defense of freedom in the sphere of culture should be concerned with poetry and painting, with music and the many other arts. Is this not the most sensitive and most secret domain of man’s imagination? It is precisely because of this that the problems, dilemmas, and dangers which have been confronting the artist in our world today are so pressingly important. We have learned to our sorrow of writers who have been condemned to prison sentences, of musicians who have been corrupted by commercialized patronage or imposed upon by conformist aesthetic principles, of painters and sculptors who have become an easy prey to the hungry and indiscriminate art market. We have seen, too, the growing interdependence of the world’s various cultures, and how everywhere a narrow-minded, close-spirited “provincialism” has been increasingly recognized as a thing to be combated.⁶⁶

Nicolas Nabokov (1960)

A Broker in Cold Wartime: Nicolas Nabokov

One of the staunchest proponents of a “cultural counteroffensive” against the Soviet Union was Nicolas Nabokov, a scion of the renowned aristocratic family of which the writer Vladimir Nabokov is perhaps the most well-known member. In the wake of the 1917 Bolshevik revolution, Nabokov fled Russia and eventually became the secretary-general of the Congress for Cultural Freedom. In this capacity, he organized various cultural and academic events in order to—in his own words—“lure [intellectuals] away from the Moscow nucleus towards our Eisenhower-Adenauer-Ollenhauer-Stevenson-of-hauer pure, democratic, freedom-loving nucleus (minus Taft-McCarthy).”⁶⁷ A composer by profession, his heart was most deeply involved in the festival-conferences he developed on behalf of the CCF and which will be the focus of this dissertation: the *L’Œuvre du vingtième siècle* festival in Paris (May 1952), the *La Musica nel ventesimo secolo* convention in

⁶⁶ Brochure *Congress for Cultural Freedom: Ten Years*, June 1960, 6-7, Kennan Papers, 21-13.

⁶⁷ Nabokov to Charles W. Thayer, September 29, [1953], Thayer Papers, 4-nf.

Rome (April 1954), the “Tradition and Change” seminars in Venice (September 1958) and New Delhi (September 1964), and the East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo (April-May 1961). Nabokov’s intriguing career provides an excellent window on the major political and cultural convictions, anxieties, and strategies that were on the mind of postwar elites in the United States, Europe, South/Southeast/East Asia. For this reason, I decided to assign him a protagonist role in my dissertation.

Until the late 1990s, Nabokov barely featured in the academic literature. In musicological studies, he mostly appeared as an informant about Stravinsky with whom he was friends since the waning days of Diaghilev’s Ballets Russes and whom he regularly invited for his CCF festivals. In the wake of several cultural-political studies of the CCF that appeared in the late 1990s, Nabokov first received wider attention in the musicological literature, in particular by Ian Wellens’s *Music on the Frontline: Nicolas Nabokov’s Struggle against Communism and Middlebrow Culture*, published in 2003.⁶⁸ In this pioneering study, Wellens for the first time investigated Nabokov’s body of writings and unpublished papers in an effort to trace his (and by consequence, the CIA’s) rationale for the 1952 Paris festival and 1954 Rome convention. As the title of his book suggests, Wellens observed two principle concerns in Nabokov’s thinking: one was the postwar expansion of Communist influence, the other the debilitating effects of the so-called “culture industry” on the integrity of so-called “high culture.” Indeed, as far as the outcome was concerned (not the nature of control), there seemed to have been for Nabokov no essential difference in subjecting culture to political dictates (as in Communist systems) or to commercial targets (as in capitalist systems): both attempts to manage culture cannot otherwise than dilute the quality of art.⁶⁹ Significantly, in a decennial retrospective on the CCF’s artistic programs, Nabokov explicitly mentioned in one breath “totalitarianism” and “commercialized patronage” as two causes of the same problem, i.e., “narrow-mindedness” and “provincialism” to which the CCF sought to pose a “universal” alternative (see epigraph).

The greatest strength of Wellens’s study is his interpretation of Nabokov’s positions in the wider context of postwar debates on the relationship between art and society, in particular the debate as conducted by the so-called “New York Intellectuals” (NYI), many of whom were to a more or lesser extent involved with the CCF. Former Marxists, Trotskyites, or anarchists shaped by the experience of the Depression years and the Popular Front, most of them would in the wake of Stalin’s purges, show

⁶⁸ Ian Wellens, *Music on the Frontline: Nicolas Nabokov’s Struggle against Communism and Middlebrow Culture* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2003).

⁶⁹ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951), 210–31.

trials, and the non-aggression pact with Hitler (August 23, 1939) turn into staunch anti-Stalinists and advocates of high modernism. As anti-Stalinists, they saw it as their mission to convince the protesters of the increasingly confrontational stance of the Truman administration toward the Soviet Union that they were being beguiled by a fifth column in their midst into believing that the Kremlin's intentions were benign and peaceful and Washington's aggressive and imperialist.⁷⁰ As advocates of avant-garde culture, they theorized the nature and evils of—in the words of Dwight Macdonald, one of the most prolific writers on the subject—“a peculiar hybrid bred from [Mass Culture's] unnatural intercourse with [High Culture],” viz. “a tepid, flaccid Middlebrow Culture that threatens to engulf everything in its spreading ooze.”⁷¹

“The significance of the avant-garde,” Macdonald maintained (by which he thought of “poets such as Rimbaud, novelists such as Joyce, composers such as Stravinsky, and painters such as Picasso”), was that it “*refused to compete*” and made a “desperate attempt to fence off some area where the serious artist could still function.”⁷² Macdonald's brother in arms and passionate defender of Abstract Expressionism, Clement Greenberg, concurred and famously argued that the avant-garde was to be involved with, and critical of, nothing else than itself in order to remain unsusceptible to political exploitation.⁷³ “Mass culture” or “*Kitsch*,” on the other hand, being pre-digested imitations of high culture (or “authentic” folk culture) fabricated by technicians, functioned essentially as “a tool of domination” by which American business corporations or the Soviet ruling elite “exploited the cultural needs of the masses” for the sake of making a profit or maintaining class rule, respectively.⁷⁴ It is this “debased” form of “true culture,” Greenberg noted with exasperation, that had “gone on a triumphal tour of the world, crowding out and defacing native cultures in one colonial country after another, so that it is now [anno 1939] by way of becoming a universal culture, the first universal culture ever beheld.”⁷⁵

Obviously, this was not the “universal culture” that could make Macdonald and Greenberg confide in the future, nor would it do for Nabokov. Defined against their experience or perception of the

⁷⁰ Editorial, “The ‘Liberal’ Fifth Column,” *Partisan Review* 13/3 (1946): 279–93.

⁷¹ Dwight Macdonald, “A Theory of Mass Culture,” *Diogenes* 3 (Summer 1953): 5. Macdonald published ever expanding versions of his culture theory between 1944 (“A Theory of Mass Culture,” in *Politics* [February 1944]: 20–3 and 1960) and 1960 (“Mass Cult and Mid Cult,” *Partisan Review* 27/2 [1960]: 203–33 and 27/4 [1960]: 589–631).

⁷² Macdonald, “A Theory of ‘Popular Culture,’” 4.

⁷³ Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” *Partisan Review* 6/5 (1939): 38.

⁷⁴ Macdonald, “A Theory of Mass Culture,” 2; “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” 40.

⁷⁵ Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” 41.

instrumentalization of art under the dictatorships of Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin, *their* “universal culture” was inherently *apolitical*, *a-national(ist)*, and impervious to manipulation. It is, then, of the greatest irony that the Truman administration would come to promote this conception of “universal culture” under the banner of “freedom” and as a weapon to fight the Soviet conception of “universal culture.” Those intellectuals who were in the know and felt apologetic of their acceptance of the Truman administration’s covert sponsorship were acutely aware of this irony. But for them the plight of millions of fellow human beings some thousands of miles away necessitated the move, and if it was not (only) altruism that drove them, then it must have been their anxiety about *their* position as producers of “high culture.” For what use was there for their “independent” artwork, music, and writing if even the middle-classes were (being) satisfied with lucrative packages of the “great classics,” “music appreciation” courses, or contemporary creations with only a mild tinge of pre-war modernism, i.e., the “unhealthy hybrid” resulting from “high” culture’s commodification which the mass culture critics so despised?

Wellens is certainly right in recognizing the concerns of the NYI mass culture critics in Nabokov’s writings. In fact, Macdonald and Greenberg were only two of the most well-known proponents of the debate on “mass culture” that spread over the pages of various “highbrow” magazines in Europe and the United States since the late 1930s, especially in response to the theories of the Frankfurt School social critics (exiled in New York by the 1940s), Theodor W. Adorno in particular. But Wellens’s exclusive placement of Nabokov in the NYI circle might suggest that Nabokov was part of it, or considered himself part of it. The opposite is true. Nabokov did enter the circle somewhere in the early 1940s (probably through Edmund Wilson) and participated from time to time in its meetings, but he never engaged in such rigorous theorizing as did Macdonald, Greenberg, or Adorno. His writings are typically composed of anecdotes full of Nabokovian witticisms, personal experiences, strong convictions, and only occasionally substantiated by a lucid application of academic discursions with which he was no doubt thoroughly familiar through the cultural-political magazines of the time, including NYI’s mouthpiece, the *Partisan Review*. To be sure, Nabokov did once take up the pen against René Leibowitz about the merits of the Second Viennese School if compared with Stravinsky’s neoclassicism, but, as I will argue (Chapter 3), he was more driven by an aversion to the type of dialectical theorizing by which Leibowitz (and Adorno) turned Stravinsky into an “inauthentic” shadow of the “authentic” Schoenberg than by the ambition to be the philosophical counterpart of Leibowitz (or Adorno).

The more I delved into Nabokov’s biography and writings, the more I have come to realize that his life cannot be reduced to “a struggle against

Communism and middlebrow culture” (which, as I can imagine, was not Wellens’s intention). As I will show in Chapter 1, up to the early 1940s, Nabokov’s stance regarding the Soviet Union and “mass culture” was much more ambivalent than Wellens presents it. To be sure, Wellens briefly touches on this ambivalence by way of a remark by Isaiah Berlin, who remembered Nabokov once (around 1943–4) making a comment to him to the effect that anti-Soviet sentiments were played up “for the benefit of General Electric, and American big business generally,” but he does not pursue its implications.⁷⁶ Nabokov’s FBI dossier and recently disclosed correspondence with Prokofiev show how much he cherished the hope that one day the situation in his motherland would improve to such an extent that he, as a composer of modernist music, could make a living there. By the same token, his struggle for a living in 1930s America led him to write for Broadway a ballet (*Union Pacific*) of which he always was proud to say that it was the first American ballet—a pride that must have amounted to a sin in the eyes of inveterate mass culture critics.⁷⁷ Nor have I seen anywhere Nabokov criticizing Hollywood, Broadway or jazz to an extent that would justify Wellens’s thesis that Soviet and American “mass culture” were for Nabokov two sides of the same coin. To the contrary, as will be shown in Chapter 3, Nabokov would hold against those who made such level-handed comparison (like, for instance, Leibowitz) that, although the creative results of Western and Soviet “culture industries” might have been the same, the Western composer at least did have the choice to ‘go commercial’ or not. Also, in his capacity as festival impresario, he would not refrain from contracting jazz ensembles (in particular the Modern Jazz Quartet) and as artistic director of the Berlin Festival (1964–7) he would support the proposal of the West German jazz promoter Joachim Berendt for a permanent jazz component in the Festival. To be sure, Nabokov did criticize Soviet “*Ersatz* culture” in much of the same terms as Macdonald and Greenberg. However, his remarks with respect to American “middlebrow culture” seem to have been more inspired by his experience as a composer who—as many of his contemporary colleagues—found the greatest difficulties in getting their works performed by orchestras who rather played on the safe side—i.e., “the big B symphonies and the antediluvian monstrosities of Sibelius and Richard Strauss”—and who during World War II *en masse* vied for the premiere rights of every new work by Shostakovich.⁷⁸

But the main objection to situating Nabokov too closely with the New York Intellectuals pertains to the area of aesthetics: Nabokov never

⁷⁶ Berlin cited in an interview with Wellens, June 11, 1997, in *Music on the Frontline*, 16.

⁷⁷ See Nabokov’s resume of 1965, Nabokov Papers, 14–10.

⁷⁸ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 172; Nabokov, “The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich,” 430–1.

positioned himself as an advocate of the highest possible form of abstraction like, for instance, Greenberg did for the visual arts. (To be sure, it will be recalled that Macdonald counted Stravinsky among the avant-garde, and not the more likely counterpart to the Abstract Expressionists, Schoenberg. But this was probably more due to a lack of expertise than a deliberate selection—most of the New York Intellectuals were interested and proficient in literature, then visual art, and barely a few in music.) If the core of NYI’s poetics was that high art should be deliberately resistant to easy comprehension, then Nabokov did not fit in. Wellens is certainly correct in singling out one of Nabokov’s post-facto recollections upon first seeing the score of Shostakovich’s First Symphony (1926) as a premonition of the NYI’s concerns:

I...remained worried over this music, and the reason for my worry was something outside of Shostakovich himself. It seemed to me...that Shostakovich might be a symptom of a new era approaching in art, [and that certain internal changes in the political and social structure of the Soviet Union, rather than considerations of a purely artistic nature, had been greatly responsible for the rise of this kind of music.] This synthetic and retrospective score...was perhaps the true expression of a new period in which the aim was to establish easily comprehensible, utilitarian, and at the same time contemporaneous art. Perhaps some of the principles which had been the cornerstones of the artistic philosophy of the past two generations would be put aside by the composers of this approaching era; perhaps our demand that music be primarily good in quality, new in spirit and technique, original in outlook would be subordinated to such principles as absolute and immediate comprehensibility to large masses of people and fulfillment of an education mission, political and social.⁷⁹

Yet Wellens’s reading of this passage as an expression of Nabokov’s general worry over the “threat” that “problematic ideas of artistic accessibility, education and utility” posed to “the modernist project which Nabokov, in his Paris festival, would later set out to celebrate and defend,” is troublesome. First, Wellens serves his interpretation by leaving out the clause that I bracketed in the above citation, which does not exclude at all the possibility that Nabokov actually had more the Soviet Union than the world at large in mind. Second, Wellens does not mention what Nabokov *did* appreciate as the “attractive novelties” of Shostakovich’ namely, “its fashionable simplicity of melodic outline or its rhythmical liveliness.” As will be shown in Chapter 1, “simplicity” and “comprehensibility” were precisely core values within Nabokov’s own aesthetics. The problem with the “simplicity” in Shostakovich’s later works and, for that matter, in American popular music, however, was that it turned out as “stale,” “contrived,” and

⁷⁹ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 192; discussed by Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 103.

“commonplace,” an affection that—and here Nabokov tunes into the mass culture discourse of the time of writing (1943)—he attributed to its being “utilized.” Third, it escaped Wellens’s attention that Nabokov made a significant omission to his assessment of Shostakovich’s music when he revised the original article (written in 1943) for the 1951 memoirs from which Wellens quoted—an omission that, as we will see, proved Nabokov to be far removed from the *l’art-pour-l’art* aesthetics that the NYI critics had come to espouse by the mid 1940s.

Nabokov’s attraction to the NYI seemed to have been its initial plan to design an outreach to East Bloc refugees (Chapter 4). Soon, however, it turned out that a faction within the NYI was more concerned in fighting a domestic war against Communism and “fellow-travellerism” than in relief. He never seemed to have felt the need “to lead a rational, ice-cold, determinedly intellectual war against Stalinism without falling into the easy Manichean trap of phony righteousness,...especially at a time when in America that ideological war was getting histrionically hysterical and crusaderishly paranoiac [*sic*].”⁸⁰ Indeed, when Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. reported to him in 1952 about how several NYI members (many of whom had joined the American Committee for Cultural Freedom) had come to support Joseph McCarthy, Nabokov wrote that if “the members of our American Committee were pro-McCarthy in sentiment, I would have no alternative but to resign” from the post of secretary-general of the international CCF, as it would render the CCF’s project of winning the favor of European and Asian intellectuals, almost all of whom looked with astonishment at McCarthy’s impact on the Washington bureaucracy, futile. Yet he held “too much faith in the health and the spirit of freedom of the American people” to believe that McCarthy represented “an authentic popular movement” in the United States.⁸¹ Three years later, Nabokov scornfully quipped to Schlesinger about “that incestuous, non-Communist-leftist, and Trotskyite-dissident [*sic*] inbred family, i.e., the New York intelligentsia.”⁸²

Nabokov was, by volition, not a man of entrenched theoretical positions but—and I mean this in the most positive sense—an impulsive writer, and an often affectionate one, too, in his correspondence with intimates. He wrote what he felt about something, and rather than seeking academic rigor or objective distance, he invested his time in the literary quality of what he wrote. An introduction to a report he prepared on a trip he made to India on behalf of the CCF in 1954 is typical of his way of expression, and for this reason I quote it in full:

⁸⁰ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 242-3.

⁸¹ Nabokov to Schlesinger, April 21, 1952, Schlesinger Papers, P-20-nf.

⁸² Nabokov to Schlesinger, February 7, 1955, Schlesinger Papers, P-20-nf.

India, to a Westerner like myself, is an experience to which no familiar yardsticks apply. It is complex, constantly baffling and endless in all its dimensions—time, space, poverty, loveliness, indolence, tragic beauty and the permanent cirrhosis of the telephone-liver. Most of its important “*données existantes*” are uncommon to a Western neophyte. Those that one recognizes (the Oxonian, Rotarian, colonial and generally British ones) only tend to increase one’s bewilderment because of their contradictory setting. It is as if one were to meet Lev Tolstoi in peasant blouse, high boots and *poddyovka* sipping a gimlet (the colonial misnomer for much juice and little gin) at the St. James Club. Hence my impressions I may have gained in India—and I did gain quite a number of exciting and poignant ones—are of little or no relevance. Were I to put them down I might, at some later date, have to chew my own words and spit them out crimson like the betel nut chew on the streets of old Delhi. Hence also I wish to keep silence, firstly in order not to permit these impressions to settle in my memory’s rut like old clubwomen glued to a bridge table, and second, to keep as open a mind as I can, for a future visit to India. Maybe at that time will I be able to understand the nature of that curiously deadening sadness which enveloped me for eleven days from the moment I entered the Victorian glory of the Taj Mahal and which clung to my heart like the sultry, sick air of Bombay. Maybe in seeing more of those wonderfully eager young men and women of India will I be able to grasp at least a few of their million burning and seemingly insoluble problems. Maybe after a longer and broader contact with Indian life will I be able to recognize in the crowded streets of the Indian landscape persons beyond faces, compassion in guise of indifference, hope beyond despair and perhaps even a fruitful soil for a common experience. I beg my Indian friends to be patient with me when I say that so far too much has remained bewilderingly confusing and alien to me in India—as alien probably as the elephant gods to a Roman Cardinal. Hence I could not speak about it either with authority or understanding. My only excuse is that “the cloud of unknowing” is a heavier burden to bear than “the sunlight of comprehension.” In all humility I hope soon to get out of that clumsy cloud into the bright, sunny daylight of understanding.⁸³

My reservations regarding Wellens’s thesis are merely of a qualitative, not a fundamental, nature. While I concur that Nabokov shared many of the same concerns, I refrain from perceiving Nabokov too closely through the lens of the New York Intellectuals. In fact, in my interpretation of his character, Nabokov deliberately distanced himself from the many social circles he entered, wherever they were located. Whether he moved within the opinion-making circles of New York, Paris, Berlin, or Tokyo, or the policy-making circles of Washington, Bonn, and New Delhi, he never identified himself as being part of these circles, and certainly had no patience with factionalism.

In speeches and official meetings, he would most of the time introduce himself as “just a composer” who could not “imagine what else, apart from

⁸³ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to India,” November 20-December 1, 1954, CCF, II-249-2.

my white hairs, could have constituted my qualification [for the position of the CCF's secretary-general]."⁸⁴ This was no false modesty—he was aware of what he was good at: persuasion through charm. However remote his audience was professionally or culturally, he always knew to establish a rapport by appealing to their common identities as men and women who, like himself, “cherish complete creative freedom, detest all frontiers, geographical and spiritual barriers and who accept only the dictates of his own conscience, both artistically and intellectually.”⁸⁵ A speech addressed at a meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom a year after the above-cited report is another example of Nabokov's binding skills:

It is a shame and a scandal that Western musicians do not know practically anything about the music of India. It is a shame and a scandal that many of us in the West still complacently regard the music of your country as a kind of exotic affair. I am aghast at the amount of misconceptions that exist in the world. It is as if we were living on fifteen different planets. We have got to learn about each other. And only then can we compare and judge.⁸⁶

By this ability to tell the right things on the right occasions and to the right people, Nabokov could translate ambitious programs into reality, elicit funding for them, and bring people from various disciplines, social circles, and geographical distances together who otherwise rarely if ever met. Rather than being a representative of any socio-political circle, Nabokov was a broker who could get things done—and this must have made him attractive indeed to those who hoisted him in the post of the CCF's secretary-general, and certainly was the reason for Willy Brandt, Governing Mayor of West Berlin at the time of the erection of the Wall, to appoint him as his cultural ambassador with a mandate to establish cultural relations with Moscow as part of a general détente policy.

Music's Freedom: (C)overt Patronages of Musical Modernism in the Cold War

Apart from Wellens's publication, a rapidly growing body of literature has shed a light on the intersection between music and politics on both sides of the Cold War divide.⁸⁷ With respect to the amalgamation between high

⁸⁴ Address at the “Science and Freedom” congress in Hamburg, in *Science and Freedom* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1955), 288-9.

⁸⁵ Address (in French) delivered at the CCF General Assembly in Brussels, November 30, 1950, printed in the proceedings of International Committee's reunion in Brussels, November 27–30, 1950, ACCF, 1-1.

⁸⁶ Nabokov, “Our Dedication,” inaugural speech delivered at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in Bombay, December 17-18, 1955, in *Freedom First [ICCF]* (February 1956): 4–5.

⁸⁷ Uta G. Poiger, *Jazz, Rock, and Rebels: Cold War Politics and American Culture in a Divided Germany* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of Berkeley Press, 2000); Rachel Beckles Willson, *Ligeti, Kurtág,*

modernist music and liberal “anti-totalitarian” ideologies that is the focus of this dissertation, the contributions by, among others, Martin Brody, Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett, and Richard Taruskin have shown how ideas about artistic autonomy have been politicized and institutionalized as the country shifted into an “age of anxiety” during which connections with the New Deal and Popular Front past became subject to suspicion, surveillance, interrogation, and, at times, incarceration.⁸⁸ Studies by Amy C. Beal, David Monod, and Toby Thacker have assessed the way in which American postwar occupation authorities in Germany promoted musics of various modernist hue as part of a general mission to erase the Nazi legacy from German society and—after 1947-8, as the US-Soviet split had become inevitable—to counter anti-American prejudices fed by Communist propaganda.⁸⁹ More recently, Danielle Fosler-Lussier and Emily Abrams Ansari have delved in the State Department’s archives to unravel the decision-making processes that have led American composers and performers of modernist music to serve as US cultural ambassadors with a mission to counter the successes of their Soviet and Chinese counterparts.⁹⁰

Apart from Wellens, Anne C. Shreffler and Mark Carroll have conducted case studies on the musical patronages of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, and by extension, the CIA.⁹¹ Both authors broached the hermeneutic question how to interpret music that is drawn into a situation in which it is expected to convey a political meaning. Shreffler concentrates on

and Hungarian Music during the Cold War (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007); Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music Divided: Bartók’s Legacy in Cold War Culture* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of Berkeley Press, 2007); Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music during the Thaw* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

⁸⁸ Martin Brody, “‘Music for the Masses’: Milton Babbitt’s Cold War Music Theory,” *Musical Quarterly* 77 (1993): 161-92; Jennifer DeLapp-Birkett, “Aaron Copland and the Politics of Twelve-Tone Composition in the Early Cold War United States,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 27 (2008): 31–62; Richard Taruskin, “Nicht blutbefleckt?,” *Journal of Musicology* 26/2 (2009): 274–84.

⁸⁹ David Monod, *Settling Scores: German Music, Denazification, and the Americans, 1945–1953* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2005); Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006); Toby Thacker, *Music after Hitler 1945-1955* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2007).

⁹⁰ “American Cultural Diplomacy and the Mediation of Avant-Garde Music,” in *Sound Commitments: Avant-Garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 223–53 and “Music Pushed, Music Pulled: Cultural Diplomacy, Globalization, and Imperialism,” *Diplomatic History* 36/1 (2012): 53–64; Emily Abrams Ansari, “Aaron Copland and the Politics of Cultural Diplomacy,” *Journal of the Society for American Music* 5/3 (2011): 335–64 and “Shaping the Policies of Cold War Musical Diplomacy: An Epistemic Community of American Composers,” *Diplomatic History* 36/1 (2012): 41–52.

⁹¹ Mark Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003); Anne C. Shreffler, “Ideologies of Serialism: Stravinsky’s *Threni* and the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” in *Music and the Aesthetics of Modernity: Essays*, ed. Karol Berger and Anthony Newcomb (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 217–45.

Threni, Stravinsky's first thoroughly serial piece commissioned (through mediation of Nabokov) by the Venice Biennale for its 1958 edition. Observing the non-developmental way in which Stravinsky treated the row (a marked contrast to Boulez's "total serialism" by which each and every parameter is derived from the row), she argues that "the piece's articulation of restriction, boundedness, inexorability, and, ultimately, profound hopelessness" makes it on the one hand "an unsuitable choice for the optimistic and rather simplistic message of the CCF," on the other hand "an ideal example of the kind of music that could only be produced in the West."⁹² Shreffler is certainly right that the very fact that Stravinsky could choose whatever style he wanted to compose in, and treat it in his own idiosyncratic way, was sufficient to communicate the CCF's message of artistic freedom. I would take it a step further and claim that composing without worrying about any message at all was the only thing Stravinsky had to do. As Shreffler herself notes, there is no evidence that the CCF's commissions came with strings attached. Nor have I seen Nabokov prescribing or advising what a particular commission should sound like in order to convey the CCF's "optimistic and rather simplistic message." True, Beethoven's Ninth Symphony with which *Threni* was paired at the Biennale concert suits the purpose better, but Nabokov does not seem to have been concerned with the sounding result of a commission once it was commissioned. (Needless to say, the moment of 'control' resided in the selection of the artist.)

Carroll's study, relying on published sources only, takes Nabokov's 1952 Paris Festival as a point of departure to discuss the politicization of music in postwar Paris. By way of Adorno's, Clement Greenberg's, and Pierre Boulez's avant-garde poetics, he attributes the neoclassicist slant in the program to Nabokov's recognition of the "potential for neo-tonality"—in contrast to "atonality"—to "sustain an association with humanist values that the Congress argued were either absent or suppressed in the Soviet Union." In fact, he goes so far as to conclude that

[f]or all his advocacy of the festival as a celebration of "free minds in a free world," Nabokov's actions imply an aesthetic and ideological bias that differed from the Soviets only in its political complexion. Both parties remained preoccupied with the ends rather than the means—with the value or appropriateness of the creation itself, rather than the freedom implicit in the act of creation, an exercise of freedom that formed a significant part of the *raison d'être* of the French avant-garde.⁹³

⁹² Shreffler, "Ideologies of Serialism," 231.

⁹³ Carroll, *Music and Ideology*, 22.

If Carroll argues here from the perspective of the French avant-garde, I concur. Boulez, for one, indeed rejected any art preoccupied with “the ends rather than the means.” But if this is Carroll’s own voice, then I must demur.

First, I think that we as historians, reflecting upon a highly contentious past, should not stop at noticing parallels between, and contradictions within, the Western or Soviet (art) worlds. Not only because there is nothing easier and safer than to judge from more than half a century’s distance after the events discussed, but also because it suggests that those involved in the events discussed were not aware of such parallels and contradictions. Contemporaries made choices, and it is up to us as historians to analyze the circumstances in which these choices were made and the consequences they bore on contemporaries and/or us. We do not need to agree with these choices, but more is needed to avoid the very antagonism of the period under review. Second, Nabokov indeed carved out a narrative linking “cosmopolitanism” or “universalism” to “freedom” which he articulated various times in his capacity as CCF secretary-general.⁹⁴ Yet, although in his writings as a private composer he undeniably shows a predilection for neoclassicism, there is no reason to believe that this “explains” what Carroll sees as conservative in the Paris Festival program. Rather than by his musical taste, the selection criteria of the program were guided first of all by the ensembles, orchestras, or artists that Nabokov and his organizing team contracted: *they* determined which twentieth-century works they would perform. The only instances of interference I have come across occurred when a program of a particular concert threatened to become “too” American. There is one notable exception: the concluding concert to the Paris Festival was to convey a particular message, namely, that

however esoteric some of the researches of musicians of the twentieth century have been, they have also produced works which have been accepted by the mass “consumer,” and hence that the musicians of the Western world and its free civilization have responded to the call of the masses (which is one of the accusations often leveled against composers of the twentieth century by totalitarian regimes).⁹⁵

Danielle Fosler-Lussier placed similar question marks as I do to Carroll’s and Wellens’s theses, observing that Nabokov’s choice of works for the

⁹⁴ See Nabokov’s address (in French) delivered at the CCF General Assembly in Brussels, November 30, 1950, printed in the proceedings of International Committee’s reunion in Brussels, November 27–30, 1950, ACCF, 1-1; or his “Introduction à l’Œuvre du Xxe Siècle,” *La Revue musicale*, no. 212 (April 1952): 5-8, published in translation in *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, second edition, ed. Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin (Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning, 2007), 459–61.

⁹⁵ Nabokov to Stokowski, January 25, 1952, CCF, III-2-9.

festival cannot be dismissed as “a purely propagandistic use of music” and that Nabokov’s criticism of middlebrow art contradicts with the “modern classic” ideal that informed the program.⁹⁶ Indeed, the retrospective nature of the program is due to its very point of departure: it was meant to show the “vitality” of half a century’s musical creativity in the “free world.” I am not sure whether Nabokov would have seen his program as “middlebrow,”⁹⁷ but I agree with Fosler-Lussier’s qualifications of Carroll’s and Wellens’s arguments. With reference to Nabokov’s explanation of what the concluding concert of the Paris Festival was to communicate, I argue that the programs were primarily informed by the objectives of 1) attracting an audience with as many as influential persons as possible from the society in which the festivals took place, and 2) anticipating on criticism from the press of the political target group, the non-aligned leftist elite.

The rationales by which Nabokov’s festivals tried to appeal to their target groups changed as the course of the CCF shifted its course from anti-Stalinism to, among other things, cultural patronage. Whereas the anti-Stalinist rationale was ostentatiously inscribed in the announcement and program of the Paris festival, the subsequent initiatives relied on the strength of Western culture “to speak for itself” only and were, consequently, devoid of explicit references to the Cold War. What was to remain a leading theme of Nabokov’s enterprises, however, was the overt call for transnational musical relations. At a time when many nations were still entrenched in the chauvinistic mindset of the 1930s and 1940s, Nabokov saw it as his mission to regain the internationalist spirit of the early twentieth century. Indeed, a self-defined cosmopolitan who prided himself on the fact that the Soviets accused him of being one (*kosmopolitaniizm* was a derogatory term brimming with anti-Semitic connotations in Stalinist discourse),⁹⁸ Nabokov tried to open audiences’ ears for music beyond their aural horizons, regardless of whether he was active in the United States, Europe or Asia. Whereas the

⁹⁶ Danielle Fosler-Lussier, *Music Divided: Bartók’s Legacy in Cold War Culture* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2007), 89-93.

⁹⁷ As judgments of taste, the “-brows” remain highly elusive. The CCF was arguably aiming at what Pierre Bourdieu called the “dominated dominants,” i.e., the social strata that possessed more “cultural” than “economic capital” (teachers, journalists, civil employers, etc.), who appreciated “the purified, sublimated pleasures demanded by the pure aesthetic...” Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984), 266–73.

⁹⁸ “I am a composer of music, an American of Russian descent, who during many years of exile has lived in most of the European countries. In sum, I am what one calls in the language of *Führer* Stalin and his *Gauleiter* Zhdanov, a ‘dirty offshoot from the bourgeoisie’, ‘a decadent [person]’, ‘a stateless person’...and often a ‘*sans-culotte*’, a ‘cosmopolitan in service of Wall Street and the capitalist agitators of war’.” Address (in French) delivered at the CCF General Assembly in Brussels, November 30, 1950, printed in the proceedings of International Committee’s reunion in Brussels, November 27–30, 1950, ACCF, 1-1.

Paris and Rome festivals cemented a link between musical communities on both sides of the Atlantic commensurate with the political convergences of the time (i.e., the Marshall Plan and the creation of the NATO), the East-West Music Encounter that Nabokov convened in Tokyo in the spring of 1961 was unprecedented in its scope and ambition.⁹⁹ Yet, if these events come up in the musicological literature, then it is only as a backdrop to the familiar names of those who participated in them (e.g., Henry Cowell, Lou Harrison, and Virgil Thomson). By discussing for the first time all the CCF musical festivals in full detail, I intend to show how a very persistent idea in our cultural discourse—the universality of music—was projected to, and received by, various audiences in the world that shared the political anxieties and personal concerns of the early Cold War.

***Liaison dangereuse?* The Congress for Cultural Freedom and Its Patron(s)**

“For some congenitally poltroonish reason, people do not want to hear about the record of any of the Cold War enterprises[,] nor do they seem to wish those records published to speak for themselves,” Nabokov sighed despondently in his 1976 memoirs about the lack of academic interest in the Congress for Cultural Freedom in contrast to the many words spent on “the unhappy conglomerate called [the] United Nations.”¹⁰⁰ Already at the tenth anniversary of the CCF in 1960, Nabokov had advanced the idea of a history of the CCF, but after another ten years, nothing yet had materialized.¹⁰¹ At the end of his life, Nabokov himself played with the thought of writing a sequel to his 1976 memoirs (which only briefly and superficially touch upon the CCF episode) under the title *C.I.A. Travel Stories* or *Les riches heures du CIA*.¹⁰² Although the title is undoubtedly tongue-in-cheek, as was his prediction that the book would come out as “largely an *opera buffa* [rather than] an *opera seria*,” his intention was sincere.¹⁰³ “A lot of abuse has been poured over [the CCF] at the time of the revelation about the source of its funding,” he explained to Ford Foundation President George McBundy whom he tried to interest in funding preparatory research for his projected book. “[A]nd this abuse somehow ‘covered up’ the fact that from the early

⁹⁹ The closest precedent to the East-West Music Encounter is the 1932 international Congress of Arab Music in Cairo. See Ali Jihad Racy, “Historical Worldviews of Early Ethnomusicologists: An East-West Encounter in Cairo, 1932,” in *Ethnomusicology and Modern Music History*, ed. Stephen Blum, Philip V. Bohlman, and Daniel M. Neuman (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1991), 68–91.

¹⁰⁰ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 244–5.

¹⁰¹ Nabokov to Joseph E. Slater, President, Aspen Institute, memorandum “The Archives of the Congress for Cultural Freedom Proposal,” August 11, 1971, Nabokov Papers, 19–16.

¹⁰² Nabokov to Eugene Ormandy, June 26, 1976, Ormandy Papers, 15–1002; Isaiah Berlin to Nabokov, December 21, 1976, Nabokov Papers, 21–8.

¹⁰³ Nabokov to Mary McCarthy, December 20, 1976, McCarthy Papers, 214–12.

1950s and until 1964[,] the CCF has been a unique international forum [in which] truly liberal and mostly highly distinguished intellectuals were able to express themselves *freely* and expose the sorry condition of scholarship, of letters and of the arts in totalitarian countries and especially in the Motherland of Stalinism and of post-Stalinism.”¹⁰⁴ Failing health and an untimely death prevented Nabokov from starting the project. Perhaps he was also dissuaded from the idea by his old friend Isaiah Berlin, who urged him to take into account that

one’s memory is not infallible [and] the subject is, to say the least, sensitive; you and I, flown by the sheer joy of the variety of life, are apt to colour events and persons—dates, faces, events go round kaleidoscopically in one’s mind, and this particular topic is likely to cause furious rejoinders, denials, explosions, from old enemies, old friends, new enemies, new friends, neutrals of all sizes and types who will, rightly or wrongly, regard themselves as misrepresented, maligned, compromised, libeled, and from reviewers who will enter the fray. I doubt if you can want to be for the rest of your life the centre of unending rows [and] strongly advise you to leave that minefield alone.¹⁰⁵

A quarter of a century later, when the Cold War had ended and archives increasingly opened, Nabokov’s complaint about the lack of scholarly interest in the CCF had become redundant. Former CCF associate Peter Coleman was the first to delve into the CCF archives bequeathed to The University of Chicago and wrote a panoramic and slightly defensive introduction to the CCF’s history.¹⁰⁶ The studies of the historians Pierre Grémion and Michael Hochgeschwender give a detailed account of the CCF with respect to the domestic politics and transatlantic policies of France and Germany, respectively.¹⁰⁷ The CCF, however, was definitively drawn out from behind the curtains by the publication of Frances Stonor Saunders’s *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters*, published in the United Kingdom under the main title *Who Paid the Piper?*¹⁰⁸ Saunders’s study is pioneering in being a lucidly written synthesis of widely disparate published and archival sources that reveal the extent of the CIA’s

¹⁰⁴ Nabokov to McBundy, March 14, 1976, Nabokov Papers, 22-10.

¹⁰⁵ Isaiah Berlin to Nabokov, December 21, 1976, Nabokov Papers, 21-8.

¹⁰⁶ Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (New York: The Free Press, 1989).

¹⁰⁷ Pierre Grémion, *Intelligence de l’anticommunisme: Le Congrès pour la liberté de la culture à Paris, 1950-1975* (Paris: Fayard, 1995); Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? Der Kongress für kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998).

¹⁰⁸ Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 2000); *Who Paid the Piper? The CIA and the Cultural Cold War* (London: Granta Books, 1999). Subsequent references to this book are given in parenthesis in the text.

involvement in the promotion of Abstract Expressionism, ‘anti-totalitarian’ literature (e.g. George Orwell’s *Animal Farm* or Arthur Koestler’s *Darkness at Noon*), and ‘little’ magazines critical of Marxism and supportive, if not apologetic, of American society and politics such as *Encounter*, *Preuves*, and *Der Monat*. As for the domain of the arts and literature, it shows how some postwar modernist currents, rather than being cut off from the ruling elite against they supposedly revolted, were in fact connected to the political status quo through a covert—in the words of Clement Greenberg—“umbilical cord of gold.”¹⁰⁹

Yet, *The Cultural Cold War* was received with controversy, to say the least, for its tendentious tone. Indeed, behind every page of Saunders’s account the reader hears her indignation at how the CIA could have dared to think of the idea of harnessing the arts and letters for what she calls “America’s *Kulturkampf*” and how major writers and artists could have allowed themselves to lend their names to an organization that “recruited Nazis, manipulated the outcome of democratic elections, gave LSD to unwitting subjects, opened the mail of thousands of American citizens, overthrew governments, supported dictatorships, plotted assassinations, and engineered the Bay of Pigs disaster.”¹¹⁰ From her narrative, directed by the main objective of refuting the defense mounted by the Agency’s beneficiaries that the secret subsidies came with no strings attached, the CIA emerges as the great corrupter and manipulator, and most of the CCF’s associates as either witting or oblivious stooges.

To be sure, the ethical question about whether it is—or, in hindsight, was—legitimate, appropriate, and necessary for a government to bypass its parliament and clandestinely sponsor those private enterprises (journals, magazines, exhibitions, etc.) that were conducive to promoting its policies at the expense of those that did not definitely needs to be raised. But after having read *The Cultural Cold War*, one wonders what conclusions the author wishes her readers to draw beyond the fact “that the CIA was [not] merely interested in extending the possibilities for free and democratic cultural expression.”¹¹¹ That the US government did not (fully) live by its own ideals of freedom and democracy which it trumpeted to the world? That the strategies the US government used to promote its positions were not (practically and morally) different from those employed by its ideological contender? That citizens of the Western world were just as (un)free to express their opinions as in the Communist world? Perhaps Saunders deliberately left it to her readers to draw their own conclusions. Yet, the

¹⁰⁹ Clement Greenberg, “Avant-Garde and Kitsch,” *Partisan Review* 6/5 (1939): 38.

¹¹⁰ Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 17, 427.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 4.

blatant presence of her judgment in the book leads one to suspect that she was not much interested in bringing out any nuances in the process of writing. It rather seems that her astonishment at the degree to which the postwar arts were entangled with politics in the Western world was her guiding muse throughout.

That culture was not free from social and political constraints is as much a truism with respect to the western side of the Iron Curtain as to the eastern side. Few if any involved in the CIA/CCF (wittingly or unwittingly) argued the opposite. Indeed, the witting precisely argued that the political tensions of the time necessitated and justified their decision to enter into a secret alliance with their government. The questions that need to be asked, then, is to what extent this decision was indeed justified, and how precisely the power balance was set in this patron-client relationship. Did covert subsidies indeed come with “no strings attached,” as beneficiaries of CIA subsidies claim(ed)? To what extent *did* the CIA intervene in the business of its fronts whose very credibility hinged so thoroughly upon their appearance of independence? In other words, did the “golden umbilical cord,” once accepted, turn into a noose or could it be kept beneficial to the parties at either end of the cord until the secret came out into the public?

To a certain extent, Saunders’s study provides answers to these questions, even though she does not pose the questions. After having read all 427 pages which make up her volume, evidence for the CIA’s intervening in the CCF’s affairs after its foundation and consolidation in 1950-1 appears very thin—an observation that she herself confirmed in an interview with Scott Lucas. She cites Thomas W. Braden, the first chief of the CIA’s International Organizations Division that ran front organizations like the CCF, as saying that his division, at the time it was launched in 1950, would have vetoed any “private operation...that was negative to or seen to be undermining our current policy,” and subsequently admits that “I didn’t find very many concrete examples of that veto actually being exercised.” This lack was initially puzzling to her until she realized that the CCF was “flooded with CIA personnel [who] were very clear about what the themes were they wanted heard and more or less how they wanted them to be played.” Thus, the few instances she did uncover acts of control are to her “a huge indictment because they disprove the blank cheque argument concretely.”¹¹²

To be sure, I do not intend to excuse anyone involved in the Cold War state-private network, nor do I intend to condone the misjudgments (or what I think were misjudgments) made. But as a historian born long after the facts, I think any study of this politically charged period should go

¹¹² W. Scott Lucas, “Revealing the Parameters of Opinion: An Interview with Frances Stonor Saunders,” in *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-1960*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Cass, 2003), 2.

further than naming and shaming, and present the facts in a manner that leaves it open to readers to pass a judgment of their own. Having scoured many of the sources that Saunders consulted, I noticed how selectively she operated, focusing on the CCF's scandals and failures but not on its successes. She barely mentions, for instance, the CCF's subsidy programs which enabled dissidents from the Soviet bloc to publish in the West or supported émigré writers and artists to settle in Western Europe, in particular the exiled Hungarian musicians whom Nabokov organized into an orchestra (the Philharmonia Hungarica) just weeks after the failed Budapest uprising of 1956. But the principal reason why I think it is so important to address the relation of power within the CIA/CCF-liaison is that authors whose main expertise does not pertain to the workings of governmental institutions and international relations so often cite Saunders's thesis to the effect that basically *all* modernist art, literature, films, and music produced in the Cold War owed their existence to the CIA, or that the Agency inveigled innocent artists into joining a war in which they did not wish to be involved. If Saunders's thesis is unbalanced, then such reductionist views of her thesis further extend this imbalance into the realm of the absurd.

The CIA, like any other complex organization, should not be approached as a monolithic wheelwork in which every cog ticks in the same direction. Of course, the Agency is nominally responsible for every action plotted on its behalf, but to equate the architects of cultural offensives with those of political or paramilitary interventions does not do justice to the mandate, risks, responsibilities, and security classifications respective players were entrusted with. In fact, in its nascent years, the CIA was an inchoate assembly of desks and offices spread across Washington which operated rather independently from, if not in competition with, each other. And even within a single desk, conflict and disagreement over what strategy to pursue reigned. Although the full details await declassification of the relevant sources, members of the desk from which the CCF emerged, the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), seemed to have been divided over the plan to enlist the services of a group of highly vocal and independent-minded intellectuals to consolidate the Cold War consensus within the transatlantic intellectual community. There is probably not a shadow of a lie in the explanation Michael Josselson, the CIA's agent in the CCF secretariat, offered for *Encounter's* rejection of one of Dwight Macdonald's harsh polemics about American culture, values, and politics:

The sympathy and confidence of the foundations [*sic*] has been won through hard labor, and without tightrope acts by Nicolas and myself, *Encounter* and much else would cease to exist.¹¹³

¹¹³ Josselson to Macdonald, April 28, 1958, Macdonald Papers, 15-376.

In fact, as I (and others¹¹⁴) argue, it seems that the CCF owed its existence to merely a few exponents of the US government's overt and covert activities who could see the use of sponsoring a group of intellectuals who in spite of all their diversity shared the official view that the United States had to act against the expansion of Soviet influence *and wanted their voice to be heard*. It cannot be emphasized enough that the idea of an organization rallying for the cause of intellectual and artistic freedom was proposed by writers and journalists critical about the lack of determination on the part of the Truman administration to enter the competition with the Soviet Union in the field of arts and letters in addition to the economic and political fields. Support from US Congress, however, was not to be expected for such highbrow activities, and certainly not when it involved former Communists, Marxists, or Trotskyites (like Arthur Koester, Sidney Hook, and James Burnham). It was only through their connections with leading exponents in the setup of the Truman administration's covert arm (George F. Kennan, Allen W. Dulles, Charles Bohlen) that their proposal was taken up and executed. In other words, one cannot speak of intellectuals being manipulated into doing something against their own convictions. Quite the opposite is the case.

The same holds true for the field of music: symphony orchestras were anything but "harnessed" for the CIA's purposes. To the contrary (as will be shown in Chapter 6), conductors like Sergey Koussevitzky (Boston Symphony Orchestra) and Leopold Stokowski (Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra) repeatedly urged Washington to enable their orchestras to tour Europe to demonstrate to Old World listeners that the New World was not as musically immature as many of them believed, or were made to believe, it was. At the time they first made their call, i.e., before the CIA's cultural program was established, their pleas fell on deaf ears. Yet, in 1952, the Boston Symphony Orchestra suddenly found itself able to attract sufficient funds to embark upon a three-week tour of Europe. The initial occasion for the tour was an invitation by the CCF, which assisted the BSO in finding sponsors to cover the expenses. Only at the very last moment, when the minimum amount of funds threatened to materialize, the CIA seems to have stepped in the breach. The way the funding of the BSO tour came about thus refutes another often read assumption about CCF-sponsored activities, namely, that CIA money poured in at a single cue from Josselson or Nabokov. The exact opposite is true: the CCF papers abound with

¹¹⁴ For instance, Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001); Giles Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture: The Congress for Cultural Freedom, the CIA and Post-War American Hegemony* (London: Routledge, 2002); and Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

numerous subsidy applications—many of them unsuccessful—to foundations and private sponsors who not all necessarily were involved in the state-private network. For most of the initiatives the CCF developed, the CIA only seemed to have drawn its purse as a last resort, when all other attempts via regular subsidy channels had failed. If the CIA did not see the value or urgency of a proposal, then the subsidy application would simply be rejected—the fate of many of Nabokov’s applications.

Thesis, Scope, and Method

This dissertation analyzes the political imperatives, policy decisions, and private-public institutional networks that enabled—but at times also hindered—forums for transnational or, for that matter, cross-cultural encounters in the musical field to take shape in the early Cold War, 1945-1961 (with a few pre- and post-period considerations). As such, it aims to contribute both to the field of the cultural/musical Cold War, i.e., the study of how the production, promotion, reception, and perception of culture/music was shaped by the ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union,¹¹⁵ and to the burgeoning fields of global history and transnational history that seek to explain the emergence of the contemporary world from a vantage point beyond Cold War rivalries and state-centered perspectives.¹¹⁶ More specifically, the study intends to contribute to studies on US cultural/musical warfare and diplomacy during the Cold War, with a focus on the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the covert state-private network of which it was part.¹¹⁷ Finally, I hope to have contributed to the portrait of a man whose steps in his “cosmopolitan” life this dissertation traces: Nicolas Nabokov.

¹¹⁵ See, for instance, Walter L. Hixson, *Parting the Curtain: Propaganda, Culture, and the Cold War, 1945-1961* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1997); *The Cultural Cold War in Western Europe, 1945-60*, ed. Giles Scott-Smith and Hans Krabbendam (London: Cass, 2003); David Caute, *The Struggle for Cultural Supremacy during the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005); *Cold War Cultures: Perspectives on Eastern and Western European Societies*, ed. Annette Vowinckel, Marcus M. Payk, and Thomas Lindenberger (New York: Berghahn, 2012); *Divided Dreamworlds? The Cultural Cold War in East and West*, ed. Peter Romijn, Giles Scott-Smith, and Joes Segal (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012).

¹¹⁶ For an introduction to these fields, see Akira Iriye, *Global and Transnational History: The Past, Present, and Future* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013) and *Global Community: The Role of International Organizations in the Making of the Contemporary World* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002).

¹¹⁷ Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); the contributions by Emily Abrams Ansari, Jennifer L. Campbell, Danielle Fosler-Lussier, Jessica Gienow-Hecht, Jonathan Rosenberg, and Kathryn C. Statler to the special forum on “Musical Diplomacy: Strategies, Agendas, Relationships” in *Diplomatic History* 36/1 (2012).

To reconstruct the conception, realization, and reception of the events and activities under discussion, I perused piles of correspondence, memoranda, reports, and policy papers from governmental, institutional, and private archival collections in the United States, Europe, and Japan. Although CIA records relating to the CCF are still closed to public inspection and the CCF archives were—in the words of Michael Josselson, the CIA officer in charge of the CCF operation—“cleaned” before their transfer to the University of Chicago,¹¹⁸ much can be derived from various public and private collections. The records of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF) are revealing of the formation of the funding conduit between the CIA and the CCF as well as of the internal disagreement between ACCF members about the wisdom of the cultural enterprises initiated by the CCF headquarters in Paris. The records of the Department of State hold some valuable, albeit scant, materials relating to the CCF’s musical activities. The same records contain, however, a bulky file that gives insight into the extent of governmental surveillance of the 1949 Waldorf Conference, a file which is surpassed in bulkiness only by that of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The FBI files of Nabokov and Josselson provide interesting details about why Josselson obtained a security clearance, and Nabokov did not. The source that comes closest to the CIA/CCF nexus are the about six hundred memoranda that the political theorist James Burnham wrote as consultant to the CIA in the formative years of the covert state-private network (1949-1952).¹¹⁹

Working with these materials can be challenging: not only because of the sheer amount of paperwork but also because of their at times fragmentary nature: correspondences can be incomplete or only available from the side of the correspondent or addressee, memoranda can appear condensed because the intended reader knew the background of the subject matter, outlines of projects may appear before your eyes without any accompanying sources that explain why they were not realized, etc. Sometimes authors—Nabokov in particular—may shed the tone of formality and comment on a particular topic in their private correspondence in a way that show some of the emotions that played into a certain matter. I have also been able to trace in private collections supplementary letters that were lacking in public collections. To gauge the public perception and reception of the events discussed, I tried to conduct an exhaustive research through the archives of newspapers, magazines, and journals—an undertaking that has been facilitated immeasurably by the digital revolution.

¹¹⁸ Josselson to Hook, 26 October 1972, Hook Papers, 16-26.

¹¹⁹ These memoranda are located in box 11 of the James Burnham Papers at the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution, and Peace at Stanford University.

Fortunately, Frances Stonor Saunders, Giles Scott-Smith, Hugh Wilford, and others have been able to interview some of the key players in the CCF (among whom Melvin Lasky, Stephen Spender, Thomas Braden, John Hunt, and Daniel Bell) before they exchanged the world of the living for the world of eternity. The protagonist of this dissertation, however, passed away before scholars took interest in the CCF, let alone its musical activities: the world lost Nicolas Nabokov on April 6, 1978 at age 74. He did leave two books of memoirs—*Old Friends and New Music* (1951) and *Bagázh: Memoirs of a Cosmopolitan*—but they provide far from the systematic evaluation of political positions, projects, and issues in the 1940s and 1950s as do, for instance, Sidney Hook’s *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the Twentieth Century* (1987) or Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr.’s, *A Life in the Twentieth Century: Innocent Beginnings, 1917-1950* (2000). I consulted these and other memoirs with the necessary caution: the various conflicts between these reminiscences are testimony to the disputes of the time, which some apparently forgot or wished to forget, and others obviously liked to invoke in order to get the record “straight.” References to memoirs in my narrative serve primarily to give the author’s contemporary or post-facto perception on a particular issue at hand. Only occasionally I had to rely on memoirs because of missing archival evidence.

Other challenges in writing were to contain the material and to address two rather specific fields of expertise: Cold War institutional history on the one hand, and Cold War music studies on the other. Sometimes I felt that I needed to explain something which the reader might be familiar with, or to offer particular information that would be certainly interesting for the one target group but distracting to the other. Consequently, some readers might find in the footnotes more detail than they bargained for, or would like to have seen particular information not to be buried in the footnotes. I can only hope that I struck the right balance. What I did try to ensure, however, is that the main narrative is equally appealing to both target groups and can be followed without perusing the additional detail given in the footnotes. For the same reasons, I tried to write each chapter as an individual case study that might be read separately from each other. Readers interested in reading the manifestos and statements of aims in full, in browsing through the programs of Nabokov’s festival-conferences, or in consulting citations from non-English sources in their original form, are being served by the appendices.

Chapter Overview

Chapter 1 introduces the protagonist of this dissertation: Nicolas Nabokov. Following him in his exile to the émigré communities of Berlin and Paris, respectively, and his subsequent crossing of the Atlantic in 1933-4, the

chapter discusses his aesthetical and political positions, and his perception of the consequences of Stalin's cultural policies on the work of Soviet composers, Shostakovich and Prokofiev (who permanently returned to Moscow in 1936) in particular.

Chapter 2 shifts to war-torn Berlin, the city in which the drama of the Cold War would unfold in its most tangible ways. What started ostensibly as an Allied mission to denazify and "re-orientate" German society soon turned in a fierce competition for the hearts and minds of Berliners for either the Western or the Soviet way of life. Although the Soviet occupation authorities had their problems in gaining the favor of Germans, from the perspective of Nabokov, cultural advisor to the US Military Governor, the American authorities were on the losing hand. While the Soviets dazzled Berliners with cultural splendor, the Americans were leaving a bad impression involving a series of embarrassing incidents, not least among them the unduly delayed denazification of the celebrated conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler. Eventually, the Military Governor did authorize a "cultural war" to counter Soviet anti-American propaganda. However, with a few notable exceptions, America's first strides in "cultural representation" in Germany were little successful.

Chapter 3 takes its cue from the May 1948 manifesto by the Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics in Prague, which denounced modernist music's inclination towards "extreme subjectivism" and entertainment music's inclination towards "superficiality" and "vulgarism." Although often described as such, I do not interpret this document *primarily* as a direct implementation of Moscow's renewed attack against musical formalism (February 1948) on European composers who—by force or volition—were aligned to the Soviet side. Rather, I read the manifesto as an expression of widely shared concerns among composers worldwide about the increasing commodification of 'classical' music and the strong appeal of (American) popular music to younger audiences. The chapter analyzes the main positions that at the time of the Prague Manifesto were circulating in Europe and the United States with regard to music professionals' responsibilities towards society and the past. It shows how the diversity of these positions became increasingly politicized and reduced to the two antagonistic stances on which the Cold War would be fought music(ologic)ally: music "dictated" by "the people" vs. music "free" from any dictates but its own.

Chapter 4 takes us to New York City, March 1949, a month marked by an event that triggered the foundation of the Congress for Cultural Freedom: the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. Often construed as part of what in Washington's lingo of the time was called the Soviet "peace offensive," I argue that the

Waldorf Conference was an initiative of non-aligned, progressive US citizens who did not allow themselves to be coerced into choosing between either Washington or Moscow. Particular attention will be given to Olin Downes, the *New York Times* music critic who felt closely attuned to the Conference's protest against the role of the Truman administration in aggravating international and domestic tensions. Yet, when faced at the Conference's Fine Arts panel with a verbose attack on the politics and music of the "instigators of war" put in the mouth of Shostakovich (the star of the Soviet delegation), Downes, as well as Aaron Copland, tried to depoliticize music. Nabokov enters the stage as one of Shostakovich's challengers demonstrating artists' plight under Stalin. The Conference marked the end of progressivism in the United States and the beginning of a large-scale propaganda offensive against the Soviet Union.

Chapter 5 investigates the forces that conspired in Washington to launch a covert program aimed at luring the world's intelligentsia away from Soviet overtures. As fate had it, the foundation of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in West Berlin coincided with the outbreak of the Korean War in late June 1950, affirming those who had worked to get the Congress off the ground in their conviction that they were fighting for the right cause. Soon, however, differences in views on which direction the Congress was to take emerged: was it to develop into a militant mass movement or an organization engaged in cultural diplomacy? Eventually, the matter was settled (with interference from the Congress's secret sponsors) in favor of the latter and in favor of Nabokov, who suddenly found himself appointed to an interim post as the CCF's Director of Cultural Relations, which later turned into a permanent position as Secretary-General. In this capacity, he brought about and cemented a transatlantic network of like-minded intellectuals who supported the Congress's purposes. Yet, with the projects he had in mind, he soon would come to antagonize some of the national CCF affiliates, in particular the American Committee for Cultural Freedom.

Chapter 6 discusses Nabokov's first two cultural enterprises aimed at strengthening transatlantic ties with the two Western European countries that had the largest Communist and non-aligned constituencies: the *L'Œuvre du XX^{ème} siècle* Festival in Paris (May 1952) and the *La Musica nel XX secolo* Convention in Rome (April 1954). Whereas the Paris Festival's prime objectives were to deflect Soviet charges of American cultural inferiority and racial discrimination, the Rome Convention espoused an emphatically cosmopolitan agenda, urging the Western musical world to rise above professional factionalism (serialism, neoclassicism, or otherwise) and national chauvinism. Both events materialized only after a series of financial and political obstacles, and their reception was mixed, most of all because local audiences, including the targeted non-aligned intellectuals, were

suspicious of the auspices under which these international festivals were presented in their capital cities. Nabokov—and by extension, the CCF’s secret sponsors—nevertheless were satisfied with the results of their contributions to a *Pax Atlantica* and shifted the geographical focus of their operations to the “Third World.”

The challenges which Nabokov experienced in organizing the European festivals paled when compared to the various adversities he faced upon orchestrating a similar festival at the far eastern end of the Eurasian continent, which is the subject of Chapter 7. Conceived at a time (around April-May 1954) when the post-Stalin leadership aimed its foreign policy at winning the allegiance of decolonized or decolonizing nations in the world, it would take seven years for the Tokyo East-West Music Encounter (EWME) to materialize. As it turns out, the delay was most unfortunate, as the preparations of the Encounter eventually came to collide with the political turmoil over the extension of the Japan-US Mutual Security Treaty (May-June 1960), turning the festival into a prime target of anti-American sentiments in Japanese society. When it finally took place in April-May 1961, the Tokyo Encounter stood in direct competition with the Osaka Festival, for which the German Democratic Republic sent its Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra. The final two sections of the chapter focus on a theme that came to rank high on the CCF’s artistic agenda after the mid-1950s and which informed the EWME’s conference: the protection of African and Asian performing traditions against “hybridization.” It will be argued that this seemingly disinterested concern for cultural preservation served a similar purpose as the “cosmopolitan” rationale of the Rome Convention: to demonstrate to the world that humankind’s cultural heritage, while facing the threat of erasure by Communist cultural policies, could count on the patronage of Western institutions.

Chapter 8 follows Nabokov in his attempts to extend his festival-conference format to non-aligned India (which in fact had been the prime political target of the EWME operation) and Brazil. Although the project of a “Rencontre noire” failed to materialize in Brazil due to the political instability the country endured in the early 1960s, Nabokov managed to realize it in the framework of the Berlin Festival, of which he became the artistic director by appointment of the Governor Mayor of West Berlin, Willy Brandt, in 1963. As one of the last feats in his career as festival impresario and cultural diplomat, he eventually even went to Moscow on behalf of Brandt with a mission to explore the possibilities of West Berlin/Soviet cultural relations. The inevitable ending of this dissertation is, of course, the disclosure of the CIA/CCF link in 1964-6, which casts a sinister shadow on Nabokov’s enterprises—a shadow much larger than there may already have been.

Political Awakenings

Lost Illusions in the Age of Utopias

It is all tied up so closely in my mind that instead of sitting quietly and writing music and teaching nice American boys and girls the rules of music, I skit around the world, sit in an office in Paris, organize conferences, speak about things I do not know much of, and discuss matters with economists and scientists. It is all partly and greatly related to the mind of man in the twentieth century, where we are suddenly faced with the negation of all that which in the nineteenth century people took for granted—the freedom of the mind, the freedom of thought and the freedom of creation.¹

Nicolas Nabokov (1955)

Nicolas Nabokov was not the kind of composer who could live his life in an ivory tower, scribbling one masterpiece after the other. As W. H. Auden once said about his friend, “[Nicolas] will never realize his talent because he cannot bear to be long enough alone.”² Indeed, Nabokov felt best when he could play the role of socialite, enjoying the company of his ever expanding network of connections that encompassed the leading artists, musicians, intellectuals, politicians, and dignitaries of his day. When asked to characterize him, most of them would string together a miscellaneous set of adjectives from which emerges the portrait of a charming, generous, energetic, and witty *bon vivant*, “blessed by the gods with all the possible gifts but that of moderation” and always full of the most surrealistic plans for celebratory gatherings.³ Many mention his talent to convey “the whole

¹ Nabokov, “Our Dedication,” inaugural speech delivered at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in Bombay, December 17–18, 1955, in *Freedom First* [ICCF] (February 1956): 4–5.

² W. H. Auden quoted by Bayan Northcott, “Notes on Auden,” *The Musical Times* 134/1800 (February 1993): 72.

³ Alain Daniélou, *The Way to the Labyrinth: Memories of East and West* (New York: New Directions, 1987), 240. Similar characterizations can be found in John Evarts, “Munich Diary,” entry August 23, 1946, Nabokov Papers, 5-5; Samuel Barber, letter dated August 17, 1952, cited by Barbara B. Heyman, *Samuel Barber: The Composer and His Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 331–2; Joseph Szigeti, *With Strings Attached: Reminiscences and Reflections*, second edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1967), 131–2; Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, “Nachruf auf Nicolas Nabokoff” speech delivered at the Akademie der Künste, Berlin, October 29, 1978, Stuckenschmidt Papers, 2551; Isaiah Berlin to Avis Thayer Bohlen, April 25, 1978, Thayer Bohlen Papers, 49; Archibald MacLeish, *Reflections*, ed. Bernard A. Drabek and Helen E. Ellis (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), 92; William Glock, *Notes in Advance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 109; Henri Sauguet, *La Musique, ma vie* (Paris: Séguier, 2001), 230; W. Phillips Davison, *A*

wonder and absurdity of our contemporary civilization” through highly imaginative anecdotes, which “when told in restaurants silence[d] conversations at neighboring tables and often stop[ped] everyone eating while they listen[ed].”⁴ His impersonations of statesmen and celebrities, too, were reported to be so hilarious that “the butt of the mimicry [could] never again be seen in the same, pre-Nabokov way.”⁵ Likewise, when FBI agents questioned them about his moral and patriotic inclinations, informants would declare Nabokov to be a “man of good character, integrity, honesty and loyalty,” an “industrious” and “colorful personality” who at times could behave in quite an eccentric and temperamental, if not outright arrogant fashion, but who, most importantly, was “thoroughly opposed to the Soviet form of Government,” and thus a “valuable man for our Government.”⁶ Not everyone, though, shared these feelings of sympathy for Nabokov: some remembered him as a braggart, who only showed interest in you if you were a celebrity and, “like many who regarded themselves as geniuses, had the morals of an alley cat.”⁷ Beloved or despised, Nabokov distinguished himself in being a composer with—as Isaiah Berlin and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., commented on their friend—a “penetrating and ironical political intelligence,” a quality he acquired from his tangible experiences of the major upheavals that marked the early twentieth century.⁸

This chapter follows Nabokov’s trajectory from pre-revolutionary Russia to wartime America. It traces the path of a composer who tried to launch a career in Paris in the 1920s, crossed the Atlantic with the ill-founded hope of better chances on the US East Coast in the early 1930s, and found himself drawn into the circles of Washington’s “Kremlinologists” and New York’s anti-Stalinists in the early 1940s, after the United States had entered into the anti-Nazi alliance with the Soviet Union. Drawing on new evidence

Personal History of World War II: How a Pacifist Drafted Accidentally Became a Military Government Official in Postwar Germany (New York: iUniverse, 2006), 122–3.

⁴ George F. Kennan, “Tribute to Nicholas Nabokov,” speech delivered at the annual meeting of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, January 24, 1979, Kennan Papers, 306–33; Stephen Spender, “Nicolas Nabokov,” typescript for publication in the *Times of India* (New Delhi), undated but probably 1955, CCF, II-244-3.

⁵ Robert Craft, *Stravinsky: Chronicle of a Friendship* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1994), 204. See also *Sergey Prokofiev Diaries, 1924–1933: Prodigal Son*, trans. Anthony Phillips (London: Faber and Faber, 2012), entry end of April–May 20, 1930.

⁶ FBI file Nabokov, reports dated July 20, 1948 (Field Office Washington, DC) and July 22, 1948 (Field Office New York). For more on Nabokov’s FBI file, see Appendix D.

⁷ Walter Laqueur, *Fin de Siècle and Other Essays on America and Europe* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 1997), 235; Sidney Hook, *Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Harper & Row, 1987), 525.

⁸ Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *A Life in the Twentieth Century: Innocent Beginnings, 1917–1950* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 2000), 377; Isaiah Berlin, “Mr. Nicholas Nabokov,” *The Times*, April 15, 1978, 16.

(Nabokov's FBI file and his correspondence with Prokofiev in the early 1930s), it will be shown that during this trajectory, Nabokov's position regarding the Soviet Union was more ambivalent than his future career would lead us to expect. The last section discusses the views of Nabokov and other critics on music composed according to ideological demands. From their assessment of the music by, for instance, Shostakovich and Prokofiev (who permanently returned to Moscow in 1936) emerged the prime assumption on which Nabokov's future work for the Congress for Cultural Freedom would be predicated: art created under political (or, for that matter, commercial) constraints inevitably compromised its quality and its ability to outlast the moment of its creation—in other words, its chances for becoming 'universal'.

From Nevsky Prospect to Broadway: Nabokov's Peregrinations in the Roaring Twenties and Depressing Thirties

Born in 1903 into a distinguished family reputed for its liberal sympathies,⁹ Nabokov grew up in a protected environment of wealth and privilege, traveling from one estate to the other, always accompanied by a flock of servants, governesses, tutors and other retainers—a carefree existence that only started to crumble at the outbreak of World War I. Spurred into action by the Russian army's disastrous defeats against the Germans, Nabokov's uncle Vladimir Dmitriyevich, a founding member of the Constitutional Democratic Party (and father of Vladimir, the novelist), participated in the plot to depose Czar Nicholas II and became Head of Chancellery of the Provisional Government after the czar's abdication in February 1917. The pointed-bearded man whom the fourteen-year-old Nabokov heard speaking from the balcony of the villa of the famous ballerina Matilda Kshesinskaya a few weeks later was not content with merely a "bourgeois revolution," though.¹⁰ Indeed, in the Russia envisioned by Vladimir Ilyich Ulyanov alias

⁹ Dmitry Nikolayevich Nabokov (1826–1904), grandfather of Nicolas and Vladimir Nabokov, had been Minister of Justice under Czars Alexander II and III and was instrumental in liberal reforms, including the abolition of serfdom in Russia in 1861. For a genealogy of the Nabokov family, see Jacques Ferrand and Serge Nabokov, *Les Nabokov: essai généalogique* (Montreuil: [private publication], 1982).

¹⁰ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 141–3. The Bolsheviks confiscated Kshesinskaya's Art Nouveau-style mansion in March 1917, and transformed it into the nerve-centre of their propaganda activities. Its balcony provided the platform from which Lenin held his first public address on April 4, 1917, a day after his return from exile in Switzerland. The speech went down in history as the "April Theses," which called for the peaceful transition from the bourgeois to the socialist revolution. Vladimir I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, fourth edition (Moscow: Progress, 1964), vol. 24, 21–4. The private Latin teacher of the Nabokov household, a certain F. F. Feofanov, happened to be a propaganda worker for the Bolsheviks, and introduced the young Nicolas to the teachings of class consciousness and world revolution. Nabokov, "Music on the Battlefields of Revolution," unpublished and undated typescript, Nabokov Papers, 45-1.

Lenin, there was no room for liberal aristocrats. Thus, in months leading up to the Bolsheviks' blood-stained *coup d'état* of October 1917, the Nabokovs left their St Petersburg residence on Nevsky Prospect for the Crimean Peninsula, where Nabokov's uncle served as Minister of Justice for the regional government till the advancing Red Army would force the family to leave their motherland for good. At the end of March 1919, most Nabokovs fled via Sevastopol to Greece, and from there spread across Europe.

After a brief detour through The Hague (where he stayed with an aunt, Natalya [Nathalie] Nabokov, spouse of the last consul to the czar, Ivan de Peterson), Nabokov set out to continue his music studies he had begun with Vladimir Rebikov (a pupil of Tchaikovsky) in Yalta. He enrolled in the composition class of Joseph Haas at the conservatory of Stuttgart, where he suffered, in his own words, from a three-month "severe crisis of Scriabinism."¹¹ When after one and a half year of wandering his family settled in the émigré community of Berlin, Nicolas joined them and completed his musical studies with Paul Juon and Ferruccio Busoni at the Hochschule für Musik. As a music critic for his uncle's Russian-language newspaper *Rul'* ("The Rudder"), he absorbed the wide variety of musical delights Weimar Berlin had to offer, and made his entry into its bohemian circles, particularly the one spinning around the liberal aristocrat, diplomat, and patron of modern art, count Harry Kessler.

Then, on March 28, 1922, fate struck again. At a meeting of the Constitutional Democratic Party in the chamber music hall of the Berlin Philharmonic, two vengeful officers from the disbanded czarist army bore down on the platform, aiming their rifles at Pavel Milyukov, the Party's leader, who had just finished his plea for a peace settlement with the Bolsheviks. When Nabokov's uncle (who belonged to the faction that argued against a compromise with Lenin) thrust himself on one of the assassins, he was shot in the back—fatally.¹² This incident not only proved the sense of security that many Russian exiles thought to have found in Berlin false, it also incited the suspicion of Berliners towards their city's Russian colony. In addition, the relentless inflation made it ever more difficult for many émigrés to make ends meet. As a result, the center of the Russian diaspora quickly gravitated towards Paris.¹³

¹¹ Nabokov in an interview with José Bruyr, April 1931, in Bruyr, *L'Écran des musiciens*, second series (Paris: Corti, 1933), 84–5.

¹² "Russian Leader [Vladimir Dmitrievich Nabokov] Murdered," *The Times*, March 29, 1922, 12; and "M. Nabokoff's Murder," *The Times*, March 30, 1922, 11.

¹³ For more on the Russian diaspora in Weimar Germany, see Karl Schlögel, "Berlin: 'Stepmother' among Russian Cities," in idem, ed., *Russian-German Special Relations in the Twentieth Century: A Closed Chapter?* (Oxford: Berg, 2006), 43–76.

Determined to make a career as a composer, Nabokov settled in *la ville lumière* in 1923, only to find that “everything I wished to accomplish had already been accomplished.”¹⁴ Thrown off his balance, he decided to pursue a degree in Letters from the Sorbonne with a particular emphasis in medieval studies. Over the course of time his networking skills paid off, though, and by late 1925 he had finally managed—thanks to the mediation of Georges Auric in particular—to maneuver himself into the Parisian concert circuit. At one recital of his songs organized under the auspices of the Société Musicale Indépendante, he caught the attention of none less than Sergey Diaghilev, the broker of Russian culture who had been dragged into the concert by Nabokov’s newest acquaintance, Sergey Prokofiev.¹⁵ Sufficiently attracted by what he heard, Diaghilev commissioned a ballet from Nabokov for the 1928 season of the Ballets Russes, which would become a ballet-oratorio after a poem by the eighteenth-century court poet and physicist Mikhail Lomonosov, titled *Ode, or Meditation on the Aurora Borealis*. The production of *Ode* went far from smoothly, and the professional critique ranged from tepid enthusiasm to embarrassing repudiation.¹⁶ Nevertheless, a Ballets Russes production could always reckon on an excited audience, and with *Ode* Nabokov established his name in the Parisian *beau*

¹⁴ Nabokov in a conversation with Harry Kessler, March 23, 1926, Harry Graf Kessler, *Das Tagebuch 1880–1937: Achter Band 1923–1926*, ed. Angela Reinthal, Günter Riederer, and Jörg Schuster (Stuttgart: Cotta, 2009), 760.

¹⁵ The Société Musicale Indépendante was founded in 1909 by Gabriel Fauré, Maurice Ravel, Charles Koechlin, and Florent Schmitt to promote contemporary music. Nabokov’s first Parisian recital was presented in March 1925 by the Algerian soprano Berthe Erza at the Salle Gaveau. The recital which Diaghilev attended featured the émigré soprano Sonia Portugalova and took place on June 4, 1926 in the Salle des Agriculteurs.

¹⁶ *Ode, ou Méditation du soir sur la majesté de Dieu à l’occasion de la grande aurore boréale* premiered on June 6, 1928, at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt. Its subject is mankind’s fatal attempt to fathom and master nature’s manifestations, in this case the northern lights, an allegory for Empress Elisabeth I. The scenario is by Boris Kochno, the choreography by Léonide Massine, and the design by Pavel Tchelitchev. For Nabokov’s memoirs about the production of *Ode*, see *Old Friends and New Music* (London: Hamilton, 1951), 73–102. André Schaeffner described the premiere as an “evident and embarrassing disaster” (*désordre manifeste et honteux*) due to lack of sufficient rehearsal time (*Le Ménestrel*, June 15, 1928, 268–9). Henry Malherbe opined that “the authors of *Ode*, who wish to convince us positively of their uniqueness, ha[d] not invented anything salient” (*Le Temps*, June 13, 1928, 3). Maurice Brillant condoned the errors of a novice, and welcomed with sympathy the young Russian musician whose “Italian charm” befitted the qualification “the gondolier of the Neva” (*Le Correspondant*, August 25, 1928, 622). One reviewer of *Ode*’s London premiere conceded that “though it [was] by no means wholly successful,” Nabokov’s ballet seemed to be “a real attempt to present an old subject in a new way, and as such [was] interesting” (*The Times*, July 10, 1928, 9). The European correspondent of *Modern Music* was less subtle in his formulations, describing *Ode* as “a potpourri of triteness and bombast” (*Modern Music* 6/1 [1928]: 25). After a concert performance of *Ode* by the Orchestre Symphonique de Paris a year later, one critic concluded that Nabokov’s “arctic inspiration is kept at several degrees below zero” (*son inspiration arctique se maintient à plusieurs degrés au-dessous de zéro*) (T. A., *Le Ménestrel*, February 22, 1929, 87). Nabokov’s colleague Henri Sauguet blamed the woeful reception of *Ode* to the fact that none of the performances had been worthy of the work (*L’Europe nouvelle*, February 23, 1929, 237).

monde, enabling him to pass through “the whole spectrum of hedonistic enjoyments...my sudden (but, ah! so relative) fame could provide.”¹⁷

In addition, his brief association with the Ballets Russes gained him the friendship of Diaghilev’s first consultant in matters of music, Igor Stravinsky, who found in his compatriot a congenial mind in terms of wit and taste. Conversely, Nabokov felt that he owed Stravinsky much of his understanding of “how to use the materials of music—intervals, rhythms, melodic outlines.” Stravinsky’s art had opened his eyes to “the decay of impressionist harmony and the corruption or the emotive paroxysms of late romanticism,” and had brought him “to admire the continuity of the classical tradition [as well as] the beauty of polyphonic technique, and to understand the necessity for a clear-cut, well-defined formal structure.”¹⁸ Accordingly, many passages in his works, including the opening of *Ode* (Example 1), show the signature of the hand that had written Diaghilev’s ‘Russian’ ballet-blockbusters, especially in the treatment of rhythm and meter, harmony and phrasing.

EXAMPLE 1 Nabokov, introduction *Ode* (1928), mm. 1–16.
© 1928, Maurice Senart, Paris.

¹⁷ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 166.

¹⁸ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 163.

An unfortunate misunderstanding froze the relationship between the two expatriate composers in the 1930s, but once restored in the early 1940s, their bond was closer than ever, with Nabokov playing the role of impresario arranging important events in Stravinsky's postwar career.¹⁹

Once the success of *Ode* had worn off, Nabokov's perennial money problems returned, forcing him to beg for commissions and financial assistance with Parisian art patrons like Princess Edmond de Polignac and Misia Sert.²⁰ In contrast to most of his companions in pecuniary straits, however, Nabokov could always fall back on his ancestry's affiliations to the rich and wealthy, such as Alexandre and Antoinette Grunelius, to whose castle and estate in Kolbsheim, a picturesque village located in Alsace near Strasbourg, Nabokov and his first wife Natalya were always welcome to retreat.²¹ In a period marked by economic, political and spiritual crises, Kolbsheim provided a temporary refuge for those who visited the Nabokovs, including Prokofiev, Milhaud, Hindemith, Henri Sauguet, Arthur Lourié, Jean Cocteau, and Vladimir Nabokov. It was here that Nabokov came under the spell of the French Catholic Revival movement (*Renouveau catholique*) through long conversations with two of its leading figures, Jacques and Raïssa Maritain.²² In the wake of the First World War, Maritain's blend of Christian mysticism, scholastic philosophy (in particular as represented by Thomas Aquinas), and classical ideals provided one source of recognition for artists (including Stravinsky) who emphatically wished to distance

¹⁹ The cause for the temporary discord between Nabokov and Stravinsky was an obituary for Diaghilev, in which Nabokov had suggested that the ideas for *Petrushka* and a "liturgical ballet" (which became *Les Noces*) originated with the ballet entrepreneur. Infuriated, Stravinsky let a rectification be published, stating that the idea for *Petrushka* was not Diaghilev's and that *Les Noces* had nothing to do with the proposed "Liturgie." Nabokov, employed at Pleyel where Stravinsky wielded much power, desperately tried to resolve the misunderstanding. He wrote a letter of apology to Stravinsky and asked Prokofiev to intercede for him. This all was to no avail: Stravinsky continued to ignore Nabokov until Christmas, when he granted the sinner absolution. Not surprisingly, the whole episode does not appear in Nabokov's memoirs. Nicolas Nabokoff, "La vie et œuvre de Serge de Diaghilev," *Musique: Revue mensuelle de critique, d'histoire, d'esthétique et d'information musicales* 3/2 (1929): 64; "Une lettre d'Igor Strawinsky," *Musique* 3/3 (1929): 119; *Sergey Prokofiev Diaries*, entry November 21–December 12 and December 24–31, 1929; *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, ed. Robert Craft (London: Faber and Faber, 1984), vol. 2, 364–5; Vera Stravinsky and Robert Craft, *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents* (London: Hutchinson, 1979), 293–4.

²⁰ Nabokoff to Misia Sert, January 8, 1932, October 19, 1932, and October 31, 1932. Excerpts from this correspondence are published in the June 1975 issue of an antiquary magazine titled *L'Abbaye*, a copy of which is held in the research file on Nabokov in the archive of the Stravinsky-Diaghilev Foundation, Harvard Theater Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

²¹ Nabokov's first wife, Princess Natalya (Natasha) Alekseyevna Shakhovskaya was a member of the distinct Shakhovskoy family, which descends from the ninth-century Rurik Dynasty and counted, like the Nabokovs, among the largest aristocratic families in pre-revolutionary Russia. Nicolas and Natalya married in Brussels in 1927 and divorced in 1939.

²² For a brief discussion of the Maritains' connection to Russian composers, Stravinsky and Lourié in particular, see Olessia Bobrik, "La famille de Jacques Maritain et les musiciens russes, d'après les archives de Kolbsheim," *La Revue Russe* 35 (2011): 125–41.

themselves from (Teutonic) Romanticism. Harry Kessler found out personally how infatuated Nabokov was with the “Thomists” when he had to listen to a long-winded eulogy on Maritain’s aesthetics. He forgave his friend, though, as his “somewhat immature, effusive Catholic radicalism” concealed “a really genial young giant.”²³

To Kessler, Nabokov expressed his admiration for Bach and Mozart and disapproval of the work of his generation of composers in France. In addition, he fulminated against “orientalism, the ethnographical, the folksong-like (*l’Exotisme dans la musique*) [*sic*] as well as against jazz.”²⁴ With this criticism in mind, it would have been interesting to see how the young critic-composer responded musically to the Persian medieval poetry of Omar Khayyam in the songs with which he debuted at the Société Musicale Indépendante concert in 1926. Unfortunately, however, the unpublished manuscript seems to be lost.²⁵ What survives are brief program notes that Nabokov submitted to the concert organizer, in which he indicated that the Omar Khayyam songs explore the “principle of tone color” by way of a “polyphony of voice and flute.”²⁶ This description does not give us an idea in what respect Nabokov’s response to the ‘Orient’ differed from, for instance, Rimsky-Korsakov’s, Debussy’s, or Ravel’s. That it differed, though, might be derived from the brief comments of two ear witnesses who attended the recital: for Harry Kessler, his friend’s songs were “astonishing by their austerity and length,” whereas the music critic of *Le Ménestrel*, André Schaeffner, spoke of “effects of puissance which are often more instrumental than properly vocal of nature.” In other words, they seem to have sounded far from romantic or impressionistic.²⁷

²³ Kessler, *Das Tagebuch: Achter Band*, entry June 6, 1926, 798. Maritain formulated his aesthetics in *Art et scholastique* (Paris: Librairie de l’Art Catholique, 1920), published in English as *Art and Scholasticism*, trans. Joseph W. Evans (New York: Scribner, 1962).

²⁴ Kessler, *Das Tagebuch: Achter Band*, entry June 6, 1926, 798. “Included in [Nabokov’s] distaste [for exoticism] is also Russian music, insofar it is ethnographical: Rimsky-Korsakov, etc. Only Borodin has to a certain extent succeeded in rising above this orientalism into the region of pure music.” A few days later, Nabokov added that “of the Russian composers, he felt most akin to Glinka and Tchaikovsky,” while he was ambivalent about Mussorgsky. *Ibid.*, entry June 8, 1926, 800.

²⁵ The manuscript is not included in the Nicolas Nabokov Papers at the Harry Ransom Center, University of Texas at Austin, and has not been found in other archival collections.

²⁶ Nabokov to the Société Musicale Indépendante (in French), December 16, 1925, Nadia Boulanger Papers, NLA-90, fols. 196-8. From this correspondence it appears that the *Trois poèmes d’Omar* were written for voice, two flutes, and two clarinets. (The program of the recital mentions only one clarinet. Michel Duchesneau, *L’Avant-garde musicale et ses sociétés à Paris de 1871 à 1939* [Sprimont: Pierre Mardaga, 1997], 321.) In another work of his performed at the same recital, *Vocalise* or *Mélodie* for voice, two flutes, clarinet, and piano, Nabokov tried to rediscover “a new harmonic aspect and a melodic color that is more or less Russian,” i.e., “the principle of the long melody.” “It is a work,” he added, “written with a desire [for] linear polyphony and classical form.” *Ibid.* 197.

²⁷ Kessler, *Das Tagebuch: Achter Band*, entry June 4, 1926, 795; André Schaeffner, *Le Ménestrel*, June 11, 1926, 264.

Kessler's and Schaeffner's characterizations make sense in light of the aesthetics—described by contemporary music critics as “neoclassicism”—to which Nabokov declared himself committed in the aforementioned notes. In order to get out of the much-debated crisis at which music arrived since the end of the nineteenth century, the self-assured novice suggested, “[w]e need to resort to pure music,” that is, music freed from the obligation to respond to “all that is not musical” in terms of technique and content. To that purpose, composers should avail themselves of “themes and melodies that are perfectly precise and concrete,” rhythms that are “acute, fresh and clear,” and a harmonic language that is devoid from “facile, thus false, technique[s] (enharmonic and occasionally chromatic modulation) [which] prevent us from feeling the tonal stability which is pleasant, desirable, even necessary to us.” In addition—thus it appears from a short exposé written for *Melos*, a prominent voice for new music during the Weimar years—Nabokov appreciated the regained importance of “linear” over “vertical” logic with respect to voice leading as well as the “individualistic” approach of the orchestra as introduced by Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* and developed by the “less gifted” Satie and the Groupe des Six.²⁸

How Nabokov's aesthetics translated into music might be heard in one of his earliest published works, *Chants à la Vierge Marie*, a song cycle written in the same year as the Omar Khayyam songs in which he—to his own account—aspired to a style that is religious but “not ecclesiastical,” devotional but “not dogmatic.”²⁹ The introductory song consists of three salutations to the Virgin Mary (the first of which is reproduced in Example 2a), each more melismatic and demanding than the preceding one: the last salutation asks the soprano to descend from C#³—an apt illustration of what

²⁸ Nabokov to the Société Musicale Indépendante, December 16, 1925, Nadia Boulanger Papers, NLA-90, fols. 196-8. At this time Nabokov was optimistic about the neoclassical trend that— from his perspective—had been mainly introduced by Stravinsky, but he was skeptical of the “lack of seriousness” (*Ernst*) he noticed in the work by certain sections of Paris's “musical youth” as exemplified by Georges Auric and Francis Poulenc (both four years older than himself): “Our classical freedom should become serious again,” he argued, meaning not a return to Debussy, the “sultry atmosphere of *Parsifal*” or the “profound shapeless double fugues by Reger,” but the creation of “eternal values, regardless of whether they appear cheerful or sad—if only they are new.” What was needed, Nabokov concluded (without explaining the contradiction with his earlier plea for “pure music), was “a revival of great forms” like the cantata and opera. Nabokoff, “Gedanken über neue Musik,” *Melos: Zeitschrift für Musik* 6/1 (1927): 32–5. Interestingly, and typical of his tendency to avoid being pigeon-holed, Nabokov would repeatedly define himself as a Romantic a few years later, ascribing his inspiration to Tchaikovsky, Schumann, and late Liszt and describing music's sole purpose as “expressing feelings, moving with sounds.” At this time, he considered Stravinsky's neoclassicism too “cold, scholastic, and formalistic,” and advocated a “renaissance of lyricism.” Nabokov in an interview with José Bruyr, April 1931, in Bruyr, *L'Écran des musiciens*, 82, 87–8.

²⁹ Nabokoff cited by André Schaeffner, “VIIe Festival de la S.I.M.C.” (Geneva, April 6–10, 1929), *Le Ménestrel*, April 26, 1929, 195.

Schaeffner described as “effects of puissance.” The other songs demonstrate equally sober part-writing, often infused with incantations and modal inflections (Example 2b). If this devout asceticism could generate a certain following in the first decade after the First World War, by the early 1930s critics grew ever more impatient with such “primitive bareness” for being—as one critic put it—more the mode of expression of “an impartial historian than of a sensible and enthusiastic poet.”³⁰ When Les Ballets 1933, George Balanchine’s short-lived avant-garde ballet company, presented Nabokov’s *Job*, an oratorio based on the eponymous book from the Old Testament adapted by Maritain and stylistically reminiscent of Stravinsky’s *Œdipus Rex* and *Symphonie des Psaumes*, the reactions were anything but favorable. The audience, which had come to see a ballet, was ostensibly “unpleasantly surprised” with the “funeral puritanism of this sacred work,” the visual component of which consisted of an immobile male choir standing against a backdrop of *laterna magica* projections of William Blake’s illustrations for the English edition of the *Book of Job*. As Harry Kessler recalled, it came to booing and hissing, and several ticketholders ostentatiously left the auditorium.³¹

Deeply offended by the hostile reception of *Job*, Nabokov felt estranged from Paris. (“God, everything [there] is frivolous, worthless, above all stupid and devoid of grandeur.”³²) On top of this, life in France had become considerably more expensive as a consequence of the devaluation of the dollar—one of President Roosevelt’s first actions after having assumed office in January 1933—which incisively affected the American demand for

³⁰ Florent Schmitt, comment on Nabokoff’s *Chants à la Vierge Marie* in a review of the Société Musicale Indépendante concert of May 19, 1932, *Le Temps*, May 28, 1932, 3. Another reviewer described the songs as “rather suggestive of the cultured amateur in their scorn of the musical amenities, the vocal part very trying, the piano-forte accompaniment clumsy and heavy-footed.” Edwin Evans, *The Musical Times* 70/1035 (May 1929): 440. The Dutch composer Willem Pijper marked the song cycle as a “failure,” consisting of “five ineffective threnodies, supported by a few awkward chords connections.” “Het muziekfeest te Genève” [The Music Festival in Geneva], *Algemeen Handelsblad*, April 10, 1929, 9. The correspondent for *Modern Music*, however, felt in the songs “a strong impulse, a soaring exultation which gave one a sense at times of irresistible force.” Aloys Mooser, “Geneva—Another Disappointment,” *Modern Music* 6/4 (1929): 12.

³¹ Henry Malherbe, review of the Ballets 1933 program presented in the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées on June 16, 1933, *Le Temps*, June 21, 1933, 3; Harry Graf Kessler, *Das Tagebuch 1880–1937: Neunter Band 1926–1937*, ed. Sabine Gruber und Ulrich Ott (Stuttgart: Cotta, 2010), entry June 16, 1933, 587. “One does not understand what brought the management of Les Ballets 1933 to put [this] sober oratorio on their program,” Malherbe grunted. “[Its] dissonance [lends] it a certain dynamic, but [overall] it resembles a diligently made assignment in which musical ideas are often absent.” The most positive review suggested that the work, written in “an austere style but not without force,” would have “certainly found more attentive listeners in a setting more suitable to its spirit.” Gustave Samazeuilh, *La Revue hebdomadaire* (July 8, 1933): 241.

³² Nabokoff to Misia Sert, August 1, 1933, published in excerpt in *L’Abbaye* (1973), located in the research file on Nabokov in the archives of the Stravinsky-Diaghilev Foundation, Harvard Theater Collection, Houghton Library, Harvard University.

EXAMPLE 2 Nabokov, *Chants à la Vierge Marie* (1926), words by Nabokov;
French translation by Raïssa Maritain.
© 1928, Rouart Lerolle, Paris.

a) Introduction, mm. 1–5.

The musical score for the introduction (mm. 1–5) is in 6/8 time and D major. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Largo* with the instruction *(legato)*. The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a half note B4. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as *rit.* and *a Tempo*.

Gloi - re gloi - - - re à vous O, Di - vi - ne

b) Third song (“Dormition”), mm. 1–8.

The musical score for the third song, “Dormition” (mm. 1–8), is in 3/4 time and D major. It features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked *Un poco Andante* with the instruction *(legato)*. The vocal line begins with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a half note B4. The piano accompaniment consists of a steady eighth-note pattern in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The score includes dynamic markings such as *mp* and *a Tempo*. The piano part features several triplets in both hands.

Voi - ci les nou - vel - les tris - tes - ses la saint - te Mè - re va mou - rir sur
les hau - teurs dans les val - lées, mon - te par tout le chant des pleurs.

European products. In the same year, however, an unexpected way out presented itself from the United States: Albert C. Barnes, a self-made tycoon who diverted the fortune he had made with the antiseptic Argyrol to the accumulation of French Impressionist art, the cultural education of the underprivileged, and the promotion of young artistic talent, had heard Nabokov’s *Chants à la Vierge Marie* in Paris (which he appreciated for being “stuff with balls”) and now granted him an eight-month scholarship to try his chances on the East Coast. In addition, he offered Nabokov a

lectureship, which required him to travel every other Sunday to his foundation in Merion, Pennsylvania, to read on how “all good modern music is based upon the old traditions.”³³ Fed up with the bleak prospects in Paris, Nabokov accepted the invitation and embarked for New York City.

As it turned out, Barnes wanted his protégé to critique what he saw as the mediocrity of American musical life caused by “orchestra conductors [in particular Leopold Stokowski, the conductor of the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra] who are circus performers instead of being artists and honest men.” One can imagine, then, the fury of his wrath upon finding out that Nabokov was trying to solicit commissions and performances from precisely this Stokowski and others. Chiding his protégé for “grab[bing] a fistful of tinsel instead of the pot of gold that could have been yours,” and “play[ing] second fiddle to a cheap showman, Stokowski, instead of knocking his block off,” Barnes broke off the relationship.³⁴ By that time, May 1934, Nabokov had been fortunate enough to score a hit with *Union Pacific*, a burlesque ballet themed on the completion of the first American transcontinental railroad in 1869 and produced by Sol Hurok, the famed American impresario who had brought “Colonel” Wassily de Basil’s necessitous Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo to Broadway.³⁵ The scenario for the spectacle was provided by 1933 Pulitzer Prize winner Archibald MacLeish, whom Nabokov knew from his Parisian years and who had helped him obtain a quota immigration visa through then Secretary of State Cordell Hull. The brassy score, woven from songs and dances popular in 1860s America (including “O Suzanna,” “Yankee Doodle,” “Runaway Train,” and “Pop Goes the Weasel”) as well as the stereotypical characterization of Irish and Chinese rail workers—muscular sturdiness versus delicate *chinoiserie* (Example 3)—is a far cry from the aesthetics Nabokov once preached to Kessler.

Such inconsistency did not seem to bother the young composer, though. After the Parisian debacle of *Job*—which, incidentally, received a favorable reception at the 1934 annual music festival of Worcester, Massachusetts—he

³³ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 183–5; L. V. Seiger, Recording Secretary, The Barnes Foundation, to Nabokoff, July 27, 1933; Barnes to Nabokov, October 23, 1933, Barnes Foundation Archives, President’s Files, Barnes Correspondence, 1-nf.

³⁴ Barnes to Nabokov, January 18, 1934, April 26, 1934, and May 2, 1934, Barnes Foundation Archives, Presidents’ Files, Barnes Correspondence, 1-nf.

³⁵ The following headlines attest to the ballet’s success: “Monte Carlo Group Gives *Union Pacific*: World Premiere of the American Ballet Draws Enthusiastic Audience in Philadelphia,” *New York Times*, April 7, 1934, 18; Edward Moore, “Hilarious Fun Rules Ballet’s *Union Pacific*,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 15, 1934, 20; John Martin, “Hearty Applause for *Union Pacific*,” *New York Times*, April 26, 1934, 26. *Modern Music* described the ballet as “one of the past season’s ablest and most vigorous productions. Without being a work of any great musical pretensions, it is so admirably suited to its purpose and uses nineteenth-century American railroad songs with so much taste in their selection, so much intelligence and musicality in their treatment, that one is eager to hear further examples of Nabokoff’s work.” Theodore Chanler, *Modern Music* 11/4 (1934): 208.

finally could taste the sweetness of success again.³⁶ Regardless of George Gershwin's advice to exploit *Union Pacific's* success in Hollywood, Nabokov remained on the East Coast, living on the commissions and temporary jobs that his rapidly expanding network of friends and patrons secured for him. In 1936, he accepted an offer to lead the Music Department at Wells College, a small women's college in Aurora, upstate New York, which five years later was followed by a similar appointment at St. John's College in

EXAMPLE 3 Nabokov, *Union Pacific* (1934); libretto by Archibald MacLeish; instrumentation by Edward Powell; unpublished; reproduced from the full score autograph, Manuscripts Division, Princeton University Library.

a) "Irish Workmen," fols. 12–14, mm. 85–106.

The musical score for "Irish Workmen" is presented in three systems. Each system contains three staves: a vocal line for soprano (sopr.) and two piano parts (pno. 1 and pno. 2). The tempo is marked as *ff* (fortissimo). The score includes various rhythmic values and rests, with dynamic markings such as *f* (forte) and *ff*. The instrumentation for the piano parts includes oboe (obo.), clarinet (clar.), horn (horn), trumpet (trump.), trombone (trbn.), and percussion (perc.).

³⁶ "Worcester Hears New Oratorio, *Job*," *New York Times*, October 5, 1934, 21. The reviewer of *Modern Music* appreciated how the composer, "like a true artist," had been impelled by the message he had to convey rather than by questions of style. There were certainly traces of eclecticism, but "by his earnestness and his integrity," the composer had welded them into "a whole which is both personal and convincing." Frederick Jacobi, "Nabokoff's Oratorio, *Job*," *Modern Music* 12/1 (1934): 43–4.

b) “Chinese Crew,” fols. 24, mm. 181–5.

Annapolis, Maryland, where he participated, together with Elliott Carter, in the development and execution of an innovative liberal arts curriculum.³⁷ From these positions he would forge his reputation for being—as Alain Daniélou put it—“not a friend but *the* Friend on whom one could count in

³⁷ Ray Pierre, “A New Teaching Approach,” *New York Times*, June 15, 1941, X6.

difficult hours,” appealing to his influential network to help his family and friends in Europe to evade the Nazi threat.³⁸ When Soviet Russia and the United States got caught up in the maelstrom of war emanating from Europe and Japan, Nabokov contributed his share to the war effort by organizing benefit plays and concerts for the Red Cross and Civilian War Services.³⁹ In addition, critical as he was of American news analysts for acting like “the Delphic oracle” with regards to the war in Russia, he applied for a moonlight job as translator at the Justice Department.⁴⁰

As a result of his governmental work, Nabokov got acquainted with Washington’s intelligentsia, including Soviet expert Charles E. Bohlen, to whose apartment at Dumbarton Avenue he used to resort after his weekly shift of intelligence processing in the “stuffy, dank basement” of the Justice Department. At a time when the anti-Nazi alliance with the Soviet Union had subdued the memory of Stalin’s pact with Hitler or the Red Army’s invasion of Poland, Finland and the Baltic States in the minds of many American citizens and statesmen, those gathered at Bohlen’s apartment—diplomats, lawyers, journalists, ambassadors, intelligence agents, and future presidential advisers closely connected by their privileged class, patrician education, and military service—retained no illusions about “Uncle Joe.”

³⁸ Alain Daniélou, “Nicolas Nabokov Is Dead,” *The World of Music* 20/1 (1978): 127. Nabokov asked Archibald MacLeish, who was at the time the Librarian of Congress, to secure a job for his cousin Vladimir, as well as to intercede for European refugee intellectuals whose “lives and destinies bec[ame] more and more the object of insipid bureaucratic mystery games,” including Jacques Maritain, Arthur Lourié, Vittorio Rieti, François Mauriac, Darius Milhaud, Dynam-Victor Fumet, Georges Auric, André Gide, Paul Hindemith, and the German émigré saxophonist Sigurd M. Raschèr. Nabokoff to MacLeish, July 10, 1940, September 16, 1940, and October 4, 1940, MacLeish Papers, 16-nf. He also asked the writer and associate editor of *The New Republic* Edmund Wilson to intervene for his cousin. Nabokov to Wilson, August 14, 1940, Wilson Papers, 49-1340. On the request of Hindemith’s manager, Ernest R. Voigt, Nabokov arranged for Hindemith to teach at Wells College and Cornell University in the spring of 1940. In addition to a professorship at the University at Buffalo offered by Hindemith’s former student Cameron Baird, these appointments sufficed for Hindemith—who, incidentally, at the time thought that the American nervousness about his safety was hardly necessary—to get a visa for the United States. Hindemith to Nabokoff, December 4, 1939. For the complete correspondence between Nabokov, Voigt and Hindemith, see Hindemith’s employment record, Wells College Archive, Long Library, Aurora, New York. Hindemith would later, in 1940, join the faculty of the Yale School of Music, where he would remain until his return to Europe in 1953.

³⁹ It can be established from the Annapolis daily *The Evening Capital* that the benefit concerts took place on March 1, 1942, May 20, 1942, February 7, 1943, and May 16, 1943. Nabokov performed with a symphony orchestra and chorus he had assembled from musicians of various degrees of proficiency from the St. John’s community and the nearby US Naval Academy.

⁴⁰ “Nabokov Leads War Discussion,” *The Evening Capital* [Annapolis, MD], February 9, 1942, 1. According to Philip E. Mosely, Division of Special Research, State Department, Nabokov applied in January 1943 for a position in the civil service, as he was “determined to do something in a helpful way for the war effort.” FBI file Nabokov, report dated April 26, 1943 (Field Office Washington, DC). This inquiry was conducted as part of Nabokov’s clearance procedure for his appointment at Department of Justice’s War Division, which would last from January 21, 1943 to July 31, 1944.

Several of them—Bohlen, his brother-in-law Charles W. Thayer, and George F. Kennan—had witnessed the horror of the trials, purges, and murders of the late 1930s while being stationed at the US Embassy in Moscow, and would come to play a decisive role in shaping America’s postwar foreign policy towards the Soviet Union. In this environment, and especially through his discussions with Bohlen and Isaiah Berlin, the Oxford-based Russian expert who served at the British Embassy in Washington at the time, Nabokov’s political perspectives acquired—in his own words—“a degree of sophistication,” as he began to see that “the evil spirit of this century was double-headed, Hitler and Stalin [being] two parts of the same phenomenon.”⁴¹

Point of (No) Return: Nabokov’s and Prokofiev’s Decision

In his memoirs, Nabokov barely touches on his political views prior to his “awakening.” He recalled his discomfort when Harry Kessler, once during a conversation in the early 1920s, glorified the Russian Revolution for the “tremendous creative forces” he thought it had unleashed, referring to artists, theater directors and poets like Kandinsky, Chagall, Malevich, Meyerhold, Blok, and Mayakovsky. (It apparently did not occur to the count that these creative forces had actually been sparked off before the Revolution.) Neither could Nabokov agree with Henri Cartier-Bresson, the pioneer of modern photojournalism with whom he briefly shared a New York studio in 1936, that the Communist movement was to be construed as the torchbearer of mankind’s future. To the contrary, he felt that the eagerness with which those who espoused such a “philo-Communist attitude” condemned the fascist tides sweeping across Europe in the wake of the Depression blinded them for the oppressive realities of post-revolutionary Russia. Nonetheless, Nabokov qualified, without explanation, his political perspectives before his “awakening” as “simplistic.”⁴²

His FBI dossier sheds further light on what he meant by “simplistic.” Although none of the FBI’s informants questioned his credentials as an anti-Bolshevist and each vouched for his loyalty to the United States (except Albert Barnes, who in his acrimonious testimony declared his former employee to be “absolutely untrustworthy and incapable of holding confidential information”), Nabokov had apparently joined those who cheered “Uncle Joe” and hoped for Soviet Russia’s alliance with the United States and Great Britain to render Stalin’s mind more amenable to Western-style democracy. Interviewed in 1943, at the time of the Battle of Stalingrad,

⁴¹ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 210–3.

⁴² Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 201, 213. The mentioned conversation with Kessler is not included in *Bagázh*, but appears in a slightly expanded version of Nabokov’s reminiscences of the count: “Harry Kessler, an aristocrate européen,” *Premes* 12/139 (1962): 31–2.

one anonymous informant imparted that Nabokov considered Stalin to be “a very great man” inasmuch as the Russian leader had been able to achieve “such great success in the past few years.” Another informant revealed that on occasions Nabokov would have made ill-conceived attempts to justify the policies of the Soviet Communist Party. According to State Department official Philip E. Mosely, such inconsistencies in Nabokov’s beliefs concerning Russia should not be taken too seriously, as they could be easily explained by his “sentimental love for his homeland.”⁴³ Indeed, there was nothing peculiar about Nabokov’s siding with his country of birth at times of war.⁴⁴ In fact, the war opened up an alternative career path that he had been looking for: commentator on Russian affairs to audiences whose interest in Russia had finally been stirred by the events of the time.⁴⁵ But should the United States and Russia ever become engaged in a conflict in the future—one colleague from St. John’s College ensured the FBI—Nabokov undoubtedly would be “emotionally upset” and perhaps even believe in “the Russian concept of what they consider right and wrong,” but never to the extent as to “advocate the overthrow of the United States Government.”⁴⁶

Nabokov’s ambivalence toward Stalin’s Russia before and during World War II seems difficult to reconcile with the anti-Stalinist position he would take when the US-USSR conflict escalated in the late 1940s. It was a position, though, that he shared with many émigrés who clung as long as possible to the hope that a clearing of the repressive climates under which they had left their nations would someday enable their homecomings. Thus, until his self-professed “awakening,” Nabokov allowed himself to hope that the predilection for “cultural reaction and provincialism” that prevailed among the Nazi and Soviet ruling elites would be, as far as his motherland was concerned, merely of a temporary nature, so that one day he could make a living as a composer in Soviet Russia.⁴⁷ He expressed his love for the country of his birth at various instances,⁴⁸ perhaps most compellingly in his

⁴³ FBI file Nabokov, reports dated April 22, 1943 (Field Office New York City), April 26, 1943 (Field Office Washington, DC) and May 8, 1943 (Field Office Philadelphia, Pennsylvania).

⁴⁴ In private correspondence, Nabokov expressed his profound grief at the thought that “these bastards [the Germans] have again destroyed nearly all the same regions they had destroyed in 1916.” But as for the Red Army, “I am *sure, positive, definitely* persuaded that they will stop the bastards. At great cost, of course, but they will.” Nabokoff to Wilson (original emphases), August 7 and December 16, 1941, Wilson Papers, 50-1342/4.

⁴⁵ “Nicolas Nabokov Discusses Situation on Russian Front,” *The Evening Capital* [Annapolis, MD], June 18, 1942, 1–2.

⁴⁶ Jacob Klein cited in FBI file Nabokov, report dated April 22, 1943 (Field Office New York City).

⁴⁷ Nabokov, “Music under Dictatorship,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 169/1 (January 1942): 95.

⁴⁸ For instance, to Scott Buchanan, dean of St. John’s College, Nabokov intimated that “I will always be more of a Russian than an American.” FBI file on Nabokov, report dated July 13, 1948 (Field Office Boston, Massachusetts). To the question as to whether he identified himself as an American composer, he answered positively, though: “Yes, of course I am an American composer

elegy for soprano and orchestra, *The Return of Pushkin* (Example 4).

EXAMPLE 4 Nabokov, *The Return of Pushkin* (1947), first movement, mm. 9–14; poem by Alexander Pushkin (1835); English translation by Vladimir Nabokov. © 1964, M. P. Belaieff, Bonn.

p

I have seen a - gain that cor - ner of the world where

p

once I spent in ban - ish - ment two years of time un - no - ticed.

This work had been commissioned by his fellow émigré and benefactor, the conductor Sergey Koussevitzky, to whom he confided how much he had been consumed with nostalgia in the early years of his exile in Germany and France:

I would try to meet travelers who came from “over there,” even those who came as heralds of the new Socialist Fatherland and proclaimed the glories of the Bolshevik regime. Even though they intimated that people like myself were the scum of the earth, deserters, who had fled their country out of fear for their “egoistic bourgeois interests,” they attracted me because they came from there, from tortured, tormented Russia....Avidly I asked them all about Russia. How was it there now? Was life getting easier? Would the regime mellow, or be replaced by another, more human government?⁴⁹

(whatever that term means). I, as you know, do not belong to an old Bostonian family, and the Nab O’caugh’s were probably more Russian than Irish, but, if the man who wrote ‘Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree’ is American, then I insist on the ‘Mayflower’, the ‘Old South’, the ‘Plymouth Rock’ and all the paraphernalia of Agnes de Mille’s Ballets and *Ubramerikanertum* [sic].” Nabokov to Parmenia Migel Ekstrom, October 27, 1944, Migel Papers, 155.

⁴⁹ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 180.

His close friend Sergey Prokofiev was asking the same questions, and ultimately drew a conclusion opposite to Nabokov's. After an absence of nearly ten years, the internationally renowned composer had begun visiting his transformed fatherland on the invitation of Soviet officials from 1927 onwards. Each visit left him with mixed feelings. Behind the façade of flattery that his hosts hauled up in front of him, obviously intended to entice him to relocate to Moscow, he noticed the unsettling shadow side of Stalin's proletarian utopia—phones being tapped, random arrests, unexplained disappearances, and so forth. Yet the tempting prospect of returning permanently to his “native soil” for which he had waxed nostalgic,⁵⁰ as well as the economic security offered him in terms of guaranteed commissions, performances and publications, were hard to resist, especially in a time of economic deprivation. Moreover, although he was wary of Stalin's surveillance apparatus, his patriotism led him to construe the Revolution as an “inescapable, positive event of Russia's national history” that—as Nabokov remembered him ensuring his compatriots—would ultimately lead to a regeneration of European society.⁵¹

Apparently Prokofiev shared his doubts with Nabokov as to whether to accept the advances made to him by Soviet representatives. In the autumn of 1931, Nabokov confided to Prokofiev that he, too, had seriously considered the possibility of returning to the Soviet Union. What kept him from doing so was his profession. Although a few months earlier he still expressed a “strong belief in the future of the new Russia,”⁵² Nabokov had come to realize that since Stalin's rise to power and the implementation of the first Five Year Plan (in 1928), “the music that is needed [in Russia] is not our music, but something cruder, simpler.” As his and Prokofiev's music and bourgeois lifestyle conflicted with “the first principal of Marxist philosophy—expediency, that is, the material necessity of everything”—they both might “sympathize with the inevitable political process” that was manifesting itself in their homeland, but living there would be unthinkable.⁵³

⁵⁰ To the music critic Serge Moreux, Prokofiev intimated in June 1933 that “I've got to live myself back into the atmosphere of my native soil [as] foreign air does not suit my inspiration.” Moreux, “Prokofieff: An Intimate Portrait,” *Tempo* (New Series), no. 11 (Spring 1949): 9.

⁵¹ Nabokov, “Sergei Prokofiev,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 170/1 (July 1942): 67. In the chapter on Prokofiev in his 1951 book of memoirs, which is to a large extent a slightly revised and updated version of the 1942 article, Nabokov asked the reader to be mindful of the fact that “the Soviet Union [at the time of Prokofiev's repatriation] was not the same as the Soviet Union of today.” Likewise, “the feelings of a forward-looking and revolutionary-minded Russian intellectual towards his fatherland and its government were quite different then from what they are now and were on the whole rather mixed.” *Old Friends and New Music*, 127–8.

⁵² Nabokov in an interview with the Belgian music critic José Bruyr, April 1931, in Bruyr, *L'Écran des musiciens*, 89.

⁵³ Nabokov to Prokofiev, September 20, 1931. This correspondence is part of a collection of documents which Prokofiev, anticipating the trouble their contents could cause him, deposited in

That Prokofiev and Nabokov considered the possibility of repatriation should come as no surprise.⁵⁴ Both had worked long enough in the West to know the hardships of being a composer under capitalism, that is, of being dependent on the whims of impresarios, conductors, patrons, markets and audiences. Nabokov loathed the sense of insincerity that in his view governed social relationships within Paris's cultural coterie—"a feigned sense of comradeship" that on the slightest occasion could "degenerate into wickedness."⁵⁵ His experiences in the United States were no less frustrating in this regard, as is clear from the description of his first impressions of the New World in 1933:

Plenty of concerts, appointments, parties of "small" or "big" peoples, of bores and beggars, of millionaires, or better, their aged wives, of the beneficiaries and the timid pariahs (the composers, the principal conductors), Mr. Olin Downes in the flesh behind a minuscule bureau of the monstrous [*New York*] *Times*, of the beautiful girls with red lips and short fingernails, desirable but not desired, and always and everywhere this taste of pasteurized milk...⁵⁶

A more tangible disillusionment would come a year later, when "Colonel" Wassily de Basil, who had commissioned the box office hit *Union Pacific* for the Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo, defrauded Nabokov and MacLeish of their royalties, because they had not thought of drawing up a contract in the frenzy of work to catch the deadline (the green light for the production had been given only three weeks before the premiere).⁵⁷

Prokofiev, for his part, was frustrated by all the energy he had to waste in Europe on cajoling conductors and theater directors in order to get his

a safe in New York City during his last tour abroad in early 1938. At the end of his life he arranged for the transfer of these documents to the Central (now Russian) State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI) in Moscow, under the condition that they remain sealed. In 2009, Prokofiev expert Simon Morrison was granted exclusive access to this collection which has been itemized as Opis 4 of the Prokofiev papers (Fund 1929). I am indebted to Morrison for sharing with me his report on some of his findings delivered at the conference "1948 and All That: Soviet Music, Ideology and Power," University of Cambridge, November 28, 2009. The quotations and translations from the correspondence in this paragraph are derived from this report, parts of which have been published in Morrison's *The Love and Wars of Lina Prokofiev* (London: Vintage, 2013), 146.

⁵⁴ For what they are worth, some testimonies in Nabokov's FBI dossier suggest that Nabokov had been close to actually following in Prokofiev's footsteps. To one informant he would have confided to have been a member of the French Communist Party, and in the mid-1930s he would have, in vain, tried to obtain Soviet citizenship through the Russian Consul in New York City. Reports dated April 22, 1943 (Field Offices Baltimore, New York City, and Albany, New York).

⁵⁵ Nabokov to Ernest Ansermet, January 24, 1930, in *Ernest Ansermet: Correspondances avec des compositeurs américains, 1926–1966*, ed. Claude Tappolet (Geneva: Georg, 2006), 37.

⁵⁶ Nabokoff to John Peale Bishop, November 29, 1933, Bishop Papers, 22–5.

⁵⁷ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 195–6; MacLeish, *Reflections*, 92–4.

works performed, whereas “in Russia they come to me.”⁵⁸ To be sure, Prokofiev’s comparison between Europe and Soviet Russia is skewed in that sense that Soviet diplomats played up to him for the purpose of his voluntary repatriation. Nevertheless, even without this special attention, the socialist state seemed to be preferable to the capitalist state when it came to making a living as a composer during the Depression years. Composers in the Soviet Union, Nabokov informed his readers, turned out to be better trained and better paid and, provided they got accepted into the Composers’ Union, received more commissions, performances, and publications of their works. These conditions were a far cry from those reigning in the capitalist West—especially in the New World, where most conductors focused on “the big B symphonies and the antediluvian monstrosities of Sibelius and Richard Strauss,”⁵⁹ and an aspirant composer like Nabokov had to take so many sidelines upon himself that his life became similar to “the life of a dentist, who—besides a full and exhausting dental practice—secretly practices gynecology, law, forestry, teaches a few courses in art and music and has five families to support.” In other words, Soviet composers seemed to be regarded as members of the cultural elite rather than as “superfluous individuals [who] do not fit into any layer of society unless they have also some other occupation.”⁶⁰

It is this relatively high recognition of the social relevancy of (new) music that made Prokofiev, against his better judgment, want to believe that he could be better off under the Soviet constitution. In his response to Nabokov’s despairing letter he proved to be more optimistic about the turn of events of autumn 1931.⁶¹ Stalin had indeed elbowed his way to the top from which he reigned with an iron fist, but had his latest public speeches not shown “a certain inclination to flexibility”? And had the journal *This is Moscow Speaking* (*Govorit Moskva*), which as the organ of Moscow Radio “can

⁵⁸ Prokofiev quoted by Vernon Duke (Vladimir Dukelsky), *Passport to Paris* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, 1955), 345.

⁵⁹ *Old Friends and New Music*, 172. Notable exceptions in this regard were Leopold Stokowski (Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra) and Sergey Koussevitzky (Boston Symphony Orchestra), the latter of whom commissioned a symphony from Nabokov (which became the *Lyrical Symphony*) that in the 1930–31 season featured in concert programs all over Europe and the United States.

⁶⁰ Nabokov to Parmentia Migel Ekstrom, October 27, 1944, Migel Papers, 155; Nabokov, “Music in the USSR (I),” *The New Republic* 104 (March 31, 1941): 436; and “Music under Dictatorship,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 169/1 (January 1942): 93. A recent study of the Soviet Composers’ Union, based on extensive archival research, confirms Nabokov’s observations. Beyond the 1936 and 1948 disciplinary campaigns against musical formalism, the Union managed to win more authority and prestige for the music profession than the other artistic disciplines, enabling it to control, with a considerable degree of independence from the government, Soviet musical life. Kiril Tomoff, *Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939–1953* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006).

⁶¹ Prokofiev to Nabokov, October 6, 1931. See Footnote 53.

only display the General Line,” not launched a “hailstorm of attacks” on modernist music’s major enemy, the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM)? For Prokofiev, then, matters on the musical front seemed to turn more congenial to the music he and Nabokov wrote, leading him to hope that “if I am successful in going to Moscow soon, it will be precisely because I am a musician.” The abolition of RAPM not long after this exchange with Nabokov confirmed him in his optimism. Perhaps he now could assume a guiding role in the development of Soviet music? After all, the official call for a broadly accessible music corresponded to his own search for a less complicated yet modern style (“new simplicity”) that he had begun in the mid-1920s.⁶²

What Prokofiev failed to see, though, is that the abolition of the RAPM was part of a comprehensive rearrangement of Soviet cultural life which involved the liquidation of competing arts organizations—including the organization that used to defend Prokofiev against attacks from the RAPM, the Association for Contemporary Music (ASM)—in favor of a centralized bureaucracy for artistic affairs constituted by disciplinary unions of writers, artists, architects, and composers who “support[ed] the policy of Soviet power and [were] striving to participate in socialist construction.”⁶³ When this bureaucracy gave him to understand that he at last should decide either to take up permanent residency in Russia or to hand in his Soviet passport for good, it was already too late: he was tied to Moscow by commissions he could not cancel, including the *Romeo and Juliet* ballet and the *Cantata for the Twentieth Anniversary of the October Revolution*. In the summer of 1935 Prokofiev settled the matter with the Soviet authorities and announced his return on the understanding that he would not have to forfeit his annual international concert tours, nor his rights to foreign royalties and concert fees.⁶⁴

Then, about a month before Prokofiev would exchange Paris for Moscow as his place of residency, the Soviet musical world was startled by an unsigned *Pravda* editorial, which infamously critiqued what had been the

⁶² Prokofiev, “The Paths of Music,” *Izvestiya*, November 16, 1934, repr. in *Sergei Prokofiev: Autobiography, Articles, Reminiscences*, ed. Semyon Shlifshteyn, trans. Rose Prokofieva (Honolulu: University Press of the Pacific, 2000), 99–100. Nabokov remembered Prokofiev welcoming the Kremlin’s music policy that was being outlined at the time of the above-mentioned correspondence, remarking that “I always wanted to invent melodies which could be understood by large masses of people—simple singable melodies.” Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 133.

⁶³ Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, “On the Reorganization of Art and Literary Organizations,” April 23, 1932, repr. in *Culture and Power: A History in Documents, 1917–1953*, ed. Katerina Clark and Evgeny Dobrenko (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), 151–2.

⁶⁴ Gabriel (Gavriil Grigorovich) Paitchadze, Prokofiev’s confidant and manager of the Paris office of Édition Russe de Musique, to Malcolm Brown, Russian and Soviet music expert, December 24, 1962, cited by Simon Morrison, *The People’s Artist: Prokofiev’s Soviet Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 30.

most successful Soviet opera to date, Dmitry Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1934), for violating the laws of good taste and euphonious music. There was little doubt that this scathing piece of libel issued from a telling incident two days earlier, when Stalin and his entourage left without a word a performance of Shostakovich's opera before the final curtain. Ten days later, Shostakovich was again targeted for critique, this time condemning his ballet *The Limpid Stream* for its inadequate musical representation of life on the collective farm.⁶⁵ In the months ahead, as one after the other Soviet "cultural worker" was dismissed, showered with abuse, imprisoned or permanently eliminated from the earth, it definitely transpired to Nabokov that any hope of improvement in "the tortured lives of my former countrymen" was delusional.⁶⁶ Prokofiev, however, concluded from the assaults on Shostakovich that, although they amply demonstrated that the animosity towards modern music had anything but vanished in the workers' paradise since the cultural reform of 1932, his own reputation was not being disputed. He therefore pushed forward with his move to Moscow, perhaps trusting that his arrangement with the Soviet authorities held open the possibility of sneaking out of the country in the event the tide would turn against him.

That moment came sooner than he allowed himself to see. Already in the autumn of 1935, *Romeo and Juliet* became the subject of controversy, and finally was declared unfit for performance. A similar fate befell the tribute he wrote for the celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution, a ten-part narrative on the birth and rise of the Soviet Union drawn from texts by Marx, Lenin, and Stalin and set to music that was a far cry from the stale folklorism prescribed by Stalin's interpreters of popular taste. The ultimate disillusionment for Prokofiev came in 1938, when upon his return from a three-month trip to Europe and the United States the Soviet borders closed behind him, not to open again during his lifetime. (Between the signing of the Nazi-Soviet non-aggression pact in August 1939 and the death of Stalin, prospects for foreign tours by artists were extremely rare and only reserved for those with the stamp of approval of Stalin himself.) The agreement on which he had accepted to become an official Soviet composer proved worthless.

Bad Politics, Bad Taste: Diagnosing Music under Stalin

Meanwhile, Nabokov followed the turn of events in Soviet cultural life from the center of capitalism, observing how "the stigmas of the 'new' official

⁶⁵ "Sumbur vmesto muzyki" [Muddle Instead of Music], *Pravda*, January 28, 1936, 3; "Baletnaya fal'sh" [Balletic Falsehood], *Pravda*, February 6, 1936, 3.

⁶⁶ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 181.

style” began to manifest themselves in Prokofiev’s work: trivial themes “of doubtful taste,” harmonic devices of “a defunct Victorian era,” angular rhythms, and a general “artificial simplicity,” which appears “genuine” in a score like *Peter and the Wolf*, but “disconcertingly unauthentic” in a larger work like *Romeo and Juliet*. True enough, Nabokov conceded, “we certainly cannot know or even guess what would have happened to Prokofiev’s art had he stayed in Western Europe.” Yet he felt that most of the works Prokofiev wrote after his repatriation showed his melodic writing “to lose its individuality in a frame of not very well digested and often old-fashioned folk material,” a trend he also perceived in the latest works of Myaskovsky, Shostakovich, and Kabalevsky. Composers enjoying the blessing of either Stalin’s or Hitler’s dictatorships might be better facilitated in their work than their counterparts in the capitalist West, yet there remained a “certain provincialism in everything they create,” a quality that, according to Nabokov, had to be ascribed to their apparent obligation to conform to the Party line on musical poetics.⁶⁷

To be sure, Nabokov was not dismissive of the expectation that composers avail themselves of a musical language that is intelligible to an average audience. Indeed, in one interview he contended that that it was “absolutely imperative” for composers to write “simple, straightforward, clear melodies” (beyond “the commonplace patterns of so-called popular music”), the scarcity of which he held as “one of the greatest defects of contemporary music.”⁶⁸ Neither was he indifferent to experiments with *Gebrauchsmusik* or the surging “mass media,” i.e., radio and sound film, as long as they did not impair the integrity, quality, and independence of music.⁶⁹ Consequently, he might have agreed with one contemporary

⁶⁷ Nabokov, “Music in the USSR (II),” *The New Republic* 104 (April 7, 1941): 469–71; “Music under Dictatorship,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 169/1 (January 1942): 94–5; “Sergei Prokofiev,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 170/1 (July 1942): 70; “Prokofiev’s Three Oranges,” *Partisan Review* 17 (1950): 86; and *Old Friends and New Music*, 135. In private correspondence, Nabokov phrased his criticisms in less subtle terms, stating that Prokofiev had “begun to fall into a kind of bourgeois infantilism” in his latest music, whereas Shostakovich’s Eight Symphony [1943] was “simply impossible to listen to.” Nabokov to Stravinsky, May 15, 1944, in *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 376.

⁶⁸ Orrin E. Dunlap, Jr., “Epic Poem in Melody: MacLeish’s Ode Is Fashioned into Cantata by Nabokoff,” *New York Times*, April 21, 1940, 130. The composition mentioned here is Nabokov’s setting of Archibald MacLeish’s epic poem “America Was Promises” (1939) for bass, contralto, male chorus and orchestra, a commission by the Columbia Broadcasting System which premiered on April 25, 1940.

⁶⁹ Nabokoff, “Radiophonie et Film sonore: Le Festival de Baden-Baden,” *Musique: Revue mensuelle de critique, d’histoire, d’esthétique et d’information musicales* 2/11–12 (September 15, 1929): 1052–6. Nabokov was modestly appreciative of the *Lindberghflug* cantata, a “musical feature broadcast” (*musikalisches Hörbild*) by Bertolt Brecht, Kurt Weill, and Paul Hindemith based on Charles Lindbergh’s account of his first transatlantic flight in 1927 that was the *pièce de résistance* of the 1929 Baden-Baden Chamber Music Festival. He was displeased, however, with Brecht’s and Hindemith’s first-of-its-kind *Lehrstück*, in which the audience was supposed to “cooperate” with the performers by singing along with the interspersed chorales projected on a screen. For him, this

commentator that however reprehensible any kind of art policy that advocates censorship may be, there is a point in wondering how society could possibly benefit from an elitist art that “wallows in hedonism, pessimism, escapism and catastrophism.”⁷⁰ In a 1943 evaluation of “the case of Dmitri Shostakovich,” Nabokov appreciated the composer’s devotion to the cause of his country and its people as “morally far more solid” than the poetics of art-for-art’s sake—a comment that he would, significantly, omit in a postwar revision of this article. While Soviet poetics did not leave much opportunity for artists to develop themselves individually, Nabokov reasoned, it was nevertheless free from “that pernicious and amoral egocentrism from which so much music of the late nineteenth and twentieth century suffers.”⁷¹

Had the Politburo left it at encouraging rather than stipulating composers to write with the less educated listener in mind, Nabokov might have returned to his motherland. The 1936 assault on Shostakovich and the fate of other artists who fell victim to Stalin’s purges, however, made crisp and clear that artists were being more than “encouraged.” Rather than being given the opportunity to solve “problems of social significance” by developing “a progressive style for a new and truly popular art” under free conditions, composers found themselves castigated for deviating from a compulsory “*mea culpa* style,” the contours of which got ever more defined by “extreme simplicity bordering on poverty of imagination, old-fashioned and conservative romantic fervor coupled with strained, pompous and flamboyant optimism, and a very insincere and stilted return to folklore in the most ethnographic and ‘Museum of Natural History’ fashion.” Music thus forced to express optimism as the only sanctioned state of mind in a socialist utopia could not help but sound “redundant, blatant, and unconvincing.” It is for this reason alone, Nabokov concluded, that the performance of Soviet music in the United States was worth the effort: to create awareness of what happens to the arts in “a country like Soviet Russia.”⁷²

concept was reminiscent of “bygone eras in which one tried to create orchestras without conductors” (a reference to the Moscow conductorless orchestra known by its acronym Persimfans, founded in 1922 and no sooner “bygone” than 1932) as well as of “proletarian theaters” and other “nice ideas of which the realization failed so often and always mortified the free and natural élan of true Art.” (Importantly, Nabokov was silent about the blatant anti-capitalist tone of the *Lehrstück*, and hardly commented on the scandal-causing scene of two clowns helping a pain-suffering colleague by cutting off all his limbs that ached him.)

⁷⁰ Alexander Werth, *Musical Uproar in Moscow* (London: Turnstile, 1949), 16. Werth comments here on an official Soviet assessment of T. S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922) as a testimony to Britain’s state of degeneracy.

⁷¹ Nabokov, “The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich,” *Harper’s Magazine* 186/1114 (March 1943): 427; cf. revised version in Nabokov’s *Old Friends and New Music*, 199.

⁷² Nabokov, “Music in the USSR (I),” 436–8 and “Music in the USSR (II),” 470–1. Incidentally,

Shostakovich was singled out by Nabokov in particular to substantiate his diagnosis of musical life under Stalin. Writing in 1943, he recalled how upon his first reading of the prodigy composer's First Symphony (1926) he recognized at once "an extremely gifted musician...who knew how to write a long and gracefully lyrical melody and how to handle a long development section in symphonic form." Yet at the same time he could not help feeling that there was "something essentially conservative and unexperimental [*sic*]" about the music, which made it appear "synthetic" and "impersonal." He felt confirmed in his assessment—not shared by many at the time of the Symphony's American premiere (1927)—by the composer's later symphonies. The Fifth Symphony (1937), for instance, the work with which Shostakovich regained official favor a year after the fallout over *Lady Macbeth*, sounded to Nabokov as a concession to the prescribed "*style officiel*," a "tragic acknowledgment of defeat rather than an affirmative statement of personal faith." The 1936 rebuke, Nabokov concluded, had turned Shostakovich into a self-repentant intellectual proletarian consumed by the belief that (1) music without political ideology is a bourgeois illusion, (2) personal feelings matter only insofar as they express the aspirations and tragedies of the collective, and (3) the Soviet composer has an educational obligation to fulfill and a political responsibility to bear.⁷³

For Nabokov, perhaps no other work by Shostakovich exemplified his argument better than the Seventh Symphony (1941), the work so

elsewhere Nabokov indicated that he could appreciate, the "inherent optimism" of Shostakovich's music, if one would not "always feel a kind of compelling force behind it, a force of an extra-musical order [that] appears to be based on the official syllogistic formula: before the revolution life was desperate, therefore art was gloomy; now the revolution is victorious, therefore art music be optimistic." "The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich," 429–30. As is well-known, in the wake of Shostakovich's (controversial) *Testimony* (1979) and the *glasnost* years, this ability to convey a feeling of enforced buoyancy came to be interpreted as Shostakovich's way of 'ironicizing' all forms of tyranny, including Stalin's.

⁷³ Nabokov, "Music in the USSR (II)," 470; "Music under Dictatorship," 95 and "The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich," 423, 426–7. Ironically, Nabokov's own work was often criticized for lacking the same quality that he missed in the work of Soviet composers: originality. Most reviewers of his works appreciated his technique, but faulted him for using commonplace patterns and lacking a personal voice. Louis Schneider, *Le Gaulois*, June 9, 1928, 4; Henry Malherbe, *Le Temps*, June 13, 1928, 3; *The Times*, July 10, 1928, 9; W. H. Haddon Squire, "A Kinetic Ode," *Christian Science Monitor*, August 11, 1928, 6; Marcel Belvianes, *Le Ménestrel*, October 30, 1931, 454; Gilbert Chase, *The Musical Times* 75/1098 (August 1934): 748; E. R., *Music and Letters* 18/1 (1937): 104; Colin Mason, *The Musical Times* 95/1339 (September 1954): 482–3. At one point Prokofiev told Nabokov that "he possesses a real gift for melody but needs to [leave behind Tchaikovsky-derived] formulaically contrived figures." *Sergey Prokofiev Diaries*, entries February 23, 1928 and February 21, 1929. The irony becomes complete when Nabokov is compared to Shostakovich: one review described *La Vita Nuova* (1947), Nabokov's setting of three excerpts after Dante for soprano and tenor solos and orchestra, as "twenty-one minutes of rather heavy, at times treacly [*sic*] music, in eclectic styles, not very determinate. In the more 'advanced' moments there is some small likeness to Shostakovich, but the idiom is usually simpler." W. R. Anderson, "Round about Radio," *The Musical Times* 93/1318 (December 1952): 551.

successfully propagandized as the sonic affirmation of the wartime Grand Alliance that it had—as *Life* magazine observed—almost become unpatriotic not to like it.⁷⁴ Notwithstanding its “somewhat naïve yet profoundly moving sincerity” as well as the mastery of orchestration to which it attested, Nabokov wondered whether the symphony exemplified the best approach to the problem of writing music for the masses. Was an eclectic style combining all kinds of clichés like those found in such “popular” pieces as Tchaikovsky’s 1812 Overture, Richard Strauss’s *Ein Heldenleben* and Ravel’s *Boléro* the only way in which a new, truly proletarian art could be achieved? Was it really necessary to talk down to “the masses” by employing commonplace material in such an ostentatious fashion “that after a while one begins to wonder if even the most uneducated masses will not soon tire of it?” Did the Soviet leadership really hold its “masses” in such low esteem?⁷⁵ Virgil Thomson, composer and music critic of the *New York Herald Tribune* and one of Nabokov’s lifelong intimates, was of the same opinion, although he aired it in considerably more wry terms. To him, Shostakovich, by having “so deliberately diluted his matter, adapt[ing] it, by both excessive simplification and repetition, to the comprehension of a child of eight,” had proven that he was “willing to write down to a real or fictitious psychology of mass consumption in a way that may eventually disqualify him for consideration as a serious composer.”⁷⁶

Nabokov’s and Thomson’s criticism may be dismissed as an expression of envy over Shostakovich’s success, a success which so many composers (including Nabokov and Thomson) could only dream of. Yet, more than

⁷⁴ “Shostakovich’s Seventh: The Russian Composer’s Newest Symphony Has Become a Symbol of the Soviet’s Brave Fight,” *Life* (November 9, 1942): 99–100. The American premiere of the Seventh Symphony received an unprecedented amount of attention from the US press, which made much of the fact that the symphony had been partly written in besieged Leningrad between the composer’s duties as fire warden and trench digger, the trouble it had taken to get a microfilm of the score to New York, and the scuffle between star conductors over the privilege of leading the premiere. See Christopher H. Gibbs, “The Phenomenon of the Seventh: A Documentary Essay on Shostakovich’s ‘War’ Symphony,” in *Shostakovich and His World*, ed. Laurel E. Fay (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 59–113.

⁷⁵ Nabokov, “Shostakovich’s Seventh,” *The New Republic* 107 (August 3, 1942): 144. For a more detailed discussion of Nabokov’s assessment of Shostakovich’s music, see Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 24–31.

⁷⁶ Thomson, “Imperfect Workmanship,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 15, 1942, 8, and “Shostakovich’s Seventh,” *New York Herald Tribune*, October 18, 1942, repr. in Thomson, *The Musical Scene* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1945), 101–4. Interestingly, a few years earlier Thomson had distanced himself from highbrow criticism of *Lady Macbeth*, opining that the opera’s Marxist politics was secondary to what he then saw as Shostakovich’s genuine artistic talent. Recalling the examples of Emile Zola, Alfred Bruneau, Erik Satie and Kurt Weill, Thomson insisted at this time that populism (which he implicitly equated with social, not socialist, realism), however vulgar it might seem to “soft or fake-sensitive minds in the upper classes of society,” was the more vital and artistic for its being appreciated by men from all walks of life. Thomson, “Socialism at the Metropolitan,” *Modern Music* 12/3 (1935): 123–6.

envy alone, their estimation of Shostakovich's work articulated a widely shared belief according to which artistic quality and political expediency are mutually exclusive.⁷⁷ At the time of Shostakovich's ascendancy in the international music world, one of the most vocal proponents of this belief was Olin Downes, the music critic of the *New York Times*. Amidst the general acclaim which the much-anticipated American premiere of *Lady Macbeth* enjoyed in 1935, i.e., at the time when many progressive Americans were united in a popular front against the rise of fascism, Downes publicly wondered "how badly, coarsely, flimsily a composer [could] write, and still 'put it over,' and be applauded." To him, Shostakovich's score appeared as being patched together from "reminiscences and shallow tricks, with almost no originality or creative quality, attached to a libretto of communistic hue, lurid, overdrawn, naïve and sensational." With the exception of the last act, the *New York Times* critic felt bored with "quarter hours [of music] during which one simply wonders at the composer's effrontery and his lack of self-criticism."⁷⁸

Likewise, when many of his colleagues hailed the Seventh Symphony as an appropriate musical reply to Nazism,⁷⁹ Downes insisted on judging the merits of an art work by aesthetic standards only. Applied to Shostakovich's "War Symphony," these standards revealed a score that suffered from the same deficiencies as its predecessors (with the exception of the First Symphony): themes too "thin," "trivial" and "derivative," their development

⁷⁷ See, for instance, B. H. Haggin, "Music" (review Seventh Symphony), *The Nation*, August 15, 1942, 138; Oscar Thompson, "Shostakovich Seventh Has Premiere," *Musical America* 62 (August 1942): 4; Cecil Smith, "Shostakovich's Seventh Played Again and Well," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, October 30, 1942, 19; George F. Kennan, "Russia—Seven Years Later" [September 1944], in *Memoirs 1925–1950* (New York: Bantam, 1969), 513–5. For a detailed study of the US reception of Shostakovich's symphonies and *Lady Macbeth*, see Terry W. Klefstad, "The Reception in America of Dmitri Shostakovich, 1928–1946," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 2003.

⁷⁸ Downes, "New Soviet Opera Is Presented Here," *New York Times*, February 6, 1935, 23, and "Two Russian Composers: Comparing Stravinsky and Shostakovich," *New York Times*, February 10, 1935, X7. With hindsight, this last phrasing might sound particularly harsh in view of the fate which struck the opera a year later, and one might imagine Downes to have adjusted his views, certainly after they had been cited by the president of the Soviet Composers' Union to justify *Pravda's* critique. Sergei Radamsky, "Soviet Direction in Music," *New York Times*, April 5, 1936, X5. To the contrary, however, Downes took the fact that Stalin, "a man of some musical experience," had come to recognize in Shostakovich's opera the very same flaws that he had exposed as a corroboration of his criticism. At this point in time, Downes assumed that the Soviet regime's control of the arts was only a temporary necessity, predicting that the Russian Revolution would produce its artists and composers once "every restraint which hinders the artist's free self-expression" would be removed. Downes, "Changes in the Soviet [Union]: Shostakovich Affair Shows Shift in Point of View in the USSR," *New York Times*, April 12, 1936, X5.

⁷⁹ As, among others, Raymond Morin, "Symphony Written During Nazi Attack Heard At Tanglewood," *Worcester Telegram*, August 15, 1942; Henry Simon, "New England Receives a Message from Russia and Understands It," *PM*, August 16, 1942; and O. V. Clyde, "Shostakovich Battle Symphony Wins Ovation at Tanglewood," *Daily Worker* [CPUSA], August 16, 1942, Boston Symphony Archives, Scrapbook 1941–1944 (Series 56, Volume 70), 144–6.

too “windy,” “inflated” and “banal,” the transitions too “crude,” “tricky,” and “theatrical.”⁸⁰ True, Downes admitted, there are certainly moments of gifted writing, as well as “unquestioned sincerity and intensity of feeling” inspired by the tragic circumstances under which the work had been written. For a work to be qualified as art, though, it should outlast “not only the emotion but [also] the men and the historical processes that went to its making,” and in this respect, the symphony had utterly failed, probably because it had been composed in a rush. This does not mean, Downes hastened to add, that an artist’s expression is, or should be, unrelated to the time and conditions surrounding him, nor that a “great symphonic masterpiece” cannot be created in a short span of time. However, in order to outlive its time,

a work of art has to represent an alembication of ideas which can never be achieved without a creative concentration that admits of no confusion with any outside source. It is emotion shaped and fused by the artist’s mind into a form which is the reverse of the incidental or pictorial or merely realistic. It has to be a sublimation of personal experience, in an art form which is usually the product of intense struggle and thought, unsparing self-examination and criticism, until inspiration has found its permanent mold. It is a battle of the fiercest and most sanguinary sort, on a field not represented by cannon; an end only to be attained by the most unbending will, intolerance of compromise, rejection of the unworthy. It is the search for truth that cannot be counterfeited by any means whatsoever, that in some way survives when an artist has found it, and is treasured by the ages.

Shostakovich, Downes concluded in reproachful wording, by using “inferior thematic material, flung together loosely and flimsily, with little concentration and development,” had betrayed this “search of truth:” his “artistic morality” reflected the “amorality of international relations and totalitarian concepts” that had brought the world to its then current impasse; he had sold his soul to “the doctrine that the end justifies the means.”⁸¹

In the face of such merciless critique of the Seventh Symphony, Sergey Koussevitzky, the conductor who had won the competition for its American premiere until Arturo Toscanini antedated it with a nationwide radio broadcast by his NBC Symphony Orchestra, leapt to the composer’s defense, claiming that “there never has been a composer since Beethoven with such tremendous appeal to the masses.”⁸² Perhaps the most acid riposte

⁸⁰ Downes, “Shostakovich Seventh Has U.S. Premiere,” *New York Times*, July 20, 1942, 15.

⁸¹ Downes, “Second View of a Symphony,” *New York Times*, July 26, 1942, X5.

⁸² “Shostakovich Upheld: Koussevitzky Chides Critics for Opinions on Seventh Symphony,” *New York Times*, August 2, 1942, 37. Toscanini presented the first radio hearing of the Seventh Symphony on July 19, 1942, and Koussevitzky the first public performance on August 14, 1942, with the Tanglewood (Berkshire) Music Center Orchestra, the proceeds of which went to the Russian War Relief.

to the criticism as represented by Downes, Thomson, and Nabokov emanated from Hans Kindler, the conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra, for whom the highbrow aesthetic notions upheld by those who, “from the comfortable position of their offices and from the safe vantage point of their editorial immunity shoot their little poison darts against the work of a man who was actually fighting his country’s enemies during the daytime while writing his magnum opus at night,” were just “nauseating.” It is not sure whether Downes took this critique personally, but by the time of Toscanini’s second performance of the Seventh Symphony three months after its premiere, the *New York Times* critic marginally adjusted his first impression, conceding that, although “posterity will certainly consign [it] to the wastepaper basket,” the work might answer the “overwhelming need for emotional outlet” of a people at war, “people who have neither time for nor need of art for art’s sake.” And whatever one might think about the artistic qualities of works produced by the exigencies of war, Downes implied, the US government could take Soviet Russia’s example inasmuch music was there considered “an indispensable part of living, an element essential to the well-being of the community, and not a matter of after-dinner entertainment or a civilization’s window-dressing.”⁸³

From the Marxist-Leninist-Stalinist perspective, Downes’s change of insight regarding the Seventh Symphony was a commendable shift away from his usual criticism of Shostakovich’s music, a criticism predicated on the premise that art can only be “true” insofar it does not serve any politico-economic interests. Yet, for most of his career, Downes remained consistent in his critique of Shostakovich’s music. After his First Symphony, in which Downes had heard “a genuine talent,” it would take Shostakovich nine symphonies to receive a compliment from the *New York Times* critic.⁸⁴ In the intervening symphonies, Downes and Nabokov opined, the composer’s talent was compromised by a government that expected its artists to produce propaganda—a development “absolutely fatal to art.” At best, the artistic fruits grown from ideological demands might appear artful, but never as Art. How better his music would be, Downes presumed, “if [Shostakovich] were let alone to consult purely his inner feeling,” unchecked by a government

⁸³ Hans Kindler, “National Symphony Conductor Comments on Today’s Program,” *The Washington Post*, November 8, 1942, L5; Downes, “Shostakovich Seventh Wins Ovation Here,” *New York Times*, October 15, 1942, 32, “Essence of a Score: Toscanini’s Treatment Casts New Light on Shostakovich Seventh,” *New York Times*, October 18, 1942, X7, and “Composing in Wartime Russia,” *New York Times*, December 23, 1945, X6.

⁸⁴ With the Tenth Symphony, Downes wrote, Shostakovich had succeeded in creating a “score in the symphonic form that proclaime[d] the complete independence and integration of his genius.” Downes, “Music: Tenth Symphony,” *New York Times*, October 15, 1954, 19.

that could make or break you.⁸⁵ Nabokov suggested the same, conceding that in the rare passages of “graceful lyricism” in which the composer seemed to “forget himself,” he could still hear “an individual, a free artist, a man by the name of Dmitri Shostakovich.”⁸⁶

“Nonsense,” one *New York Times* reader protested. “There is no attempt to subdue art in Russia.” If “politics is the conscious and articulate form of economic and social forces” and “music expresses politics,” then composers, being the medium of that expression, “must feel the pulse of politics—in other words, he must be disciplined.”⁸⁷ This quasi-Marxist syllogism might raise one’s eyebrow, but, at least in his public performance, Shostakovich seemed to have accepted it. There is no reason to preclude the possibility that the Soviet composer spoke out of personal conviction when he told US reporters that he considered it his duty to make himself “as widely understood as possible” and “vest his symphony with those feelings which grip our people [in the face of] Hitlerism.”⁸⁸ Long before his music met with the Party’s condemnation, he had already instructed foreign correspondents in Marxist-Leninist poetics, explaining that “[t]here can be no music without ideology.”⁸⁹ A few months before the *Pravda* attack, however, he had gone a step further by voicing the first of several confessions he would make during his career. In an interview with an American correspondent, he expressed his regret over the fact that only his First Symphony, Piano Sonata, and *Lady Macbeth* were known in the United States, since “when I wrote them, I tried to be original,” whereas “now I no longer feel the necessity of trying to be original; I merely want to write for and be understood by the masses.”⁹⁰ Whether such statements should be interpreted as instances of sincere persuasion or self-protective behavior remains open to speculation. For émigrés like Nabokov, however, who had

⁸⁵ Downes, “Music and Bolshevism: Russia’s Mistaken Attempts to Subdue Art to Politics,” *New York Times*, January 8, 1933, X6; “Shostakovich Seventh Has U.S. Premiere,” *New York Times*, July 20, 1942, 15, and “Politics vs. Art: Ninth of Shostakovich Raises Question Anew,” *New York Times*, November 17, 1946, 79.

⁸⁶ Nabokov, “The Case of Dmitri Shostakovich,” 430.

⁸⁷ Paul Aranak, “Music and the Soviet,” *New York Times*, January 15, 1933, X8.

⁸⁸ Ralph Parker, “Shostakovich, Composer, Explains His Symphony of Plain Man in War,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1942, 17; “Shostakovich’s Seventh,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, April 2, 1942, 14; “U.S. Hears New Russian Symphony Written in Leningrad Under Fire,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, July 21, 1942, 7; Shostakovich, “Stating the Case for Slavonic Culture,” *New York Times*, June 21, 1942, X6. The latter article, published under the composer’s name, features passages from a promotion essay prepared by the Soviet music critics David A. Rabinovich and Semyon I. Shlifshteyn, which the Soviet Embassy in Washington, DC, supplied to US newspapers.

⁸⁹ Rose Lee, “Dimitri Szostakovitch [sic]: Young Russian Composer Tells of Linking Politics with Creative Work,” *New York Times*, December 20, 1931, X8.

⁹⁰ Shostakovich cited in a letter from the composer and publicist Ashley Pettis to Virgil Thomson, undated, Thomson Papers, 29-57-6.

an interest in vindicating their choice not to trust Stalin's regime, any speculation was redundant: Prokofiev and Shostakovich had both been trapped in the illusion that their music reflected the needs of the new society on which they had pinned their hopes.⁹¹

If these illusions had been rekindled by the accolades heaped upon wartime compositions like Shostakovich's "Leningrad" Symphony and Prokofiev's symphonic suite *The Year 1941*, all hope remaining would soon be dashed for good. After the victorious ending of the "Great Patriotic War," Andrey Zhdanov, Stalin's right-hand man in matters of culture and education, resumed the crusade against "bourgeois corruption and decay" with renewed vigor. In January 1948, following the condemnation of perceived dissidents on the theatrical, literary, cinematic, scientific, and philosophical "fronts," the time was considered ripe for Soviet "music workers" to feel the guidance of the Party's Central Committee. After a strained three-day conference on the question why Soviet music had failed to reflect the path of socialist realism as indicated in the unvarnished criticism of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth* twelve years earlier, Zhdanov drew his obviously preconceived conclusions: the development of "a mighty Soviet musical culture" had been hampered by those composers, music critics, conservatory teachers, and institutional representatives who had blindly imitated or supported the "formalist trend" emanating from Western bourgeois culture, thus allowing themselves to be estranged from "the People." Artists truly committed to the socialist cause, Zhdanov lectured, understood that music had to be rooted in the songs of "the people" and be built on Russia's "classical heritage" as represented by Glinka, Dargomizhsky, Tchaikovsky, and the "Mighty Five." As Soviet art was to be anything but what "formalism" and "cosmopolitanism" stood for (i.e., perversity, amorality, esotericism, elitism, egocentrism, neuropathology—to name but a few invectives current in anti-formalist rhetoric), any "music worker" truly devoted to the realization of the Soviet socialist state had to "re-orientate [himself] and turn towards [his] people," reflecting its life and spirit in music.⁹²

⁹¹ There is evidence that by the fall of 1939, Prokofiev shared Nabokov's analysis. In an outline for a lecture that would remain unfinished, probably because it had no chance of being delivered, the disillusioned composer argued that "the official directive concerning the struggle against Formalism has been carried out too zealously," leading composers to work with "second-rate material" that, rather than transporting the masses, "pushe[d] them backward." Cited by Morrison, *The People's Artist*, 111.

⁹² Quoted from Zhdanov's concluding speech at the Conference of Musicians at the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, Moscow, January 13, 1948, repr. in Andrey A. Zhdanov, *On Literature, Music and Philosophy* (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1950), 52–75. For condensed proceedings of the conference, see Alexander Werth, *Musical Uproar in Moscow* (London: Turnstile Press, 1949), 47–86. Declassified documents in the collection of the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) show that the 1948 campaign against

When Zhdanov's diagnosis of the state of Soviet music resulted in the notorious resolution that explicitly branded the work of Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturyan, Myaskovsky and others as exemplary of "formalistic distortions and anti-democratic tendencies,"⁹³ the suspicion Nabokov had confided to Prokofiev in the early 1930s turned out to be more than true: not only did the "precarious hierarchy of Soviet Men of Distinction" deem their music, even when written for the glorification of Stalin and the State, as "reactionary," and therefore as "useless" and even "harmful garbage," it also called for its "liquidation." "Purge," then, is the word Nabokov used to explain Zhdanov's decree to a Western readership, although none of the six composers singled out as first offenders against the mores of Soviet music underwent the lethal fate of some of their counterparts in other fields of the arts and letters.⁹⁴ Myaskovsky and Shostakovich were dismissed from their posts as composition teachers at the Moscow and Leningrad conservatories; Shebalin, the Moscow conservatory's director, was replaced by Aleksandr Sveshnikov, the leader of the Russian National Folk Chorus; and Khachaturyan lost the position of secretary general of the Composers' Union to Tikhon Khrennikov. At first, all of their music was blacklisted, but, dependent on how repentant they were and how much improvement their new works showed, this ban was eventually lifted. But for all his attempts to justify his compositional methods as actually fitting in with the purposes set out by Zhdanov,⁹⁵ Prokofiev kept being vilified as a man whose onetime cosmopolitan life-style would have corrupted his constitution to the extent that no recovery was ever to be expected. Deprived of his status and rights, Soviet Russia's "prodigal son" spent the last years of his life in poverty and poor health, writing works under stifling ideological tutelage—a hopeless existence that

formalism in music was not so much inspired by aesthetic concerns as by internal factionalism and envy. From a confidential report submitted to Zhdanov in January 1948, it appeared that the Union of Soviet Composers had allocated disproportionately high subsidies to its leaders, including Khachaturyan, Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, Popov and Shebalin—the six composers named in the 1948 resolution apart from Vano Muradeli, head of Muzfund, the organ responsible for the distribution of the Union's budgetary resources, whose lavishly staged opera *The Great Friendship* was singled out as the catalyst for the 1948 attack on the "musical front." For meticulous reconstructions of the bureaucratic operations and rivalries on which Soviet music policy under Stalin was predicated, see Simon Mikkonen, *Music and Power in the Soviet 1930s: A History of Composers' Bureaucracy* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009) and Meri E. Herrala, *The Struggle for Control of Soviet Music from 1932 to 1948: Socialist Realism vs. Western Formalism* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2012).

⁹³ Cited from the resolution on music by the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), February 10, 1948, repr. in translation in Nicolas Slonimsky, *Music Since 1900*, fifth edition (New York: Schirmer, 1994), 1055–7.

⁹⁴ Nabokov, "The Music Purge," *Politics* 5 (Spring 1948): 102–4; and "Russian Music after the Purge," *Partisan Review* 16/8 (1949): 842–51.

⁹⁵ Prokofiev, "My Plans," *Soviet Literature*, no. 6–12 (1948): 134–5.

might have significantly changed for the better had he not passed away on the very same day as Soviet citizen No. 1, Joseph Stalin. For his friend, Nabokov intimates to his reader, the purge was without redemption.⁹⁶

⁹⁶ Nabokov, "Ordeal of a 'Cosmopolitan' Composer," *The Reporter*, August 16, 1949, 17–19.

Cultural Relations/ *Kulturkampf*

The Allied Competition for German Hearts and Minds

It is wonderful to know that it is you, with your great gifts, skills and understanding, who is going to plan and organize the cultural relations of this country with the outer world. This is surely the most urgent work a man can do as well as the most useful one. To pick up anew the broken threads of exchange of cultural values, to build new ones[;] what a grand goal, what a responsibility!!¹

Nicolas Nabokov congratulates Archibald MacLeish on his appointment as Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs (1944)

[T]here are some persons [in Europe] who appear to be working actively to make bad feeling in their country toward ours. If next spring an orchestra composed of one hundred of our finest players and conducted in turn by three of our best conductors would go to Europe and...play with our high standard of performance their music of Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, Wagner, Strauss, and others of their great masters, it would be the most honest, powerful, and yet subtle propaganda...It would be a continuation of psychological warfare into psychological peace.²

Leopold Stokowski (1946)

This grandiose [Soviet House of Culture] will reach the broad masses and do much to counteract the generally accepted idea here that the Russians are uncivilized....We should be spurred on by this latest Russian entry into the *Kulturkampf* to answer with an equally bold scheme for putting over British achievements here in Berlin.³

British Control Commission, Berlin (1947)

One does not have to be much of a psychologist to read Nabokov's passionate congratulatory remark to his friend "Archie" MacLeish as an expression of his own ambitions. Fed up with the drudgery of teaching

¹ Nabokov to MacLeish, December 13, 1944, MacLeish Papers, 16-nf.

² Leopold Stokowski, conductor Philadelphia Orchestra, to Charles A. Thomson, Acting Adviser to the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, Department of State, June 15, 1946, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Division of International Exchange of Persons, Subject Files—Music, UD 57, 5-UNESCO 1946.

³ R. E. Colby, British Control Commission, Berlin, to William Montagu-Pollock, Cultural Relations Department, Foreign Office, March 19, 1947, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA), FO 924/604.

and anxious to make a firmer connection with the United States government following his self-described political awakening, he applied for a music-related job at the State Department—in vain.⁴ Although he was considered an apt candidate, the rising opposition against émigrés in government employment worked to his disadvantage. Finally, the opportunity occurred for him to go to Germany to serve, together with his recruiter, Wystan H. Auden, in the Morale Division of the US Strategic Bombing Survey (USSBS), a civilian outfit organized by the War Department in November 1944 to evaluate the psychological effects of Allied bombing operations. While stationed in northern Germany (June to early August 1945), he soon discovered that “*nothing* had changed in the Soviet Communist empire” since Moscow’s bond with London and Washington. Indeed, “what was going on in my motherland was a hell as vast as...the one we laid bare to public inspection in Germany.” From that moment, “I knew that my Russia, the Russia of an exile’s wish-dream, had been wiped out.” What disturbed him most was to see how the Western Allies, in all their ignorance, lent their assistance to the repatriation of thousands of Soviet displaced persons (DPs), many of whom had barely survived the Nazi prisoner-of-war camps, to the Soviet Union, where detention, slavery or death were once again awaiting them, since Stalin considered their stay in the West as a security risk in both military and political terms.⁵

Determined to do something about the dreadful plight of these DPs, Nabokov decided to get involved into what was being established in Berlin as the quadripartite Allied Control Council. (Following the Allied agreements of the Yalta Conference in February 1945, the former Nazi Reich and its capital were to be split into a Soviet, American, British, and French zone of occupation.) No sooner had he offered his services than he walked in uniform through the ruins of the former Reich Chancellery, watching Russian officers posing for the camera in what was once the Führer’s bathtub.⁶ It did not take long for him to meet an old acquaintance from his Berlin days in the early 1920s: Michael Josselson, an émigré of

⁴ Memorandum of Nabokov’s conversation with Charles J. Child, Director of the Art and Music Section, Division of Cultural Cooperation, Department of State, June 30, 1944, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Division of International Exchange of Persons, Subject Files Series—Music, UD 57, 5-Memos of Conversation. Already in 1941, Nabokov expressed a wish for “defense jobs in music,” and he more than once offered his services to John Peale Bishop, who served at the time as publications director in Nelson Rockefeller’s Office of Inter-American Affairs. Nabokoff to Wilson, March 16, 1941, Wilson Papers, 49-1341; Nabokoff to Bishop, April 11, 1941, Bishop Papers, 22-5.

⁵ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 182. The full truth about the MVD (later NKVD) camps remained hidden until the last days of the former GDR and USSR. Irina Shcherbakova, “How Buchenwald Became NKVD’s Torture Chamber,” *Moscow News*, June 4, 1993.

⁶ Nabokov, “Music in Ruins,” *The Peabody Notes* [Peabody Conservatory of Music, Baltimore, Maryland] 2/1 (Fall 1947): 1.

Estonian-Russian extraction who, like Nabokov, had been uprooted by the Bolshevik revolution, spent his adolescence and early adulthood in the émigré communities of Berlin and Paris, and finally migrated to the United States around the mid-1930s. Equally eager to contribute his share to the war effort, Josselson had enlisted in the US Army in July 1943 and eventually found himself assigned as prisoner-of-war interrogator to the Intelligence Section of the so-called Psychological Warfare Division (PWD), a counter-propaganda unit created by the Allied Forces (SHAEF) as part of the military campaign against Nazi Germany. In the months following the end of hostilities, both Nabokov and Josselson obtained leading jobs in the Berlin section of the Information Control Division (ICD), a division of the United States Office of Military Government for Germany (OMGUS) charged with the mission to “denazify” Germany’s cultural and media infrastructure and to cultivate the German mind for the principles of democracy and internationalism.⁷

With respect to the field of the performing arts, ICD cultural officers like Nabokov and Josselson (i.e., US civilians with military privileges) were expected to prevent “ardent Nazi sympathizers” from mounting Germany’s stages and to license those performers, actors, conductors, directors and theater managers whom they believed to be politically untainted. In addition, they saw to it that Germans would be exposed to artistic achievements of those who had been suppressed by the Nazis and that no concerts and other forms of live performance degenerated into nationalist, fascist or otherwise subversive manifestations.⁸ Further, they coordinated the publication and dissemination of sheet music, recordings and writings about music, the return of valuable music manuscripts to the State Libraries, and the redistribution of tons of scores and costumes that in the last years of the war had been stored in vaults, castles, and salt mines remote from Allied bombing targets.⁹ Finally, with respect to the long term objective of severing the ties by which Germany’s cultural sector had been bound to Goebbels’s propaganda apparatus, they conducted negotiations between entrepreneurs and authorities at the city, municipal, and *Land* level. Besides these bureaucratic tasks, they rolled up their sleeves to solve all the pragmatics involved in rebuilding a war-torn cultural infrastructure, securing “halls and houses for the orchestras, operas and conservatoires, coal to heat them,

⁷ F. W. Marshall, Office of the Deputy Military Governor, memorandum “Basic Policy for Information and Information Control Operations in Germany,” January 17, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/4.

⁸ Supreme Headquarters of the Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), *Manual for the Control of German Information Services*, Chapter 10, Jackson Papers, box 18.

⁹ Kurt Hirsch to Nabokov, memorandum “Transfer of Costumes and Orchestral Scores Located in the Salt Mine of Heimbaldshausen,” October 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-3/6.

roofing and bricks to patch up the leaks and holes, bulbs to light them, instruments for the orchestras, calories for the musicians.”¹⁰

Speaking fluently the languages of all four Allied forces among which Austria, Germany and Berlin were divided after the dissolution of the Nazi empire, Nabokov’s and Josselson’s assignments soon came to involve more than the physical reconstruction of Berlin’s cultural venues and the “recolorization” of German writers, artists and musicians. Josselson was supposed to gauge the feelings and attitudes of Soviet personnel at informal four-power parties and to assess whether or not Moscow would take an antagonistic or a cooperative line at any imminent meetings of the Allied Kommandatura, the coordinating body set up for the joint administration of Berlin. Nabokov was entrusted with the task of convincing ICD’s counterpart in the Soviet Military Administration (*Sonjetische Militär-Administration in Deutschland*, SMAD) of the need to establish a quadripartite Directorate of Information Control jointly with the British, the French and the Americans—“the thirteenth or fourteenth child of that happy military family called the Allied Control [Council],” the governing body charged with the coordination of Allied policies concerning the denazification, demilitarization, and democratization of Germany.¹¹

“Happy” great-power collaboration is indeed what many hoped for in the immediate aftermath of the war. From their experiences in negotiating with SMAD officials, however, Nabokov and Josselson came to know better. Initially, both considered themselves to be “apolitical” and capable of entertaining “excellent personal relationships” with most of their Soviet counterparts with whom they felt a cultural kinship. “It was only after Soviet policies became openly aggressive, when stories of atrocities committed in the Soviet zone of occupation became a daily occurrence, when some anti-Nazi Germans whom I had befriended disappeared overnight only to be heard from after many months from Siberia, and when the Soviet propaganda became crudely anti-Western, that my political conscience was

¹⁰ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 216–7.

¹¹ W. Phillips Davison, former Chief of the ICD Plans & Directives Branch, *A Personal History of World War II* (New York: iUniverse, 2006), 129; Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 222. According to his FBI file, Nabokov was Deputy Chief of ICD’s Film, Music, and Theater Section in Berlin from September to December 1945, Coordinator of Inter-Allied Negotiations from December 1945 to July 1946, and Cultural Adviser to Ambassador Robert Murphy and Military Governor Lucius Clay from July 1946 to January 1947. Nabokov’s networking skills apparently even brought him to the top of the Soviet occupation pyramid, i.e., face to face with Marshall Georgy Zhukov, the military governor of the Soviet Occupation Zone in Germany until Stalin replaced him with Vasily Sokolovsky out of fear concerning Zhukov’s popularity. In February 1946, Vladimir Nabokov wrote his sister that “in Paris [Nicolas] was invited to Marshal Zhukov’s [theater] box.” Vladimir Nabokov to Elena Sikorski, February 24, 1946, in *Vladimir Nabokov: Selected Letters, 1940–1977*, ed. Dmitri Nabokov and Matthew J. Bruccoli (San Diego: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1989), 66.

awakened,” Josselson remembered later in life.¹² Indeed, the ever more strained relations between the Soviet Union and the Western Allies, eventually culminating in the breakdown of the Allied Control Council, the Berlin Blockade, and the constitutional consolidation of the rift between East and West in a divided Germany, foreshadowed the competition in which both men would get deeply involved in the 1950s and early 1960s, i.e., the competition for the allegiance of those who found themselves balancing between the opposing ideologies of the United States and the Soviet Union.

This chapter follows the efforts of the Allies to rebuild postwar Germany in their image, efforts that ostensibly started out as concerted activities but would end up in fierce competition over German hearts and minds as Cold War tensions escalated into an irreversible rift between the Western and Soviet allies. Prime focus are the repeated appeals of ICD’s cultural officers to their superiors not to overstress OMGUS’s denazification mission at the expense of an expedite recovery of Germany’s cultural life. In their view, a series of incidents attesting to OMGUS’s lack of interest in culture, including the protracted denazification procedure of the celebrated conductor Wilhelm Furtwängler, had a disastrous effect on the American prestige with the Germans. Nabokov, adviser to the Military Governor, emerged as a particularly vocal exponent for investments in US-German exchanges in order to offset Soviet initiatives in the cultural domain. Eventually his call would be met with a visiting artists program, which, however, produced only meager results. The most successful visits—of Yehudi Menuhin, Leonard Bernstein, and Paul Hindemith—took place outside the framework provided by the program. To counter the unrelenting machinery of Soviet propaganda, clearly a more persistent strategy was imperative.

“Democratic Renewal”: Cultural Policy in the Soviet Zone of Germany

When the American and British occupation forces assumed control of their sector of Berlin in early July 1945, they were confronted with an unpleasant *fait accompli*. In a time of barely two months since their march into the Nazi bulwark, the Soviet forces had, for better *and* worse, deeply marked their presence on the devastated capital. During their first inspection tour of Berlin upon their arrival, Josselson and his colleague, Henry Alter, were particularly struck by the “the show must go on” policy that seemed to reign in the domain of the performing arts. Everywhere they came, they saw announcements for classical concerts, plays, movies, and cabaret. It was a “remarkable achievement,” Alter reported, all the more so if one bore in

¹² Josselson, autobiographical note “The Prelude to My Joining the ‘Outfit,’” summer 1969, Josselson Papers, 27-2.

mind that in the last months of the war, when the Allies advanced ever deeper into the Nazi realm, all stage performers had been forced into conscription. However, whereas other areas of public life were drastically purged from “Nazi elements” in accordance with Allied agreements, the Russians seemed to have forgotten a great deal when it came to artists. Indeed, considering the privileges granted to them in terms of food rations, cigarettes, coal, and other such amenities regardless of their past associations with Nazi institutions, artists seemed to be seen “apart from other humans, and of limited accountability.”¹³

Aside from the fact that they knew from experience the importance of circuses in the absence of bread, the Soviet authorities had good reasons to extend such a high priority to a prompt reconstitution of Germany’s cultural life. For years Goebbels’s propaganda machinery had depicted the Bolsheviks as the basest barbarians (*Untermenschen*) one could think of, and this image was anything but refuted by the behavior of the Soviet troops that had come to cut the Third Reich’s prospected thousand years of existence short. Many Berliners, especially women, who lived through the chaotic and lawless onset of the occupation painfully remember the brutal violence and random injustice inflicted upon them by inebriated hordes of Red Army soldiers seeking revenge for the atrocities the Nazis had committed to their families, compatriots, and humankind in general—a period of terror and anarchy that hardly changed for the better when the Soviet Military Administration (SMAD) was installed in early June.¹⁴

That it would take more than a year for SMAD to subdue the daily waves of rape, looting and unexplained arrests or abductions should be attributed to the absence of clear lines of command between, and within, Moscow, Karlshorst (the eastern Berlin district in which SMAD’s headquarters were located), and German governing institutions. Indeed, clear-cut directives were the last thing that emanated from Stalin’s Kremlin. The Politburo proved itself utterly divided over the question of Germany’s future. One faction proposed to drain Germany from all its military, economic, and cultural resources by way of reparations, another opted for a separate (East)

¹³ Henry C. Alter and Michael Josselson, FTM, report “Recommendations of Film, Theater and Music Sub-Section,” July 18, 1945, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/242-3/13. A British Information Control report from October 1946 likewise mentioned that the Soviet attitude towards the cultural sector seemed to be in tune with the “German belief that all persons connected with the arts should be regarded as a different kind of human being.” As cited by George Clare, former Information Control Officer, *Before the Wall: Berlin Days, 1946–1948* (New York: Dutton, 1990), 98.

¹⁴ For a comprehensive introduction into the Soviet occupation of Germany that draws extensively on materials from Russian archives, see Norman M. Naimark, *The Russians in Germany: A History of the Soviet Zone of Occupation, 1945–1949* (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1995). On the German perception of the Soviet presence in the immediate aftermath of the Nazi surrender, see Anne Hartmann and Wolfram Eggeling, *Sonjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR, 1945–1953* (Berlin: Akademie, 1998), 101–6.

German state under Soviet tutelage, and a third pleaded for a unified, stable and neutral Germany with strong economic ties to the Soviet Union. All these factions had their advocates among the Soviet military authorities and their German subordinates, and few would shy away from using their direct lines of contact with the highest in the Soviet pecking order to bypass one another. As a result, it could happen that one agency tried to turn the tide of rape and pillage while another let its troops run riot; that German farms and business concerns were expected to meet production quotas while their machinery and factories were being dismantled and evacuated; or that voters were constantly told that the way to becoming a “true democracy” was reopened for them, while the only party in the Soviet zone that could count on SMAD’s support was the Communist Party (KPD), later the Socialist Unity Party (SED).¹⁵

Obviously, this inconsistent performance of Soviet authorities could only be ended by the supreme authority that went by the name of Stalin. His decision-making regarding Germany, however, depended on the course of the inter-Allied negotiations, and it was only when these negotiations headed for a definitive collision that the Kremlin’s oracle spoke the word that restored order, albeit a dubious one: Germany would be divided, its eastern zone Sovietized. Until that moment, however, chaos ruled in Soviet-occupied Germany, and it was up to Colonel Sergey Tulpanov, head of the Administration for Propaganda and Censorship of SMAD’s Political Division (renamed to Administration for Information in January 1947), to prove the Nazi’s anti-Bolshevik propaganda wrong—a mission that was like swimming against the tide as long as other Soviet military agencies remained unable, if not unwilling, to rein in their marauding personnel, stop the excessive expropriation of vital industrial assets, or decelerate unpopular Soviet procedures such as land reform, collectivization and nationalization.¹⁶ No other strategy seemed better suited for improving the image of the Soviet presence in the eyes of the Germans than to return to them their museums, presses, concert halls, cinemas, and theaters that Goebbels had closed for the sake of “total war.” Thus, as soon as Soviet administrators entered the cities that had been “liberated” by the Red Army, they set out to present themselves as patrons of German culture and solicit the goodwill of the local intelligentsia, condoning ties with the former Nazi establishment when needed.

¹⁵ Gavriel D. Ra’anan, *International Policy Formation in the USSR: Factional “Debates” during the Zhdanovshchina* (Hamden, CT: Archon Books, 1983).

¹⁶ Tulpanov relates on the tasks of his unit in “Vertrauen und Zusammenarbeit,” in *...einer neuen Zeit Beginn: Erinnerungen an die Anfänge unserer Kulturrevolution, 1945–1949*, ed. Institute for Marxism-Leninism (SED) and Kulturbund (Berlin: Aufbau, 1981), 511–22, and *Deutschland nach dem Kriege (1945–1949): Erinnerungen eines Offiziers der Sowjetarmee*, ed. Stefan Doernberg, trans. Günter Gossing and Lothar Jäger (Berlin: Dietz Verlag, 1986).

Instrumental in the execution of this strategy was a group of German communists (*de facto* named after its leader, Walter Ulbricht), most of whom would come to occupy leading positions in the future Democratic Republic. Having returned from exile in Moscow, where they had been briefed on how to build societies along the lines of Stalin's reading of Marxism-Leninism, this group endeavored to unite the left-oriented bourgeoisie for the "democratic renewal" of Germany. The prime organization designed for this purpose was the Cultural League for the Democratic Renewal of Germany (*Kulturbund zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands*), a brainchild of the onetime Expressionist poet Johannes R. Becher, who realized all too well that any success to appeal to German progressives hinged upon the extent to which their independence was guaranteed. At a well-attended inaugural rally (July 3–4, 1945) opened by the Berlin Philharmonic's rendition of Beethoven's *Egmont* Overture, Becher presented his association emphatically as a nonpartisan "parliament" for "cultural workers" devoted to the "eradication of Nazism from all facets of life and knowledge"—an objective which anyone opposed to fascism could easily endorse.¹⁷

For all its efforts to avoid the impression of being a vehicle of cultural Sovietization, skeptics held few if any illusions about the Kulturbund's actual allegiances. To them, the appearance of Becher's organization, just days before the Americans and British arrived to assume control of their city sectors, was nothing short of a Machiavellian plot to enlist "cultural workers" for Stalin's interests in the same way Soviet artists and writers had been tied to the state in the late 1920s and early 1930s. Indeed, despite Becher's resistance, the Kulturbund would, under pressure from Tulpanov, end up as a tool of ideological education and warfare controlled by the KPD/SED. At the first nationwide Kulturbund congress in May 1947, two months after the Truman administration officially declared its intention to "contain" communism, Becher admitted to the conferees—in the presence of Tulpanov—that "whether we want to be or not, we must be a political movement, [as] everything is politics nowadays."¹⁸ For the time being, however, it was strategic wisdom that SMAD restrain its revolutionary impulse in the field of culture, employing it instead to fashion an image of itself as a benefactor to German interests, and German interests only.

¹⁷ *Manifest des Kulturbundes zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1945). For detailed discussions of the Kulturbund, see David Pike, *The Politics of Culture in Soviet-Occupied Germany, 1945–1949* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 80–8; Wolfgang Schivelbusch, *In a Cold Crater: Cultural and Intellectual Life in Berlin, 1945–1948* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1998), 72–106; or Magdalena Heider, *Politik, Kultur, Kulturbund: Zur Gründungs- und Frühgeschichte des Kulturbundes zur Demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands 1945–1954 in der SBZ/DDR* (Cologne: Verlag Wissenschaft und Politik, 1993).

¹⁸ Cited from *Der erste Bundeskongress: Protokoll der ersten Bundeskonferenz des Kulturbundes zur demokratischen Erneuerung Deutschlands am 20. und 21. Mai 1947 in Berlin* (Berlin: Aufbau, 1947), 110.

“Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative”: Conflicting Priorities in the American Occupation Zone of Germany

SMAD’s leniency towards artists and intellectuals who had favored (or had been favored by) the Nazi regime, was unacceptable to the OMGUS leadership, which had set its mind on a strict and fair denazification procedure. No German public figure or administrator was to be exempted, no matter how talented or popular he or she was.¹⁹ In contrast to their Soviet counterparts who distinguished the fascist Germany of “the Hitler clique” from the humanist Germany of “the people,” many US policymakers and administrators, including ICD chief Robert A. McClure, deemed every single German—except for the few who demonstrably had been in opposition to the Nazi regime—at least partially guilty for the crimes perpetrated in his or her name. According to this line of reasoning, Hitler had been able to conduct his belligerent and genocidal campaigns in pursuance of his fantasy of an Aryan empire because the German people had allowed him to, predisposed as they were to both aggression and subordination to “the will of the collective” as dictated by a tyrannical elite. Therefore, the only re-education program that could possibly be effective, McClure asserted, was first to arouse in each German a sense of collective responsibility for the Nazi horrors, and then to “indoctrinate” him or her with the democratic ideals cherished by the American people. In practice, this meant that ICD first should take full control of the public sphere, then reshape it according to Allied terms, and finally return it to German control. And at all times, McClure repeatedly emphasized, “it lies with us, not them, to call both the key and pace of the tune.”²⁰

Not everyone in McClure’s division was convinced that this graded trajectory would work in practice, and neither did all accept the notion of collective guilt. In fact, even the top of the OMGUS command did not share the ICD chief’s lack of confidence in the regenerative power of German society, and made it understood that there was no need for the ICD to become a “Ministry of Propaganda” for American-style democracy.²¹ Indeed, as early as four months after Germany’s surrender, McClure was informed by the deputy military governor (later military governor), Lieutenant General Lucius D. Clay, that the operations of his division would

¹⁹ For the official Joint Chiefs of Staff directive on which the US occupation policy for Germany was initially predicated (JCS 1067), see *Germany 1947–1949: The Story in Documents* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 22–8.

²⁰ McClure, press releases concerning PWD and ICD activities, May 25 and August 2, 1945, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/242-2/36 and a speech delivered at a dinner meeting of the River Club, New York City, October 9, 1945, Jackson Papers, 73-McClure (3–4).

²¹ Clay to McClure, December 14, 1945, quoted from McClure’s private archive by Schivelbusch, *In a Cold Crater*, 32.

soon be turned over to the Germans. Likewise, SHAEF's Deputy Chief of Staff, a believer of the philosophy expressed in Bing Crosby's song "Accentuate the Positive, Eliminate the Negative," was delighted when his superior, SHAEF Chief of Staff (and future CIA Director) Walter Bedell Smith, rebuked McClure for insisting that an "internecine strife" should be stimulated in Germany.²² For their part, Nabokov and Eric T. Clarke, chief of ICD's Film, Theater and Music (FTM) Control Branch, politely presented the conflicting views between the ICD leadership and field officers as an "interesting disagreement" in which "we civilians see ICD as guiding the reconstruction of Germany" and as such "rather [would] have things start up now so that we may observe and control their tendencies," whereas "the colonels" apparently wished to confine ICD's tasks to purging and censorship, leaving "all new undertakings to begin only when the Army moves out."²³

In essence, this tension between "we civilians" and "the colonels" boiled down to a different understanding of the priority and relevance of culture in accomplishing OMGUS's mission. "The colonels" considered the arts more as entertainment than anything else, and opined that there were far more important problems to deal with in Germany than the restoration of its cultural enterprises. Also, they felt that OMGUS's interference in the cultural domain should not extend beyond what was necessary to prevent a repeat of recent history. As they saw it, Hitler's exploitation of the arts once more confirmed the prime tenet of cultural policy in the English-speaking world, viz., that culture and politics make poor bedfellows. Accordingly, they considered ICD's role in restoring Germany's cultural life to be limited to sorting out the foul apples in its infrastructure and providing legislation aimed at reducing governmental interference. Once these objectives were realized, it would be up to the Germans to regain a thriving theatrical and musical life.

In contrast, most FTM officers, many of whom were—either professionally or as amateurs—committed to German arts and literature in civilian life, argued that a quick regeneration of musical and theatrical activity was of the utmost concern to OMGUS's mission, as it would create plenty of jobs, stimulate the economy, and function as a "safety valve" by bringing

²² Frederick E. Morgan, SHAEF Deputy Chief of Staff, to Robert D. Murphy, US Political Adviser for Germany, April 14, 1945, Office of the US Political Adviser for Germany (NARA), Classified Records, UD 2531A, 1-df.

²³ Clarke, "Report on STAGMA Situation," October 18, 1945, OMGUS/IFZ, 10/17-3/2. Clarke and Nabokov had negotiated for days with the German state agency for musical royalty and copyright claims (STAGMA) to secure the rights of music that would be imported for re-education purposes, only to be carpeted by their superiors to explain why they had authorized STAGMA executives to resume their activities in what had been a branch of the Reich Chamber of Culture.

relief in a time when squalor and misery never seemed to end. Moreover, realizing that culture was anything but a luxury to most Germans, they reasoned that an effort “to help the Germans re-establish a semblance, a modicum of culture on the ruins of twelve years of the Nazi Reich” would be of “a re-educational and therapeutic value which could contribute greatly to restoring the German mind to a ‘live and let live’ way of thinking.” In defiance of those who held that the Nazis had corrupted German culture to the bone, they maintained that the perpetrator had to be distinguished from the perpetrated. To them, the legacy from Bach to Brahms and even Wagner, Hitler’s favorite composer, was in itself an immaculate contribution to the world’s cultural heritage that the Nazis had shamelessly abused for their own perverse purposes. Indeed, if Goebbels had abused music, film, and theater as “powerful psychological weapons” to corrupt the German spirit, it was now up to the Allies to convert them into “psychological weapons with which to destroy Nazism and promote a genuine desire for a democratic Germany.”²⁴ Accordingly, when the Mayor of Bayreuth suggested to explore the possibilities of reviving the most troubled music institution in Germany, the Bayreuth Wagner Festival, the chief of the ICD Music Section in Bavaria, John Evarts, gave his full support, surmising that the festival may “effect an important contribution to the reorientation work of music life in Germany.”²⁵

In stressing the importance of re-education over censorship, the FTM officers followed the earliest directives for the control of the performing arts that American and British PWD officers had derived from their wartime experiences in psychological warfare. “Music Control Instruction No. 1” warned that “we should not give the impression of trying to regiment culture in the Nazi manner,” as “such an attempt would in any case be doomed to failure.” Instead of compiling an exhaustive “index expurgatorius” of music and musicians supported by the Nazis, “German musical life [should] be

²⁴ Benno D. Frank, Deputy Chief FTM Branch, to Colonel G. R. Powell, memorandum “Theater and Music in Germany,” January 12, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/265-1/2; John Evarts, Chief Music Section, to Chief ICD FTM Branch, Bavaria, Special Report “Music Control in Bavaria,” period June 1945 to July 1946, June 27, 1946, OMGB/BHA, 10/48-1/4; Walter Hinrichsen, Music Control Officer, ODIC, “Music in Germany,” *Weekly Information Bulletin* [OMGUS] 73 (December 23, 1946): 6–7, 16–17, and “Reorientation Activities of ODIC in Germany: Theater and Music,” April 15, 1947, OMGUS/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music and Theater, A1 623, 248-17.

²⁵ Evarts, memorandum “Participation of Music Section in Orientation Activities,” May 9, 1947, OMGUS/BHA, 10/48-1/4. For a detailed account about the decision-making concerning the resuscitation of the Bayreuth Festival in 1951, see Sabine Henze-Döhring, “Kulturelle Zentren in der amerikanischen Besatzungszone: Der Fall Bayreuth,” in *Kulturpolitik im besetzten Deutschland, 1945–1949*, ed. Gabriele Clemens (Stuttgart: Steiner, 1994), 39–54. The Soviets, too, supported a Wagner renaissance, arguing that “not [all treasures of German culture] that the Fascists had claimed for themselves could be abandoned.” Rather, they were to be “purified.” Sergej Tulpanov [Sergej Tulpanov], “Vom schweren Anfang,” *Weimarer Beiträge* 5 (1967): 726.

influenced by positive rather than by negative means, i.e., by encouraging that music which we think beneficial and crowding out that which we think dangerous,” the latter being confined to all military marches used by the German Army and all songs exclusively or primarily associated with the Nazi regime. Above all, the focus of music control policy was to tone down every remaining sentiment of chauvinism among Germans by pulling them out of the “musical vacuum” they supposedly had lived in, and by reintroducing them to the vast corpus of works, composed within or outside of Germany, that had been banned or neglected by the Nazis.²⁶

But when Nabokov was asked upon his arrival in Berlin to evaluate the overall music scene in Germany and draft a proposal for an Allied music policy, he observed that the ICD’s negative task of extirpating Nazism, or, for that matter, “regimenting” German cultural life, significantly overshadowed the positive program of re-education. Plenty of conductors and musicians were willing, or even eager, to perform musical works from the Allied countries, but there were simply no scores available, with the result that “the Germans play only classical music with an insistence upon Mendelssohn,” whose ‘rediscovery’ had “the same boot-licking flavor as the ‘rediscovery’ by every German of a forgotten Jewish grandmother.”²⁷ To tackle this deficiency, Nabokov proposed to McClure the foundation of a music library to which each of the Allies would contribute the musical

²⁶ PWD/SHAEF, Music Control Instruction No. 1, June 19, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/243-2/1; Political Intelligence Department, Foreign Office, draft “Information Control in the British Occupied Zone of Germany,” Appendix B: “The Control of Music,” June 18, 1945; and W. H. A. Bishop, Director, British Information Control Service, “Note on Information Services Control Activities in the British Zone of Germany,” August 10, 1945, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA), FO 898/401; Heinz E. Roemheld, Chief ICD FTM Branch, to Robert A. McClure, September 12, 1945, OMGUS/NARA, Information Control Division, Executive Office, A1 249, 134-2. A list of “Works Permitted to be Performed Anytime,” dated June 9, 1945, cites exclusively instrumental works by the major Classical-Romantic composers from Germany, Austria, France, Russia, Central Europe and Scandinavia, including Strauss’s *Heldenleben* and Wagner’s *Siegfried Idyll*. OMGUS/IfZ, 10/18-1/6. Due to lack of agreement between Nazi ideologues over the question whether “degenerate” music could be “Aryanized” or not, the suppression of music officially declared as “degenerate” (jazz and various trends of modernism, including dodecaphony) was never systematically pursued, meaning that German music lovers had not lived in a “musical vacuum” as ICD cultural officers supposed, or wanted to suppose, they had. See, e.g., Michael H. Kater, *The Twisted Muse: Musicians and Their Music in the Third Reich* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997); Pamela Potter, “What is ‘Nazi Music’?,” *Musical Quarterly* 88 (2005): 428–55; Elizabeth Janik, *Recomposing German Music: Politics and Musical Tradition in Cold War Berlin* (Leiden: Brill, 2005); Heinz Geuen and Anno Mungen, eds., *Kontinuitäten-Diskontinuitäten: Musik und Politik in Deutschland zwischen 1920 und 1970* (Schliengen: Argus, 2006).

²⁷ Nabokov, FTM, to Colonel G. R. Powell, memorandum, October 24, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 10/18-1/1. Nabokov’s counterpart in ICD Munich, too, commented on the Mendelssohn revival as having become “critical, ridiculous, and urgent” (emphases in original). Edward Kilenyi, Chief of ICD’s Music Section in Bavaria, Weekly Report, August 10, 1945, OMGUS/BHA, 10/48-1/5. Obviously, programming or performing Mendelssohn had become a means for Germans to proclaim one’s anti-fascist credentials.

accomplishments of their own nation in the form of books, sheet music, and phonograph records. With official consent in his pocket, he started to apply his organizational skills, engaging his Russian, British and French colleagues for the idea, seeking the cooperation of publishers and librarians in London, Paris and New York City, and negotiating the complicated copyright issues involved. Thus, a year later, on September 28, 1946, the Inter-Allied Music Lending Library (Interalliierte Musik-Leihbibliothek) opened in the Berlin State Library (located Unter den Linden in the Soviet sector)—one of the few successful projects that emerged from quadripartite collaboration.²⁸

Most of the time, though, the occupation forces—the American and Soviet ones in particular—as well as ICD’s intelligence and media branches disagreed about the methods and priorities for reshaping Germany’s cultural life. To be sure, few of ICD’s music officers disagreed with their colleagues from the Intelligence Section—the sole authority to blacklist German civilians—that “musical big-wigs” with a seemingly patent record of collaboration with the Nazi regime, like Richard Strauss, Hans Pfitzner and Elly Ney, should be kept off the stage in the postwar order.²⁹ A complete denazification of Germany’s public arena, however, was, as Nabokov put it, “far removed from reality,” if only for the fact that membership of Nazi unions had been a prerequisite for employment in the Third Reich. One music officer in Munich observed that if one were to exclude all musicians who had been NSDAP members or who had enlisted in a Wehrmacht music corps to escape front duty, hardly any orchestra in Bavaria could continue to exist. Even if one would concentrate on conductors, soloists and first bench players only, the staggering task of checking everyone’s credentials against the ICD Intelligence Section’s rather black-and-white definition of complicity would tremendously delay the normalization of musical life.³⁰

²⁸ Nabokov to Virgil Thomson, October 11, 1945, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16; Nabokoff, US Delegate of the Information Committee of the ACA Political Directorate, “Input from Working Party of the Music Control Offices on the Opening of the Inter-Allied Music Lending Library,” August 12, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-2/22; Weekly Report of the Theater and Music Section, period September 26 to October 1, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-1/8; Hinrichsen, “Inter-Allied Music Library,” *Weekly Information Bulletin* [OMGUS] 105 (August 11, 1947): 11–12, 14.

²⁹ Edward Kilenyi, former Chief of ICD’s Music Section in Bavaria, “The Record of German Musicians,” *New York Times*, June 2, 1946, X5.

³⁰ Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 216–7; Arthur Vogel, Chief ICD Music Section, Bavaria, “Elimination of Nazi Musicians,” July 24, 1945, OMGB/BHA, 10/48-1/5; Holger E. Hagen, Deputy Chief Music Section, Bavaria, report on Mission to Munich and Nurnberg, September 14–23, September 29, 1945, OMGUS/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music and Theater, A1 623, 241, “Miscellaneous Reports”, Henry C. Alter, memorandum “Political Screening of Artists,” November 29, 1945, OMGUS/NARA, US Allied Command Austria, Information Services Branch, Theater & Music Section, General Records, A1 2027, 2, “Denazification”; Colonel Alfred Toombs, Chief ICD Intelligence Branch, to Eric Clarke, May 23, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ: 5/347-3/25; Colonel F. N. Leonard to T&M Section, “Denazification Berlin Philharmonic,” May 29, 1946; Walter Hinrichsen to Benno Frank, “Members of

What was especially frustrating, moreover, was that denazification directives constantly changed. At the beginning of the occupation, the screening of German personnel was conducted on an ad hoc basis. When the first blacklist was issued, which precluded anyone who had worked with Nazi officials from key offices, many of the Intelligence Section's earlier decisions had to be reversed, meaning that those who earlier had been found suitable by the Music Section to restart an opera house or symphony orchestra suddenly found themselves ostracized.³¹ Not only did such interventions impair the already fragile image of OMGUS with the average German, but it also made ICD appear wrongheaded, if not silly, in the eyes of the other allies, who prioritized re-education over denazification and, consequently, transferred the responsibility of personnel management into German hands sooner than the ICD command would like to have seen. The Soviets, for instance, did recognize that every Nazi, and everything that had to do with Nazism, should be eliminated from German public life. However, as mentioned before, they did not consider NSDAP membership alone a decisive factor in political clearance procedures (at least not if it came to the field of the arts).³² To them, it seemed foolish to dismiss an orchestra member for the sole reason that he had belonged pro forma to the NSDAP, if only because there was such a scarcity of musicians. Once a musical subject had proven that he was "an asset in the democratic rebuilding of his country," SMAD's music officer Sergey Barsky explained, Soviet authorities would acquit him from his duty to appear before German denazification boards (*Prüfungsausschüsse*).³³

Philharmonic Orchestra Berlin Discharged in Accordance with Denazification Policy in the US Zone," June 25, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/347-3/2.

³¹ This happened, for instance, to the conductors Eugen Jochum and Hans Knappertsbusch, who after intensive screening processes were licensed to conduct in the American zone, until the Intelligence Section discovered that they had been included "on the wrong list" and should be considered "Nazi parade horses" after all. Only when OMGUS decided to end the blacklisting as of May 1947, Knappertsbusch and Jochum could resume work with orchestras falling under American jurisdiction. Edward Kilenyi, Chief ICD Music Section, Bavaria, Weekly Report, October 24 and November 28, 1945, OMGB/BHA, 10/48-1/5; memorandum "Eugen Jochum," December 7, 1945 and McClure to his British colleague, Major General W. H. E. Bishop, December 19, 1945, Records of the Reich Chamber of Culture (BA), R56-1/2703/0108/08.

³² The French took a similar position, maintaining that since all Germany had been "Nazified," the fact that a German had or had not belonged to the Party did not automatically indicate whether he should be "condemned or whitewashed." French report quoted by Percy W. Bidwell, "'Re-Education' in Germany: Emphasis on Culture in the French Zone," *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 27/1 (1948-9): 79.

³³ Otto Winzer, member of the Ulbricht group and head of the Department of Popular Education (*Amt für Volksbildung*) of the Berlin municipal authorities (*Magistrat*) in conversation with Josselson, ISCS Survey Sub-Section, to ISCS Officer Berlin District, Semi-Weekly Report No. 2B, July 14, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-3/13; Barsky quoted from the Minutes of the Theater & Music Working Party (Quadrupartite), "Denazification Procedure in the Theater and Music Field," December 19, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/347-3/2. The *Prüfungsausschüsse* were German-staffed boards

The American cultural officers had every reason to be apprehensive of the pragmatism in the Soviet way of dealing with sensitive issues. Time and again, Tulpanov's propaganda strategists seized the incidents following from ICD's more dogmatic approach towards denazification as an opportunity to pose SMAD as the one and only genuine patron of German culture, thereby confirming Josselson's early impression that the Soviets were "trying to beat the Western Allies [by demonstrating] their own efficiency and good will towards the German people."³⁴ As Josselson and his colleagues saw it, the ICD command failed to see how adroitly SMAD ingratiated itself with Berlin's cultural elite, while OMGUS lost its sympathies due not only to an over-righteous denazification policy, but also to the occasionally tactless conduct of Army personnel who only seemed to care for their own recreation.

The Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra was one of the institutions which were to feel the effects of these two deficiencies in the OMGUS apparatus. As soon as they had brought about the downfall of the Nazi capital, the Soviets had reinstated the orchestra, placing it under the leadership of Leo Borchard (a Russian-born conductor who during the war had been marginally active in a Communist underground resistance group), allocating it a gaudy cinema in the southwestern city district of Steglitz (the Titania Palast), and exempting it from time-consuming clearance procedures. This favorable arrangement ended abruptly when the Philharmonic came to fall under American jurisdiction. Much to the dismay of John Bitter, chief of the Berlin Sector's FTM Branch, the ICD's Intelligence Section blacklisted one orchestra member after the other, whereas the Army's Special Services requisitioned the cinema for their own entertainment, subjecting the Philharmonic to bothersome negotiations to retain even part-time use of the building. Observing the critical response that this humiliating treatment of the orchestra provoked with local music lovers, Bitter warned his superiors that if the "crying need for the preservation of [such an] excellent organization as the Philharmonic" would be ignored, the latter could decide to go over to the British or Russians, where it would surely be welcomed with open arms.³⁵ Five days after his report, the damage towards America's

consisting of delegates from the theater and music unions, representatives of the *Land* and city cultural ministries, and several private citizens, who conducted preliminary screenings of applicants for functions in the performing arts. Their decisions were not binding on the occupation authorities. Although initially opposed to involving German citizens in the denazification procedure, the ICD command caved in by the summer of 1946 as it could not process the enormous piles of applications.

³⁴ Josselson, ISCS Survey Sub-Section, to ISCS Officer Berlin District, Semi-Weekly Report No. 8B, August 4, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-3/13.

³⁵ Bitter, Chief FTM Berlin, Semi-Weekly Report No. 12, August 18, 1945, and Weekly Report No. 28, October 12, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-3/13.

prestige that Bitter signaled in the Army's treatment of the Berlin Philharmonic exponentially increased when a young overzealous US soldier emptied his gun on the car that was driving Borchard home after curfew time had set in, only because the conductor's driver had mistaken a signal to stop at a mandatory checkpoint for an attempt of someone to hitch a ride.³⁶

Two years later, nothing had changed for the better.³⁷ During his tour of Germany and Austria to cover OMGUS operations in the field of music and theater, the *New York Herald Tribune's* music critic, Virgil Thomson, observed that "[t]he pampering of our soldiers is considered everywhere to take precedence over the reconstruction of German cultural life, even when this has been thoroughly de-Nazified." Whereas the Russians had successfully restarted the Berlin State Opera (*Staatsoper*), and the British somewhat later the Municipal Opera (*Städtische Oper*, today's *Deutsche Oper*), the Americans, who were "so strict that more than 99% of the German musicians in their zone and sector [were] still blacklisted," had not yet been able to bring the Berlin Philharmonic back to "anything like its former musical efficiency." Thomson was particularly critical of the "'hard peace' attitude" that prevailed in the military government, as a result of which "[w]e treat [the Germans] very much as we do Negroes in the United States[:] we expect them to work hard and to be very grateful to us but we refer to them as 'krauts' and do not eat with them in public." It was all summed up in the experience of the undernourished musicians of the Berlin Philharmonic, who, after having played at a party given by a US Army officer, were allowed to pass through "a supper room in which buffet tables groaned with food, without being offered so much as a sandwich."³⁸ Given this glaringly discriminatory treatment, "defection" to areas under British or Russian jurisdiction was a very real scenario.

³⁶ John Bitter, Berlin FTM Section, Semi-Weekly Report, August 25, 1945, in Chamberlin, *Kultur auf Trümmern*, 122–3. After the unfortunate death of Borchard, Bitter was instrumental in the subsequent appointment of the young Sergiu Celibidache, under whose leadership the Berlin Philharmonic regained its international prominence. Bitter, "Berlin Philharmonic," *Weekly Information Bulletin* [OMGUS] 100 (July 7, 1947): 9–11. For more on ICD's patronage of the Berlin Philharmonic, see Abby Anderton, "It was never a Nazi Orchestra: The American Re-education of the Berlin Philharmonic," *Music and Politics* 7/1 (2013): 1–16.

³⁷ Bitter, Bi-Weekly Report Music and Theater Activities, November 16–30, 1947, OMGUS/LB, 4/8-1/2.

³⁸ Thomson, "Music in Berlin and De-Nazification," *New York Herald Tribune* [Paris edition], September 14, 1946, 2; "German Culture and Army Rule," *New York Herald Tribune*, September 21, 1946, 2; and "Music Life behind Iron Curtain," *New York Herald Tribune*, September 28, 1946, 2. For an informal account of his 1946 tour of Europe, the German and Austrian leg of which he undertook jointly with Nabokov, see Thomson's autobiography, *Virgil Thomson* [1966] (New York: Dutton, 1985), 378–82.

Art above Politics? The Furtwängler Case

In the meantime, Wilhelm Furtwängler, the artistic leader of the Berlin Philharmonic, tried to resume his position. The eminent conductor had barely managed to escape to Switzerland when the Nazi regime, in the last months of its existence, ordered his arrest on grounds of suspected complicity in the assassination plot against Hitler. Now, he would find himself one of the most well-known victims of what Thomson described as “over-de-Nazification.” Although the ICD intelligence officers deemed him “conceited for believ[ing] that the musical world [was] waiting for him and would suffer a great loss if he could not conduct anymore,” they realized that they could not build a case against the famous conductor. He had not been a NSDAP member, did not adhere to any Nazi ideologies, and had ignored the honorary title of State Councilor (*Staatsrat*) that he had been obliged to accept from Hermann Göring. In addition, he had been more than once at odds with Hitler’s regime for failing to perform the Nazi salute at concerts, even in the presence of the Führer himself, for standing up for Jewish members of his Berlin and Vienna orchestras who were faced with the threat of dismissal or detention, and for publicly defending, and/or privately interceding on behalf of, prominent Jewish exponents of German musical and theatrical life, including Arnold Schoenberg, Bruno Walter, Otto Klemperer, Max Reinhardt and Guido Adler.³⁹ Eventually, when Goebbels and Hitler refused to intervene in the case of Paul Hindemith, the last modernist composer of international stature in the Third Reich who had become the target of vilification for associating with Jewish musicians and showing traits of “un-German behavior,” Furtwängler had resigned from his posts as director of the Berlin Philharmonic and the Prussian State Opera and vice president of the Reich Chamber of Music.⁴⁰

What spoke against the maestro, however, was that in February 1935, when Goebbels gave him to understand that Germany’s borders would close on him forever if he would choose to emigrate, he opted to stay, supposing—as he later declared—that he could do more to contravene the Nazi’s exploitation of German music from within than from without the system. Realizing that his choice required a pragmatic pact with the ruling elite, he decided to recognize Hitler’s supreme authority in matters of art policy on the condition that he would never have to assume responsibility

³⁹ Furtwängler to Bernhard Rust, Minister für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung, June 4, 1933, Records of the Reich Chamber of Culture (BA), R56-I/140, fols. 18-21; Furtwängler to Schoenberg, June 4, 1933, Schoenberg Correspondence, ID 10768; Furtwängler, open letter to Goebbels, *Vossische Zeitung*, April 11, 1933, repr. in translation in *Furtwängler on Music*, ed. Ronald Taylor (Aldershot: Scolar, 1991), 117–20.

⁴⁰ Furtwängler, “Der Fall Hindemith,” *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*, November 25, 1934, repr. in translation in *Furtwängler on Music*, 138–9.

for it: wherever he would perform, he would do so as a freelancer on behalf of “another Germany,” not as a representative of the Nazi regime. Furtwängler may honestly have thought he had done the most to distance himself from politics, but the American and British intelligence services felt that the conductor had opportunistically, if not deliberately, allowed himself to become “a powerful weapon” for the Nazi propaganda apparatus, lending support to Goebbels’s interests in proving the Third Reich to be in tune with the highest aspirations of German culture as expressed by Goethe, Beethoven and Wagner. After all, for all his apologies of having been tricked into it, Furtwängler had directed Wagner’s *Die Meistersinger* at the same party rally that ushered in the notorious Nuremberg Race Laws of September 1935, and conducted the Berlin Philharmonic on various Party functions (including Hitler’s birthday in April 1942) or during tours of occupied countries throughout the Nazi reign. For that reason alone, the widely esteemed conductor was compromised, and, in accordance with the Allied agreement on denazification, McClure insisted that he remain classified under the “mandatory removal category.”⁴¹

From the very outset, however, ICD’s FTM branch expressed its non-concurrence with the Intelligence Section’s blacklisting of Furtwängler. Nor could McClure find much support for this move with the other allies, all of whom employed musicians who had been banned from the stage in the American zone. The French objected to the conductor “because he is a German,” but proposed to stick to the protocol, which meant that the decision of the proper *Prüfungsausschuß* should be awaited before the Allied authorities could pass their final judgment on the case. The British, although teaming up with the Americans in the investigations into the conductor’s controversial role in the Third Reich, realized that the majority of the German music-loving public opined that the defendant’s genius was to be allowed to outweigh political considerations, and accordingly indicated not to raise any objections to the maestro’s reappearance if he were cleared before a German denazification tribunal. The Russians—as was to be expected—did not see any reason for “the world’s greatest conductor” to be put through the bureaucratic mill of denazification. But if inter-Allied legislation required him to undergo the procedure, it would be “ridiculous to

⁴¹ Memorandum “Dr. Wilhelm Furtwängler,” undated, OMGUS/NARA, US Allied Command Austria, Information Services Branch, Theater & Music Section, General Records, A1 2027, 2-Denazification; Declaration by Furtwängler, undated, Nabokov Papers, 1-2; OMGUS Information Control Intelligence Summary No. 32, February 1946, Records of the War Office (TNA), WO 208/4430; Ralph Brown, McClure’s representative, cited at a meeting on the Quadripartite Personnel and Denazification Committee of the Allied Kommandatura, undated but probably August or early September 1946, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/37-3/12.

expect [him] to queue up like everybody else.”⁴²

This impasse provided the perfect occasion for propaganda exploitation, and SMAD’s propaganda machinery did not fail to seize it. From mid-January 1946 onwards, the Soviet-licensed *Berliner Zeitung* ran a series of articles that defended Furtwängler against the charges of his critics. When the conductor applied for denazification to an Austrian tribunal in February 1946 and his rehabilitation was generally expected, the same newspaper published an open letter signed by prominent Berliners, including leading members of the Philharmonic and the Kulturbund, which called, in highly adulatory prose, for the return of “the high symbol of artistic perfection” to assist in the rebuilding of “a new and democratic Germany.”⁴³ A ray of hope in his otherwise bleak prospects for a swift return to Germany’s musical life, Furtwängler accepted the invitation, and agreed that, should he be rehabilitated, he would make himself available to the Berlin State Opera (located in the Soviet sector), provided that his freedom of movement would be guaranteed at all times.⁴⁴ The day after the Austrian denazification tribunal indeed acquitted him (March 9, 1946)—partly for the lack of evidence that proved him to have been a member of any Nazi institution, partly for the invaluable role he was expected to play in the reconstruction of musical life in Austria—the Russians packed Furtwängler onto a Soviet military cargo aircraft bound for Berlin, where he was awaited, under much media attention, by the Kulturbund’s president, Johannes Becher, and SMAD’s music officer, Sergey Barsky.⁴⁵ When asked about his intentions,

⁴² Semi-Monthly Progress Report of Film, Theater and Music Control Section, period September 15 to October 1, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/243-1/4; Stanley J. Grogan, Acting Chief ISB, to the Deputy Commanding General, US Forces in Austria, May 23, 1946, OMGUS/NARA, US Allied Command Austria, Information Services Branch, Theater & Music Section, General Records, A1 2027, 2-Denazification; B.T.B. Intelligence Summary No. 37 (extract), April 1, 1946, Records of the War Office (TNA), WO 208/4430; Arseny Guliga, Soviet representative at a meeting of the Denazification Subcommittee of the Allied Kommandatura’s Cultural Affairs Committee, April 1946, as cited by George Clare, *Berlin Days*, 132. In a questionnaire conducted by British information control officers among German citizens, interviewees expressed their wish for Furtwängler’s return, advancing “the old contention that great artists should have complete freedom of movement.” Control Commission for Germany (British Element), Information Services Control Branch, Monthly Summary No. 2, May 1, 1946, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA), FO 371/55798.

⁴³ P. R., “Ein Beitrag zur Diskussion um Furtwängler,” *Berliner Zeitung*, January 16, 1946, 3; “Berlin ruft Wilhelm Furtwängler,” *Berliner Zeitung*, February 16, 1946, 1, 3. On the drafting of this appeal, see the memoirs of *Berliner Zeitung* editor Hans Borgelt, *Das war der Frühling von Berlin: Eine Berlin-Chronik* (Munich: Schneekluth, 1980), 201–5.

⁴⁴ Furtwängler to Boleslav Barlog, March 23, 1946 and to Johannes R. Becher, September 22, 1946, in Furtwängler, *Briefe*, ed. Frank Thiess (Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1964), 129, 149–50.

⁴⁵ F. S., “Wilhelm Furtwängler in Berlin,” *Berliner Zeitung*, March 12, 1946, 1; Barsky, “Wilhelm Furtwängler: Zu seiner Ankunft in Berlin,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], March 13, 1946, 3. The February issue of the Kulturbund’s journal, too, paid an obsequious homage to Furtwängler: Erwin Kroll, “Wilhelm Furtwängler zum 60. Geburtstag,” *Aufbau* 1/2 (1946): 213–4.

the conductor explained that he had come on personal title only—a rather clumsy statement that shows how oblivious he was to the political game in which he was caught up.

The ICD top was not amused by this turn of events. McClure had been reconsidering his judgment on the conductor after a journalist had handed him Furtwängler's personal documentation file in early February. Curt Riess, a Jewish correspondent for American newspapers who regularly forwarded intelligence to OMGUS authorities, had personally received the file from the conductor, who, convinced of being a victim of an inimical conspiracy, was seeking press coverage of his side of the story. Upon finishing the dossier that same night, Riess, until then quite skeptic about the conductor's innocence, concluded that "there was no need for Furtwängler to say anything more," and decided to put his case to the ICD director.⁴⁶ Perhaps against all expectations, the file led McClure to the same conclusion as Riess. He promised his commitment to get Furtwängler removed from the blacklist as quickly as possible, and asked Riess to tell the conductor to keep a low profile in the meantime. One can imagine what went through McClure's mind upon learning that Furtwängler had nonetheless sought the limelight, which yielded him his rehabilitation in Berlin's Soviet sector, where the local *Prüfungsausschuß*—a Kulturbund-controlled institute that at the time was no longer recognized by the Western Allies—granted him clearance. The only way for McClure to avoid a loss of face in that situation was not to deviate an inch from the ethical standards he had set himself from the beginning. Thus, he refused to follow the line of reasoning that had led the Austrian commission to rehabilitate the conductor, and insisted that it be inconceivable for anyone who had allowed himself to lend "an aura of respectability to the circle of men who are now on trial in Nuremberg for crimes against humanity" to occupy a leading position in Germany.⁴⁷

The whole episode around Furtwängler's denazification was a blow to the US Military Government's image. The Soviets were clearly winning the battle for German public opinion, and the relations within McClure's division were more strained than ever. The tough line initiated by the ICD command obviously worked to its disadvantage, all the more so because the British and French refused to go along with it. Therefore, and in the face of three incisive personnel cuts that were ordered by Washington within the first two years of OMGUS's existence, deputy military governor Clay

⁴⁶ Curt Riess, *Furtwängler: Musik und Politik* (Bern: Scherz, 1953), 15–21; Furtwängler to Irme Schwab, October 24, 1945, *Briefe*, 117–8.

⁴⁷ Press release OMGUS Public Relations Service, February 20, 1946, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/270-3/4; in abridged form published as "Furtwängler Branded 'Tool' of Nazis," *New York Times*, February 21, 1946, 6, and "McClure Explains Allies' Boycott of Furtwaengler as Conductor," *New York Times*, February 22, 1946, 6.

deemed it wise to proceed with transferring the responsibility of denazification to the German authorities as quickly as possible. This meant that as of early March 1946, civilian tribunals (*Spruchkammern*) would assess the defendants' degree of involvement with Nazism and forward their verdict to the military government for ratification. Needless to say, this shift of policy embittered McClure and his intelligence staff, who—with good reason—suspected that German courts would maintain lower standards in their assessment of an individual's past associations with Nazi organizations than they did. They felt confirmed in their suspicion by a one-year study of “the German mind, character and way of life,” which dimly concluded that a year after the Nazi defeat, hardly any tendency towards democracy could be detected among the average German population, meaning that “the German potential for creating trouble must still be regarded as very high.”⁴⁸

As McClure and Clay reached a deadlock over the question whether time had come for OMGUS to slacken the reins, ICD's FTM officers saw their chance to wriggle Furtwängler, who in their view should be regarded as “a figure in the world of music apart from nationality,” out of Soviet hands. A few weeks prior to the conductor's long postponed hearing before a German denazification tribunal (*Spruchkammer*), they appealed to their superiors to refrain from “gratuitous comment” on the maestro's status, and expressed their hope that in the event of a positive outcome for the conductor, “clearance here will mean clearance everywhere.”⁴⁹ In this endeavor they were supported by Josselson and Nabokov, who seem to have used their high-ranking positions to interfere in the Furtwängler case, presumably behind the back of McClure.⁵⁰ In a letter written at the end of

⁴⁸ McClure to Clay, “Assumption of Information Control Responsibilities by German Agencies,” 23 November 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/37; Clay to McClure, December 14, 1945, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/4; Clay to John J. McCloy, Assistant Secretary of War, “Conditions in Germany,” September 16 and October 5, 1945, in *The Papers of Lucius D. Clay: Germany 1945–1949 (Clay Papers)*, ed. Jean Edward Smith (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1974), vol. 1, 78, 95–6; Clay, *Decision in Germany* (New York: Doubleday, 1950), 65–70; “A Report on Our Problem in Germany,” July 1, 1946, 2–3, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/4.

⁴⁹ Report on a Visit to the American Zone by Head Theater & Music Section, PR/ISC Group, Berlin, undated but probably November 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/244-1/27.

⁵⁰ Although the OMGUS records show that Josselson and Nabokov were involved in the investigations into the Furtwängler case from the beginning, they do not reveal their own judgment on the conductor. One of Josselson's colleagues remembered him as someone who, in contrast to his superiors, was aware of the complexities of Nazism in Germany and “genuinely believed that the role of intellectuals in a very difficult situation shouldn't be decided in an instant.” Melvin Lasky in an interview with Frances Stonor Saunders, August 1997, in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 14. David Monod suggests that Nabokov, whom he introduces as “one of Berlin's intelligence officers,” followed the hawkish line of the ICD top. The composer, however, never belonged to the ICD Intelligence Section, and, given his criticism of the collective guilt thesis, is more likely to have agreed with most music officers that the maestro should be exonerated as soon as possible. His colleague from the ICD Planning and Directives Branch, W. Phillips Davison, surmised that Furtwängler might not have been sidelined so long by the

their lives, Nabokov asked Josselson whether he remembered the approximate date that Furtwängler came to Berlin and gave a press conference “threatening to go to Moscow [*sic*] if we would not clear him at once.” Obviously the conductor had not uttered such a threat in public when SMAD brought him to Berlin in February 1946. But it might be very well that he made this point in private to Nabokov, who apparently got to meet the conductor thanks to the diplomatic skills of Josselson.⁵¹

Immediate clearance was something Josselson and Nabokov could not arrange for Furtwängler. But full clearance was the outcome of the protracted and at times wearying two-day hearing before the German-led Denazification Commission for Cultural Workers conducted ten months later, during which incriminating testimonies were far outnumbered by favorable ones, and rather insubstantial charges—concerning his (involuntary) state councillorship, his performances at two Nazi party functions, and his allegedly anti-Semitic slur against the Italian conductor Victor de Sabata—were either refuted or invalidated for lack of evidence.⁵² It was the “biggest circus we ever had,” the intelligence chief of ICD’s British counterpart recalled, a media spectacle during which—as McClure had feared—the fundamental question of how, if at all, the moral responsibility of artists working under a dictatorship should be assessed remained unaddressed.⁵³

The circus had not ended, though, for it took another four months for the clearance to be ratified by the Allied Kommandatura—a matter of routine that normally should have been settled within days. Needless to say, criticism mounted by the day, and the Soviet-licensed press kept insinuating

Intelligence Section had Nabokov not already been transferred from the FIM branch to the position of Coordinator of Interallied Negotiations by late 1945. Monod, *Settling Scores*, 130; Davison, *A Personal History of World War II*, 135.

⁵¹ “He [Furtwängler] was brought to my billet and spent a day and two nights at Bitterstr[asse] 16 before being packed off back to the ‘Villa Imperator’ above Montreux. I remember all about our talks with him (especially his views on Bach, Bayreuth and Brahms) but have forgotten the circumstances of his coming to Berlin. I seem to remember that you had something to do with bringing him out of the Soviet sector (hadn’t you?) to my billet. I remember gen. McClure’s gentle fury at Furtwängler’s behavior.” Nabokov to Josselson, October 28, 1977, Josselson Papers, 23-1. At least since 1951, Nabokov actively sought contact with Furtwängler and eventually became—in Nabokov’s experience—“good friends” with the conductor. Furtwängler’s assessment of the scores Nabokov sent him was flattering: “[E]verything you write [is] full of natural talent.” Nabokov to Furtwängler, September 21, 1951, CCF, III-2-6; Furtwängler to Nabokov, January 12, 1954, Nabokov Papers, 2-1.

⁵² The hearings before the Sub-Commission for Denazification of Cultural Workers at the Berlin Magistrat took place, amid great public attention, on December 11 and 17, 1946. For the minutes, see OMGUS/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music and Theater, A1 623, 237-nf. For a detailed account of the trial based on these minutes, see Shirakawa, *The Devil’s Music Master*, 309–37.

⁵³ Colonel Kaye Sely, Chief, Intelligence Section of the British Information Services Control, as cited by Clare, *Berlin Days*, 197.

that the Western Allies were to blame for the unseemly delay.⁵⁴ Fed up with bad press, the Berlin FTM branch approached Josselson, at the time the American representative on the Kommandatura's Cultural Affairs Committee, to expedite the process. Upon finding out that the state of inertia in the ratification procedure was due to the Denazification Commission's failure to forward its conclusion of the December hearings to the Kommandatura because of indications about "additional incriminating material" that might lead to a reopening of the case, Josselson intervened and demanded the paperwork to be submitted immediately.⁵⁵

The nature of the "additional incriminating material" that apparently halted the bureaucratic procedure is unclear, but it might have included the evidence that researchers have come to retrieve ever since the controversial trial in December 1946. Seriously casting doubt on the altruistic, idealistic, and apolitical image Furtwängler had managed to create of himself since the collapse of the Third Reich, this evidence divulges that the conductor had not only interceded with Nazi authorities on behalf of Jews or known opponents of the Nazi regime but also anti-Semites, full-hearted Party members, and musicians sympathetic with the Nazi cause. In addition, it demonstrates how Furtwängler used his influence not only in the interest of others, but especially in his own interest. All whom he considered a threat to his position and interests, including Richard Strauss, Clemens Krauss, and Herbert von Karajan, experienced Furtwängler's skills in eliciting from the Nazi apparatus the outcome he desired. And what is one to make of an intervention by Furtwängler if the subject is described as "one of the few Jews, whose track record has been in the time I know him *evidently constructive*, and who always evinced "a true *intrinsic affinity with German music*"?⁵⁶ A strategic use of Nazi phraseology to let authorities hear what they wanted to hear? Or a basic endorsement of the Nazi view on the limited potential of Jewish artist to contribute to "true German culture"? And was his acceptance of Goebbels's outstretched hand after their fallout over the Hindemith case really a calculated act of resistance? Or was it ultimately just

⁵⁴ "The Case of Furtwängler: Strange Usages at Schlüterstraße" [translation produced by OMGUS staff], *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], March 16, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/347-3/1.

⁵⁵ Josselson, "Case of Wilhelm Furtwängler," March 11, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/267-3/4; "Decision Personnel and Denazification Committee of the Allied Kommandatura re. Furtwängler's Appeal for Denazification," April 29, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, AG/1949/88/3. In an obvious slip of memory, Josselson would later in life aggrandize his role in the Furtwängler affair as one of "sparing the great German conductor the humiliation of having to go through the denazification procedure despite the fact that he had never been a member of the Nazi Party." Autobiographical note "The Prelude to My Joining the 'Outfit,'" summer 1969, Josselson Papers, 27-2.

⁵⁶ This intercession was on behalf of Bernhard Sekles, director of the Frankfurt conservatory and one of Hindemith's teachers. Furtwängler to Bernhard Rust, Minister für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Volksbildung, undated but certainly from 1933, Records of the Reich Chamber of Culture (BA), R56-I/140, fol. 33.

self-serving opportunism that guided his decisions? After all, in return for his cooperation with the Nazi regime, he not only could maintain the prominent positions in cultural life that he otherwise would have to sacrifice but also received one of the highest salaries an artist could make at a time of crisis and war.⁵⁷ Be it as it may, questions like these at least give an alternative ring to the final words Furtwängler addressed to his judges: “The political function of art is to be above politics.”⁵⁸

In early April 1947, however, when Josselson recognized that OMGUS really could not afford to protract a (positive) outcome of his case any longer, Furtwängler found himself classified as a “fellow traveler” (*Mitläufer*) rather than as a direct exponent of the Nazi bureaucracy, which meant that he was eligible for leadership positions again. A month later, on May 25, he reappeared with the Berlin Philharmonic at the Titania Palast for the first time since the collapse of the Third Reich, despite SMAD’s attempt to hold him to his earlier promise to assume the artistic directorship of the Berlin State Opera. “In this time of a menacing stylistic degeneracy and lacking standards,” the music critic Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt wrote in the program booklet, Furtwängler’s musicianship brings forth the hope that music will soon regain its “moral function,” i.e., “to be a language of humanity, and to reconcile with sounding images [*tönenden Bildern*] what in the realm of the logical seems to be irreconcilable.” In similarly rapturous language, Stuckenschmidt’s colleague, Fritz Brust, declared the conductor to be “the representative of the German soul, of unbending *Werketreue*.” The war correspondent and theater critic Hilde Spiel looked with suspicion at such lofty appraisals. To her, Furtwängler’s comeback concert was tantamount to “a tribal ritual that celebrates the renascence of a myth.” His musical skills may be indeed “miraculous,” Spiel conceded in a review for *The New Statesman*, but the “mass hysteria he engendered in his audience is rife with ill omens.”⁵⁹ In whatever way one looked at Furtwängler’s rehabilitation, supporters within ICD could rub it in to all their naysayer colleagues: the concert, with Beethoven’s Fifth and Sixth Symphonies on the program, was “an honest musical success” without political demonstrations;

⁵⁷ For detailed, and overall exculpating, accounts of Furtwängler’s complex relationship with the Nazi regime, see Sam H. Shirakawa, *The Devil’s Music Master: The Controversial Life and Career of Wilhelm Furtwängler* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992) and Fred K. Prieberg, *Trial of Strength: Wilhelm Furtwängler in the Third Reich* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1994). Assessments that are critical of the conductor’s decisions and suspicious of his de facto defense include Kater, *The Twisted Muse*, 195–203, and Herbert Haffner, *Furtwängler* (Berlin: Parthas, 2003).

⁵⁸ Furtwängler in his closing address to the Sub-Commission for Denazification of Cultural Workers at Magistrate Level, December 17, 1946, 64, OMGUS/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music and Theater, A1 623, 237-nf.

⁵⁹ Spiel, *Welche Welt ist meine Welt? Erinnerungen 1946–1989* (Munich: List, 1990), 33–5. Stuckenschmidt and Brust are quoted in this passage.

listeners forgot all politics and lost themselves in the music...”⁶⁰ This was merely a scant consolation for the American military government. For in defiance of Furtwängler’s final words at his denazification trial, his case only portended that art was anything but to be above politics in the years to come.⁶¹

Calm Before the Storm: The Menuhin-Furtwängler Concerts

Elated by what many saw as their own little triumph in the Furtwängler case, ICD’s music officers devised the ultimate strategy to boost the lamentable image of OMGUS: a series of benefit concerts by the Berlin Philharmonic under the baton of the rehabilitated maestro, featuring as soloist America’s most celebrated violinist at the time, Yehudi Menuhin. Actually, the Section had been trying for quite some time to get Menuhin to repeat his successful appearance with the Philharmonic in the previous year (then conducted by Sergiu Celibidache), but the violinist, who had become personally acquainted with Furtwängler in the meantime, stipulated the clearance of the conductor as a condition for his accepting the invitation.⁶² That condition had now been met, but the idea of an American citizen performing with someone whose affiliations with the Nazi regime remained debatable still fell on stony ground with the ICD command, which informed its staff that while it would be pleased to sponsor Menuhin “as a top-ranking American artist in our

⁶⁰ John Bitter, report of Theater and Music Section, May 28, 1947, OMGUS/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Theater and Music, A1 623, 241-Berlin Reports; Eric Clarke cited by John Elliot, Adviser to Director Civil Administration Division, OMGUS, May 25, 1947, repr. in Elisabeth Furtwängler, *Über Wilhelm Furtwängler* (Wiesbaden: Brockhaus, 1980), 135. Incidentally, a few days later, Bitter detected “a political tinge” in the length of the applause with which Furtwängler’s comeback at the Staatsoper (i.e., as guest conductor, not in a Staatsoper-related function) was greeted. Bitter, report of Theater and Music Section, July 17, 1947, *ibid.*

⁶¹ For other accounts of Furtwängler’s denazification case, see, for instance, Clare, *Before the Wall*, 100–16; Riess, *Furtwängler*, 273–95; Borgelt, *Das war der Frühling von Berlin*, 201–19; Monod, *Settling Scores*, 128–55; and Janik, *Recomposing German Music*, 134–9.

⁶² Walter Hinrichsen to Robert McClure, “Requested Chronological Report with Reference to Yehudi Menuhin’s Appearance Before German Audiences,” May 3, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/348-3/9; Kathleen McLaughlin, “Germans Absolve Dr. Furtwaengler,” *New York Times*, April 20, 1947, 54. In response to McLaughlin’s article, the War Department let a statement be published ensuring US public opinion that Furtwängler’s clearance “was not conditional upon any agreement for joint appearance [with] Menuhin.” “Ruling on Furtwaengler,” *New York Times*, May 15, 1947, 32. Menuhin started to defend Furtwängler against his critics after having heard during his tour of Europe in the summer of 1945 various positive testimonies on Furtwängler’s record, including from former inmates of Nazi concentrations camps. “Menuhin Calls on Allied World to Accept Furtwaengler Again,” *New York Times*, December 5, 1945, 26. For a discussion of Menuhin’s position on German guilt and Jewish victimization, see Robert Magidoff, *Yebudi Menuhin: The Story of the Man and the Music* (London: Hale, 1956), 243–51. For Menuhin’s own reminiscences of Furtwängler, see *Hommage à Yebudi Menuhin: Festschrift zum 70. Geburtstag am 22. April 1986*, ed. Karl Wilhelm Pohl and Angela Zipf-Pohl (Baden-Baden: Nomos, 1986), 51–9.

reorientation program,” sponsoring Furtwängler was out of the question.⁶³ General Clay’s political adviser, Ambassador Robert Murphy, evidently thought otherwise and overruled the ICD leadership. Thus, during a six-day visit late September and early October 1947, two of the most renowned musicians of their time concertized in both Berlin’s Western and Soviet sectors for audiences and critics that were unanimous in their praise.⁶⁴

The OMGUS press, too, lauded Menuhin’s appearance, and could not resist the temptation to boast that the violinist was “one of us,” born and raised in a world that men had always dreamed of, “a world in which race and creed and color would be no deterrent to greatness, a world of opportunity for all.”⁶⁵ In a less self-congratulatory manner, Benno Frank, the Berlin chief of the ICD Theater and Music Section, arrived at the same conclusion. Frank had attended the concert for the benefit of Berlin’s Jewish community that took place under Soviet auspices at the Staatsoper on October 2 (incidentally, with the Staatskapelle, not the Berlin Philharmonic). The record-breaking box office receipts (RM 50,000), the ovation that lasted for half an hour, and Frank’s curious experience of shaking hands with several Russian officers who came up to him to express how moved they had been by Menuhin’s playing demonstrated what music officers continuously tried to impress on their superiors’ minds, namely, that it was imperative for the success of the OMGUS mission to have top-ranking US artists perform in the American occupation zones.⁶⁶

What the ICD reports did not comment on, however, were the groups who had deliberately chosen not to attend the Furtwängler-Menuhin concerts. Offended that Menuhin had allowed himself to play for the Germans with an orchestra and conductor who had been more than closely tied to the power elite that had designed and executed the holocaust, the residents of Berlin’s three DP camps—mainly Russian and Polish Jews who

⁶³ William H. Kinard, Deputy Director, ODIC, to Staff Secretary, ICD, May 5, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/270-3/4.

⁶⁴ Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt (*Die neue Zeitung*) qualified the Menuhin-Furtwängler concerts as “perfect” (“vollendetes Musizieren”), Kurt Schönewolf (*Neue Zeit*) as “harmony of absolute beauty” (“Akkord vollkommener Schönheit”), and the unidentified critic of *Der Kurier* as “medicine and revelation” (“Arznei und Offenbarung”). For a full impression of the Berlin press reaction on Menuhin’s visit, see the clipping file in OMGUS/IfZ, 5/266-1/31.

⁶⁵ “Menuhin Artist and Ambassador Extraordinary,” *The Berlin Observer*, undated clipping, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/266-1/31.

⁶⁶ Frank to Clarke, “Concert of Menuhin,” October 3, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-3/9. That of the three Berlin concerts this was the only one that did not feature a composition by a Jewish composer is curious. The program, which featured Gluck’s Overture to *Alceste*, Bach’s Sonata for Solo Violin in C Major and Beethoven’s Violin Concerto, even concluded with Wagner’s Prelude and *Liebestod* from *Tristan und Isolde*. No one from the audience seemed to have expressed their discontent at these peculiarities. Ludwig Misch, “Yehudi Menuhin und Furtwängler spielen für die Juden,” *Der Weg: Zeitschrift für Fragen des Judentums* (October 10, 1947): 5.

did not wish to be repatriated out of fear of persecution—stayed away from the concerts, including a recital by Menuhin that had been specifically organized on their behalf (but without their consultation) at the Düppel Center at Schlachtensee. When he learned upon his arrival at the nearly empty concert venue that the camp residents had been called upon by the Center’s newspaper not to attend the concert, he asked for an opportunity to explain his collaboration with Furtwängler and the Philharmonic. “Boos, hisses and imprecations” came from all directions when he climbed the stage to explain his case the next day. By the time he had ended a passionate confession of his belief in the universality and humanitarian powers of music, the crowd was shouting for “unsere Yehudi” to give the concert he was supposed to give the previous day.⁶⁷ At this time, Menuhin’s critics in the United States and the nascent state of Israel remained unyielding in their stance that playing German music with a German conductor and a German orchestra (and not just a German orchestra, but the former *Reichsorchester*) could not be taken otherwise than as an affront to the Jewish experience of the unspeakable crimes perpetrated on them in the name of German *Kultur*. Yet, in the years ahead, many of them who came to experience Menuhin’s charisma live would come around.⁶⁸

Although certainly noteworthy, Menuhin’s interactions with the Jewish DP communities passed unmentioned in the OMGUS reports because their authors were too full of something else: the violinist’s visit had proven not only the political value of sending top-ranking American performers to Germany, but also the validity of their call for “cultured” behavior on the part of all American occupation forces. For however much Menuhin may have served as the best ambassador the United States could have wished for, the same could not be said of the US authorities who had been in charge of the concert at the American-licensed Titania Palast two days earlier. This appears from an OMGUS evaluation report on the political value of Menuhin’s visit, which chided the Military Police (MP) and Special Service officials for “a number of incidents” that had marred the otherwise brilliant event. Evidently, a “number” was rather an understatement, as the report

⁶⁷ Menuhin, *Unfinished Journey*, 234–6; Magidoff, *Yehudi Menuhin*, 246–9. For a detailed account of the Jewish reception of Menuhin’s 1947 visit to Germany, see Tina Frühauf, “Five Days in Berlin: The ‘Menuhin Affair’ of 1947 and the Politics of Jewish Post-Holocaust Identity,” *The Musical Quarterly* 96 (2013): 14–49.

⁶⁸ In response to Menuhin’s Berlin visit, members of the Jewish community in the United States lobbied—in vain—for a boycott of a tour the violinist was to make of Central and South America. The start of Menuhin’s first tour of Israel in April 1950 was overshadowed with assassination threats from a terrorist group, but after a couple of days all precautionary measures could be rescinded. Menuhin, *Unfinished Journey*, 237–9.

continued with a sizable list of utterly embarrassing missteps.⁶⁹

The first of these inadvertencies was made on a rehearsal at the Titania Palast at the day of Menuhin's arrival in Berlin (September 27), when a Military Policeman urged Menuhin and Furtwängler to leave in five minutes in order to make place for a prescheduled variety show for Allied soldiers. (The MP officer toned down his intervention when Menuhin told him that he was in Berlin on personal invitation of Military Governor Clay.⁷⁰) If the first concert (September 28), open to American military personnel only, passed off without incident, one incident after the other followed around and during the second concert (September 30) directed at the Berlin community-at-large. The identity control of concert attendants—who had waited for hours in line to get hold of a ticket—was unnecessarily protracted, with the result that by the time the concert was supposed to start, no more than about half of the sold-out auditorium was filled. When impatience was uttered, the MP simply suspended their work. After the orchestra had started the concert with Mendelssohn's Overture to *A Midsummer Night's Dream* with over half an hour's delay, people continued to trickle in, mortified of disturbing the performance. While performing Beethoven's Violin Concerto, Menuhin looked out on an audience that was being intimidated by MP personnel ordering them once again to show their paperwork. The noise caused by the subsequent expulsion of some visitors from the auditorium drowned out the pianissimo introduction of the Andante movement in Beethoven's Seventh Symphony. Finally, at the end of the concert, while the ovations were still in full swing, MP officers ordered the hall to be cleared at once. As if that had not been enough, Captain Barsky, SMAD's music officer, and his wife saw themselves more than once taken to account for not having licenses. In conclusion, "by making it appear in the eyes of the Germans that Americans are not sincerely appreciative in cultural activities," the MP's uncouth behavior had "completely nullified the effect the concert was supposed to take," and no one less than the highest authority of the Berlin Command, Brigadier General Frank L. Howley, ordered necessary steps to be taken to "insure that such unfortunate incidents [would] not occur again."

⁶⁹ Howley, Director OMGUS Berlin Sector, to Commanding Officer, OMGUS Berlin Command, memorandum "Concert by Yehudi Menuhin on Tuesday, 30 September 1947," October 9, 1947; "Little Respect Toward Art," translation from a review in *Nacht-Express*, October 2, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/267-3/4. The next paragraph is based on this report.

⁷⁰ This incident was reported at the time in "Tumult um Karten: Menuhin, Berliner und ein MP-Mann," *Der Spiegel* (October 4, 1947): 19.

“Exhibit the Fruits of Democracy”: Calling the Cultural War

As noted before, the tactless conduct of military personnel seriously frustrated the efforts of ICD’s cultural officers to refute the ubiquitous German prejudice of American indifference to *Kultur*. Several days after his glorious report on the Menuhin-Furtwängler concerts, Benno Frank expressed to his superiors his displeasure with OMGUS’s representation at a festival the French had organized at the Berlin State Opera in commemoration of their *résistance* movement (on September 27). Whereas the Russians had offered dances and music by their renowned soldiers’ chorus and the British a famous Scottish bagpipe band, the US Special Services had come forward with a “burlesque act of a *Carmen* parody” by four soldiers and a small jazz band, the “inappropriateness” of which had been cause for comment by representatives of the other military governments present, including Captain Barsky. Frank’s complaint did not fall on deaf ears, and if it had not transpired just in time that the *Carmen* skit had actually been requested by the French themselves, the Army top would have received an urgent appeal from the highest OMGUS level to coordinate cultural activities of a diplomatic nature with the ICD, so that henceforth the United States would showcase talent that was both “more representative and of greater dignity.”⁷¹

The concert pianist Carolyn Gray, one of the participants in the *Carmen* parody, had been equally embarrassed by how puny the American act compared to those of the French, British and Soviets, and decided to appeal directly to the Army top for more “constructive propaganda.”⁷² Couched in direct terms that Frank probably never would have dared to employ, she assessed America’s presence in Germany as follows:

Our policy of filling their [the Germans’] stomachs is not filling their minds with admiration. To them we are a people interested only in the machine age and in making money. Nor are they very well impressed by our army of occupation, nor by the type of American life they see lived here. The Soviets, on the other hand, are not missing a trick[:] take their House of Culture in Berlin, for example—two fine buildings filled with striking pictures of pre-revolutionary Russia as contrasted with the same cities today, beautifully bound books on the Soviet [Union] and its life, fine music and ballet and theater controlled and molded to the Russian purpose....At the same time, they [the Soviets] are keeping an eye peeled to our every activity, trying to

⁷¹ Frank to Clarke, memorandum “U.S. Cultural Representation on a Quadripartite Level,” October 13, 1947; Brigadier General Charles K. Gailey, Jr., Chief of General Staff Corps, Executive Office of OMGUS, to Major General Miller G. White, Deputy Chief of Staff, European Command, US Army, October 22, 1947; Colonel Gordon E. Textor, Director ICD, to Chief of Staff, October 22, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/267-3/4.

⁷² Gray to Kenneth Royall, Secretary of the Army, November 13, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/267-3/4. The remaining quotes in this paragraph are from this letter.

ferret our ulterior motives, which they promptly point up to the German people.

The conclusion was obvious: if OMGUS aimed to regain some of the stature it had lost, it had to beat the Soviets at their own game, and start investing in a cultural program that presented “our democratic way of life” and the “innate fineness of the American people.” The world of entertainment, Gray advised, could be “a powerful weapon...as effective as a flight of B-29s,” as it offered “a fertile field for propaganda to an art-loving and art-hungry nation convinced that we are a culturally undeveloped country unable to produce anything but jazz and be-bop.” It could do much for “implant[ing] in the peoples of Germany a healthy respect for and desire to emulate the United States,” and as such steal the initiative from the Socialist Unity Party of Germany (SED), the political body that the previous year had emerged from Tulpanov’s shrewdly orchestrated amalgamation of Germany’s Communist Party (KPD) and Social Democratic Party (SPD).

Gray’s concerns about the ever more conspicuous Soviet preponderance in Germany had indeed been a red thread in OMGUS top level correspondence ever since the appearance of the first wrinkles in the former anti-Nazi coalition. In a top secret report to his friend Charles Bohlen, at the time a key adviser to President Truman, Nabokov confided the dim impressions he gained from a short return visit to Berlin in the summer of 1947.⁷³ (As of October 1946, Nabokov had been flying back and forth between New York and Berlin on behalf of the State Department for the purpose of setting up its broadcast agency, the Voice of America, for beaming Russian-language programs to Moscow.) A two-year long “policy of appeasement of the Russians,” Nabokov observed gloomily, had brought Berlin to a situation that could only be qualified as “hopeless” from the American perspective, primarily because the OMGUS top failed to see that the Russians were conducting “a large-scale political and psychological warfare” against them right under their nose. For one, the political life in the segmented city, and Germany at large, had been completely paralyzed by Soviet exploitation of the principle of unanimity on which Allied governmental bodies operated. The Social Democrat Ernst Reuter, who had been elected by the City Assembly as Lord Mayor of Berlin with an 83% majority of the vote but was confronted with the Soviet refusal to ratify his appointment, was only one of the most prominent victims of SMAD’s practice of vetoing any act or person not to its liking. Moreover, OMGUS representatives had been time and again deluded at Allied Control Council

⁷³ Nabokoff to Charles E. Bohlen, Counselor for the Department of State, memorandum “Berlin Impressions,” July 10, 1947, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 33/61. The remaining quotes in this and the following paragraph are from this document.

meetings into giving their consent to directives with far-reaching consequences: the uprooting of millions of Germans from the areas provisionally under Polish administration; the expropriation of Nazi and non-Nazi landowners and businessmen in the Soviet zone under the guise of denazification; the forced merger between the KPD and the leftist faction of the SPD; and the subjugation of non-conformists there by measures of terror “at least as brutal and undemocratic” as those of which the Nazi regime had availed itself. With their lack of resistance to such undemocratic procedures, Nabokov warned, US representatives were estranging German politicians who stood on their side.

Like Gray, Nabokov warned that the Soviets had been far ahead of the Western Allies in promoting themselves: whereas the SMAD-controlled radio and press led a vicious and continuous anti-American campaign that accused the United States of “the worst capitalistic intentions toward Germany,” the luxurious Soviet House of Culture enjoyed popularity among Berliners of all ages—“they even like the atrocious Russian paintings which hang on the walls of the exhibition rooms (you know, the usual husky boys and girls plowing, smiling and sewing).” In addition, the Soviets were benefiting from OMGUS’s negligence. SMAD’s investments in the reconstruction of Germany’s cultural infrastructure far exceeded US investments, and democratic political parties and trade unions in the Western zones and Berlin sectors hardly received the support in terms of food, fuel, office space and supplies, and other facilities that SMAD bestowed on the KPD/SED.⁷⁴ Indeed, OMGUS even denied interzonal travel permits and other privileges to German personnel or SPD politicians, whereas an Allied agreement stipulated that it be allowed for Soviet representatives and KPD/SED agents to travel and speak publicly throughout the US zone, thereby enabling a “constant infiltration of communists into key positions” in the Western zones. Worst of all, however, OMGUS, despite ample evidence of “large-scale security leaks,” allowed itself to be manipulated into retaining “a significant number of American Communists and fellow travelers, not to speak of German Soviet agents” in their ranks. The result of all this was that the prestige of OMGUS, both among its staff and the German population, was so low that most of Nabokov’s interviewees admitted no longer to confide in General Clay. Any

⁷⁴ General Clay disagreed with those who believed that OMGUS should grant greater support to political parties that were more disposed towards the Western than Soviet interpretation of democracy, i.e., the Christian Democrats (CDU) and Social Democrats (SPD), as this “would have clearly violated its announced principle of complete political neutrality.” Moreover, “it would weaken the strength of our protests against corresponding Soviet action.” Clay to War Department, “U.S. Aid for CDU and SPD,” August 20, 1946, *Clay Papers*, vol. 1, 256–8. Admittedly, even if Clay would have decided otherwise, OMGUS simply lacked the resources to assist parties like the CDU and SPD to the same degree as SMAD assisted the SED.

chance of improvement, Nabokov advised, would demand the abrogation of the principle of unanimity in the Allied Control Authority; the organization of an active campaign to “combat Communist propaganda and infiltration”; the support of US allies in Germany; the immediate abolition of “all the degrading prohibitive restrictions which place the Germans on a level of ‘Sumpfmenschen’ and give them a totally wrong idea about American democracy and justice”; and the replacement of “the farce of denazification” by proceedings against both Nazi criminals and Communist agents among American personnel and German civilians. “Only very vigorous and highly astute political and economic action,” Nabokov ended his report persuasively, “can restore to the United States the position which it has lost in Germany.”

In retrospect, both Gray and Nabokov had been too quick to interpret all the bravura the Soviets flaunted as a sign of success. In reality, the House of Soviet Culture, which opened on February 28, 1947, had been founded as a response to the persistent reluctance by most Berliners to get excited about the prolonged presence of their “liberators.” Obviously many visitors marveled at the exhibitions shown in what was an impressive eighteenth-century palace (Palais am Festungsgraben) and the House’s guestbook abounds with positive, if not outright lyrical, comments. But if one leafs through more attentively, one also encounters expressions of bitterness and indignation, revealing wounds that no display of art could heal. “How is it possible that the fighters and carriers of the culture shown here (the Red Army, etc.) could behave in the way we [had] to endure during the invasion of these liberators?!!,” one such entry reads.⁷⁵ Indeed, like their Western counterparts, the Soviet administrators did not only face suspicion on the part of the Germans, but they also experienced similar problems in convincing their home front of the need to invest in the dissemination of their nation’s cultural accomplishments abroad. The instances of Soviet showmanship which Gray and Nabokov referred to were the results of Tulpanov’s painstaking efforts to induce the Central Committee in Moscow to send materials, lecturers, and guest performances that would show the Soviet Union at its best.⁷⁶ In sum, Gray and Nabokov’s anxiety that, without intervention, Berliners would choose the Soviet side en masse may have been rather overstated, but that did not make their wake-up call about the need to make serious work of the US re-education mission less timely.

The wake-up call had hardly any effect, though. Indeed, if Nabokov’s 1947 report to Bohlen seems to imply a lack of faith in the effect of his

⁷⁵ Guestbook of the Zentrales Haus of the Gesellschaft für Deutsch-Sowjetische Freundschaft, vol. 1 (1947), SAPMO (BA), DY32/12108.

⁷⁶ Naimark, *The Russians in Germany*, 408–16. For more on the Soviet House of Culture, see Hartmann and Eggeling, *Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR*, 181–5.

words, that might be the result of his experiences a year earlier, when he protested General Clay's drastic cuts in OMGUS-controlled media personnel, funds, and facilities. At a time when the competition with the Soviet Union grew by the day—Nabokov warned in a review of the US information program—it would be “detrimental to the interests of the United States” were OMGUS to continue on this road. To the contrary, given the already proven “incalculable value” of existing newspapers, journals, magazines, information centers as well as radio, film, theater and music programs for the implementation of US foreign policy, every effort should be made to intensify and expand ICD's operations instead of phasing them out. Such a reversal of Clay's current policy was even more imperative given the success with which SMAD managed to employ its media for an “anti-American campaign [that] at certain important political junctures [took] enormous proportions.” For that reason alone, Nabokov suggested, an increase in efforts to solicit the support and goodwill of the Germans was justified. For the field of music, this meant that the American contribution to the collection of the Inter-Allied Music Lending Library (which was gravely outweighed by that of all other Allies, the Soviets first) was to be significantly augmented, and a tour of “American-born high-class artists” to be arranged.⁷⁷

To be sure, Clay answered Nabokov's 1946 appeal by exempting the OMGUS divisions responsible for educational work from the projected personnel cuts. Nabokov, however, had recommended not just to spare the rank and file in those divisions, but to increase their numbers—a proposal that was countenanced by leading State Department officials, and forwarded to the Secretary of State, James Byrnes, for discussion with Clay.⁷⁸ At this time, continued disagreement between the Allied Powers over a variety of issues, including reparations, borders, denazification, unification, and economic policy, had led the United States and Great Britain to decide to

⁷⁷ Nabokoff to Ambassador Robert D. Murphy and Donald R. Heath, Director of Political Affairs, Office of the US Political Adviser, memorandum “Organs of Overt United States Information in Germany,” October 14, 1946, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 752/22. Nabokov made the mistake of not consulting Clay before presenting this memo to the State Department, which put the military governor in an embarrassing position when asked about it. Although he had no objection to the contents of the memo, he remonstrated with Nabokov about the manner in which he had operated. This impetuous behavior was thought characteristic of Nabokov by some, as his former ICD colleague Charles A. H. Thomson testified to the FBI. “[Nabokov] does things on [the] spur of the moment and doesn't understand the workings of bureaucracy.” FBI file Nabokov, report dated June 14, 1948 (Washington, DC Field Office).

⁷⁸ Henry P. Leverich, Chief, Division of Occupied Areas, Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, to Major General John H. Hilldring, Assistant Secretary of State for Occupied Areas, memorandum “Increase in Personnel of the Education and Religious Affairs Branch, OMGUS,” November 7, 1946; H. Freeman Matthews, Director, Office of European Affairs, Department of State, to James F. Byrnes, Secretary of State, November 6, 1946, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 752/23.

follow a course independent of the French and the Soviets, a course aimed at getting Germany on its feet as soon as possible in order to prevent it from becoming “the satellite of any power or powers.” To this purpose, the Anglo-American coalition introduced an unequivocal shift of policy away from punishment and atonement to the economic rehabilitation of Germany and its reintegration into “the family of democratic nations”—a shift that would drive McClure and his intelligence staff to despair as it implied a further relaxation of denazification standards.⁷⁹ For those who had been critical of OMGUS’s perfunctory attention for re-education, however, this change of course worked out well, as it mobilized large sums for the foundation of reading rooms, lending libraries and information centers where Germans could learn about American culture through words, pictures, and phonograph records. Still, Clay was not inclined to direct significant OMGUS resources towards activities of the kind proposed by Gray and Nabokov.

This was indeed the same Clay who since early 1946 had been urging McClure to prioritize the re-education of German citizens through the dissemination of “examples of our own cultural life” over the process of tracing and removing every (possible) Nazi element in German society. But as he did with respect to the denazification operation, the military governor insisted that the re-education endeavor would be managed by the Germans themselves, with the Americans standing by for guidance and assistance only. In other words, ICD might suggest reorientation programs, but it was up to the Germans to implement them and—at least to an important extent—finance them. Only projects which demonstrably benefited Germany’s economic and political restoration at limited cost would qualify for ICD funds (which consisted of Deutsche Mark-profits from overtly OMGUS-sponsored newspapers and magazines). As far as Clay was concerned, activities to showcase American talent did not fall in this category.⁸⁰

The War Department, which had taken over responsibility for ICD’s cultural policy from the State Department on July 1, 1946, obviously thought

⁷⁹ James F. Byrnes, US Secretary of State, “Restatement of Policy on Germany,” speech delivered in Stuttgart (“Speech of Hope”), September 6, 1946, reprinted in *Documents on Germany under Occupation, 1945–1954*, ed. Beata Ruhm von Oppen (New York: Oxford University Press, 1955), 52–60; Clay to Oliver P. Echols, Director of the War Department’s Civil Affairs Division, memorandum “U.S. Policy in Germany,” July 19, 1946; Clay to Byrnes, memorandum “The German Problem,” November 1946; Clay to Echols, memorandum “Denazification,” December 15, 1946; Clay to Major General Daniel Noce, Director of the Civil Affairs Division, War Department, memorandum “Educational and Cultural Affairs,” September 11, 1947, *Clay Papers*, vol. 1, 236–44, 279–85, 424–5.

⁸⁰ Clay, *Decision in Germany*, 284, 302–3; Clay to William H. Draper, Jr., Under Secretary of the Army, memorandum “German Reorientation Program,” October 9, 1948, *Clay Papers*, vol. 2, 896.

otherwise. Responding to the official shift of emphasis away from a punitive denazification and re-education program to a more moderate program of reorientation and cementing US-German relations, the War Department's Civil Affairs Division (CAD) set its stakes on winning the hearts and minds of Germans for democracy by persuasion through culture and, for that matter, stealing a march on SMAD's well-oiled propaganda machine that turned ever more aggressive as disagreements within the Allied Control Council increased.⁸¹ Like Nabokov and Gray, CAD realized that the success of this mission depended on the extent to which the United States succeeded in presenting itself as a nation that produced more than cigarettes, bubble gum, and jazz, and that, for all its imperfections, had kept democracy alive. And—to put it in the words of the composer Harrison Kerr, chief of the CAD Reorientation Branch's Music, Art and Exhibits Section—what more potent argument was there for democracy against dictatorship as “the simple exhibition of the fruits of democracy,” i.e., the recent achievements in American art, music, theater, and literature?⁸²

With respect to music, the proposal by Leopold Stokowski, the conductor of the Philadelphia Orchestra, to send off a complete orchestra to demonstrate America's affinity with European classical-romantic music might have been too quixotic for 1947 (see epigraph). It seemed obvious, however, that “serious” music was the only domain in which German respect could be won. Yet, by mid-1946, all the efforts ICD music officers had paid to introduce Germans to American concert music paled into insignificance when compared to the campaign by which the Soviets boosted their music, choirs and composers.⁸³ American works in the collection of the Interallied Music Library were six times outnumbered by the Russian contribution, and Russian musicians frequently performed for German audiences while OMGUS's restrictive fraternization regulations forbade Americans to do the same. Fearing that the United States would be definitely upstaged by the Soviets, Kerr continued to insist the OMGUS

⁸¹ War Department to ICD, memorandum “The Reorientation Branch, Civil Affairs Division,” April 22, 1946, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/242-1/20.

⁸² Kerr, “Information Control in the Occupied Areas,” *Notes* (Second Series) 4/4 (September 1947): 435. Incidentally, although one might think that Kerr and ICD's music officers preferred it not to be seen promoted along with jazz, swing, and other forms of popular music, the American musical was considered among the “fruits of democracy” as well. Recognized as a unique and typical American form of theater, ICD's FIM Section at one point planned to bring *Oklahoma* and *Show Boat* to Germany. Edith Hamann, “Rundfunk-Interview mit Mr. Benno D. Frank,” undated but probably 1947, OMGUS/NARA, Educational and Cultural Relations, Music and Theater, A1 623, 242-Theater Productions.

⁸³ One periodic review of American works performed in Germany listed the names of Samuel Barber, Leonard Bernstein, Elliott Carter, Aaron Copland, Howard Hanson, Charles Ives, Nicolas Nabokov, Walter Piston, Quincy Porter, William Schumann, and Randall Thompson. ODIC, memorandum, 19 June 1946, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/348-1/8.

command lend its cooperation for an increased effort in promoting American musicianship and works by, among others, Barber, Bernstein, Carter, Copland, Gershwin, Ives, Harris, Thomson and Kerr himself.⁸⁴

McClure had already yielded under the pressure of those who reprimanded him for having overemphasized denazification at the expense of ICD's re-education mission. In fact, he did not have much of a choice after the three other occupying powers had announced to lift their prohibitions on performances by their artists in occupied Germany. And so McClure came to write his superiors that in his opinion time was ripe to involve US artists in America's mission in Germany: "Appearance of a careful selection of such artists in the US zone would give the lie to the belief, consistently fed by Nazi propaganda, that Americans have no understanding for the arts and would combat the myth that German music is superior to the music of other countries."⁸⁵ It took more time to win Clay and his political adviser, Robert Murphy, for McClure's proposal. Possible protests from US taxpayers and difficulties in recruiting first-class talent were the pragmatic reasons Murphy cited for his and Clay's non-concurrence. The most important objection, however, was a matter of principle. As American troops were not being entertained on this "superior basis" and the United State and Germany were still in a technical state of war, the "entertainment as such of German nationals by American citizens" should wait until the conclusion of a peace treaty.⁸⁶ Clarke and Nabokov, the duo who had pressed the issue of a cultural representation program with McClure, systematically removed all reasons for the concerns expressed by

⁸⁴ Monod, *Settling Scores*, 215–6; Thacker, *Music after Hitler*, 93–4.

⁸⁵ McClure to Chief of Staff, memorandum "Use of U.S. Artists in Democratic Reorientation of Germany," March 22, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/246-3/27. Significantly, in an attached list of artists proposed to approach for the program, the names of African American singers (Dorothy Maynor, Camilla Williams, Portia White, and Todd Duncan) are marked by the parenthesized word "Negro," indicating that the authors of this memorandum intended their program to act upon the Soviet charge of American racism as well. It would not be the first time that ICD would use African-American musicians for this purpose. In early September 1945, the Guyanese and Juilliard-trained Rudolph Dunbar was authorized to conduct the Berlin Philharmonic in a concert including the premiere of William Grant Still's *Afro-American Symphony* (1930). John Bitter, Berlin FTM Section, Semi-Weekly Report, September 5, 1945, in Chamberlin, *Kultur auf Trümmern*, 142; "Rhythm in Berlin," *Time*, September 10, 1945, 23.

⁸⁶ Murphy to McClure, March 28, 1946, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 459/1. Incidentally, at the dismay of some of his colleagues, FTM Chief John Bitter, a conductor by profession, managed to arrange for himself a special agreement with his superiors which allowed him to lead the Berlin Philharmonic in concerts for American troops. Memorandum "Performance of U.S. Personnel before the German Public," May 22, 1946, and Clarke, memorandum "Captain John Bitter, Conductor," January 15, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-2/7. Equally remarkable is that the second American work the Philharmonic would include in its repertoire after Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* was Nabokov's *Parade*. See online Program Archive Berlin Philharmonic [<http://www.berliner-philharmoniker.de>], May 26 and 27 and June 2, 1946.

Clay and Murphy. According to their information, there was no reason to fear a lack of interest on the part of first-class musicians to perform in Germany, any concerts given by participating musicians would be open to US servicemen, and, most importantly, the State Department had indicated that an investment in “dispelling Nazi sponsored views of American cultural inferiority” should not be left to await a future peace treaty. Subsequently, Murphy approved the trial of a visiting artists program, provided that OMGUS would be liable only for local transportation, messing and billeting and that the ICD staff would assume the responsibility of raising funds towards covering all other expenses.⁸⁷

Playing (Across) the Divide: Visiting Musicians in Germany

Apparently Clay got second thoughts about the blessing he gave to Nabokov’s proposal for a visiting artists program. A month later, against the advice of McClure’s office to level the regulation as of July 1, 1946, Music and Theater officers were instructed that the original SHAEF agreement prohibiting Allied nationals to perform for German audiences would remain in effect for unspecified time in the US Zone and Sector of Berlin. Since the other Allies had already lifted their ban on performances of their nationals in Germany, it did not take long for the first Allied artist touring through Germany to be halted in the American area of jurisdiction.⁸⁸ Walter Hinrichsen (ICD music officer) and Harrison Kerr (chief Music Section of CAD’s Reorientation Branch) tried to bypass Clay’s intransigence by using the so-called Visiting Expert Program—a program designed for visits of leading US representatives from the economic, technological, administrative, and educational fields—to bring Leopold Stokowski as touring guest conductor to Germany.⁸⁹ Why this never materialized is unclear, but Stokowski’s colleague, Sergey Koussevitzky, who was likewise interested in reorienting Germans, was confronted with so much red tape that he gave

⁸⁷ Clarke and Nabokov to McClure, memorandum “Staff Study on U.S. Artists,” March 29, 1946; Murphy, memorandum, May 24, 1946, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 459/1; Clay to Adjutant General, War Department, Civil Affairs Division, undated but probably May 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/246-3/27; Frank to Clarke, memorandum “Test Appearance of US Artist for Germans,” August 29, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-2/7. Although Clarke submitted it in name of the ICD Theater and Music Section, Nabokov was the author of the “Staff Study” memorandum. Clarke, cable to the Office of the Political Adviser, October 4, 1946, POLAD/IfZ, 752/20.

⁸⁸ Clarke to Nabokov, June 15, 1946; Nabokov to Clarke, June 17, 1946; Newell Jenkins to Clarke, memorandum “Mme. Monique de La Bruchollerie,” July 3, 1946; Edward T. Peeples, Executive Officer, ICD Intelligence Branch, to Jenkins, memorandum “Performance of Allied Nationals for Germans,” July 13, 1946, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-2/7.

⁸⁹ Hinrichsen to Frank, memorandum “Progress Statement on Stokowski Tour in Germany 1947,” March 19, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-2/10. Stokowski was primed to tour the American Zone and Berlin Sector for the period between June 27 and September 1, 1947.

up.⁹⁰

Clay had his reasons for his reluctance to expose the Germans under his wings to Allied performers. Back home, the Republicans had won a majority in Congress and started to dismantle President Roosevelt's legacy which they so despised. Officials with (former) New Deal sympathies—synonymous to communism, in the Republican mind—could count on with close scrutiny, with the result that many of them would tread warily in everything they did in order to avoid being red-baited. ICD's many requests for "so many non-native Americans as experts" had already aroused suspicion, one member of CAD's Reorientation Branch told an ICD representative early 1947.⁹¹ In fact, Republican Congressmen were unfavorably disposed towards the very idea of "reorienting" Germans by means of culture, let alone of music, which many of them, in spite of Nabokov's refutations, considered first and foremost as "entertainment" rather than as an instrument for education. The point of sending experts to lecture Germans about the American way of political, economic, and social organization was clear. But artists? In the tense political climate prevailing in Washington, it was easy to step on a career-wrecking mine, which is one explanation why the decision-making process regarding cultural representation programs proceeded so terribly slowly and capriciously.

The immediate reason why Clay may have reversed his earlier consent for a visiting artists program is that he had been taken to task by Republican Congressmen for softening the denazification policy, of which the Furtwängler case had been exemplary. Even a former FTM chief, when asked by McClure to assist in the projected reorientation program, questioned the urgency, if not relevance, of sending American artists to Germany. What role could music possibly fulfill in the political re-education of the German people if someone like Furtwängler could triumph again in Berlin?⁹² For Menuhin, whose repeated intercessions on behalf of Furtwängler consistently met with resentment from many colleagues, the answer to this question was clear: music had the power to "challenge a mentality based on intolerance, hate and prejudice," and for that reason only—Menuhin impressed upon the mind of Ambassador Murphy—the US government should enable its musical citizens to team up with their Russian

⁹⁰ Koussevitzky to Robert Murphy, November 30, 1946; Murphy to Koussevitzky, December 16, 1946, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 459/9.

⁹¹ Alexander L. George to R. Schmid, Chief of ICD Intelligence Branch, "Report on Conversations with Officials in Reorientation Branch (War Department, CAD) and in State Department, Washington, DC, February 5–19, 1947," February 22, 1947, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/348-1/15. Although naturalized US citizens, the Slavic-sounding names of Stokowski and Koussevitzky could have sufficed to attract this suspicion, and that is probably why both conductors did not get to tour Germany on OMGUS auspices.

⁹² Davidson Taylor to McClure, February 11, 1948, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/267-1/3.

counterparts in dispelling, through their art, “certain Nazi fascist doctrines equally distasteful to both nations.”⁹³

Needless to say, Menuhin’s plea for peace and reconciliation sounded naïve by the end of 1947, when both the US and Soviet governments saw each other, rather than Nazism, as the main threat to their interests. In March of that year, consensus had been reached within the Truman administration that it was irrational to think a mutually beneficial relationship with the Kremlin could be maintained, and that preemptive action should be undertaken lest all of Europe would color red. When the British government indicated that it no longer could afford its military and economic commitments to Greece and Turkey, President Truman officially declared communism a “totalitarian threat” to be contained (known as the Truman Doctrine) and requested Congress to step into the breach with \$400 million in loans in order to maintain the Eastern Mediterranean for the West.⁹⁴ Three months later, when the persistent destitution in war-torn regions summoned the specter of Communist ascendancy, especially in France, Italy and Germany, George C. Marshall, President’s Truman newly appointed Secretary of State, announced a multi-billion aid program designed to expedite the rehabilitation of Europe.⁹⁵ To conceal the political rationale of the Marshall Plan, i.e., the forestallment of a Communist seizure of power in Western Europe, an invitation was sent to Moscow to join in the program negotiations. The Kremlin initially confirmed the invitation, but—as anticipated by the Marshall Planners—backed out of the negotiations when they found out that allocation of the American credits to the People’s Democracies was contingent on their renouncing their exclusive orientation on Moscow. Determined not to let himself be sidelined by his former allies, Stalin forbade the leadership of his “friendly ally states”

⁹³ Menuhin to Murphy, October 10, 1947; Murphy to Menuhin, November 1, 1947, Records of the Office of the Political Adviser, POLAD/IfZ, 460/8. Menuhin had adopted a “live and let live” stance towards the Soviet Union after having concertized in Moscow on invitation of the Soviet Society for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries (VOKS) two years earlier: “It would be a good thing for us to remember that the Soviet system is no threat to us and that our system would not work for the Soviet Union. And it would also be a good thing for the Russians to realize that our system is no threat to them and their system would not work in America.” Cited by Brooks Atkinson, “Russian Art Good, Menuhin Asserts,” *New York Times*, November 20, 1945, 19. Menuhin would come to change his mind with Zhdanov’s February 1948 decree on music, which he denounced as “a completely wrong attitude toward the one group of people [the Soviet government] can *never* coerce—the creative composers.” Emphasis Menuhin’s. “Menuhin Asks Soviet [Union] to Keep Bars off Music,” *The Stars and Stripes* [US Army, Germany], February 16, 1948, 7.

⁹⁴ President Truman, “Special Message to the Congress on Greece and Turkey: The Truman Doctrine,” March 12, 1947, in *Public Papers of the Presidents of the United States: Harry S. Truman—1947* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1963), 176–80.

⁹⁵ George C. Marshall, speech delivered at the 296th Harvard Commencement, June 5, 1947, in *FRUS, 1947*, vol. 3, 237–9.

to accept the American bounty, and instructed his bureaucracy to mastermind a campaign aimed at exposing the political expediency of Washington's sudden generosity.⁹⁶

Moscow's counteroffensive was launched in late September 1947 at the founding conference of the Communist Bureau of Information (Cominform), an agency nominally conceived for the exchange of information and experiences between European Communist parties.⁹⁷ The occasion assumed the character of a show trial when Andrey Zhdanov, who was responsible for implementing Soviet foreign policy apart from reasserting the Party's control over intellectuals and artists at home, took the floor and reproved the French and Italian party leaders for having allowed themselves to be ousted from the coalition governments in their countries. Confirming Stalin's view of the world as divided into two hostile camps, Zhdanov condemned the US aid program as an unsavory scheme plotted by the "Wall Street-led imperialist and anti-democratic camp" to "enslave" the recipients of its dollars, to meddle in the national affairs of countries within the Soviet sphere of influence, and to enforce a division of Germany. To protect themselves against the enmity of the United States and its "lackeys," leaders of the People's Democracies were "advised" to accelerate the process of transforming their countries into full Stalinist states, purged from all remnants of "bourgeois" capitalism, whereas their errant French and Italian counterparts were instructed to abandon any armchair fantasies about a unique, peaceful, non-Soviet (i.e., democratic) road to socialism and to choose the Bolshevik road of strikes, riots and sabotage.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ On the internal decision-making behind the Truman Doctrine and the Marshall Plan, see Melvyn P. Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power: National Security, the Truman Administration, and the Cold War* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1992), 141–219. On the Soviet response, see Scott D. Parrish and Mikhail M. Narinsky, *New Evidence on the Soviet Rejection of the Marshall Plan, 1947*, Cold War International History Project, Working Paper No. 9 (March 1994); Geoffrey Roberts, "Moscow and the Marshall Plan: Politics, Ideology and the Onset of the Cold War, 1947," *Europe-Asia Studies* 46/8 (1994): 1371–86.

⁹⁷ Importantly to note, Stalin conceived the Cominform as a defensive tool to prevent the consolidation of anti-Soviet blocs in Europe, and not—as many Western observers thought at the time—as the reincarnation of the Comintern, the Central Committee's offensive tool to unleash the world revolution, which the Soviet leader had disbanded in 1943 in a gesture of rapprochement with his Western allies in the war against Hitler. Fernando Claudin, *The Communist Movement: From Comintern to Cominform* [1970], trans. Francis MacDonagh (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), vol. 2, 455–79.

⁹⁸ Zhdanov, "The International Situation," speech delivered at the founding meeting of the Cominform, Szklarska Poreba, Poland, September 25, 1947, repr. in *The Cominform: Minutes of Three Conferences, 1947/1948/1949*, ed. Giuliano Procacci et al. (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1994), 216–51. For a documented history of the Cominform, see Grant M. Adibekov, *Das Kominform und Stalins Neuordnung Europas* [1994], trans. Beatrix Höhne, Ute Metzler, and Wolf-Ulrich Pradel (Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 2002).

Thus, by the time of Menuhin's call for appeasement, both the US and Soviet governments had abandoned every prospect of coexistence and collaboration for mutual distrust and unilateralism. Accordingly, the only way to persuade Congress to open its purse for something like a visiting artists program would have been to prove its capacity to stall the spread of communism. Yet, in a time when Clay experienced extreme difficulties in obtaining sufficient appropriations from Congress to keep the food supplies in his zone at a competitive level, he could not even begin to think of asking for funds to defray expenses of visiting artists. To his view, there was "no choice between becoming a Communist on 1500 calories [the daily ration allowance in the Soviet zone] and a believer in democracy on 1000 calories [the maximum ration that OMGUS could deliver]."⁹⁹ Therefore, OMGUS's scarce resources would not be spent on the import of cultural luxuries until the necessary provisions could be guaranteed to fulfill Germany's physical, rather than mental, needs.¹⁰⁰ When he reissued his earlier blessing to a visiting artists program in May 1947, he again did it on the understanding that OMGUS would assume no more than the travelling and living expenses of the artists in the occupied zones. Any fees and transportation costs to and from Germany would have to be financed through alternative channels.¹⁰¹

Eventually these alternative channels would be found in the Rockefeller Foundation and the Oberlaender Trust (founded in 1931 by the German-born Pennsylvanian industrialist Gustav Oberländer for promoting US-German cultural relations), who granted \$7,500 and \$10,000, respectively, towards the coverage of transatlantic transportation costs of prospective participants in the Visiting Artists Program. Musicians consenting to participate in the program toured Germany at no recompense other than their expenses, while the net dollar income from the sale of tickets to Army and OMGUS personnel was earmarked for the next batch of visiting artists.¹⁰² The Army was to take care of the transport and accommodation of participants within Germany, while the music officers assumed the responsibility for concert organization. Finally, OMGUS could embark upon its mission of disproving the propaganda that "America has no culture, that

⁹⁹ Clay to Echols, "Food Situation in U.S. Zone," March 27, 1946, *Clay Papers*, vol. 1, 183–5.

¹⁰⁰ Clay to Noce, "Education and Information Policy," January 31, 1947; Clay, draft statement for the Appropriations Committee, US Congress, February 18, 1947; William H. Draper, Jr., Under Secretary of the Army, to Carolyn Gray, December 2, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/267-3/4; "Food Situation in Germany," May 13, 1947, *Clay Papers*, vol. 1, 308–9, 316–9, 354–63.

¹⁰¹ Clay to War Department, cable, May 4, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/267-1/3.

¹⁰² G. H. Garde, Assistant Adjutant General, Headquarters European Command Berlin, memorandum "Standard Operating Procedure for Visiting Artists Program," May 3, 1948, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/271-2/30.

it is a nation of materialists and all that sort of thing.”¹⁰³ And as the political vetting of German musicians formally ended by October 1947, it finally could do so without the risk of being contravened by the control and censorship activities of another OMGUS unit.

Yet, as it soon turned out, the Visiting Artists Program was still not blessed by the gods. Interest among Army personnel for the “Carnegie Hall type”¹⁰⁴ of artists selected by ICD’s Education and Cultural Relations Division (as the ICD was now called to indicate the shift from “control” to “public relations”) was slim, and those who would come turned out to be quite reluctant to pay their admission fee in their extremely valuable dollars instead of Reichsmarks. (In early 1948, one dollar had the worth of roughly RM 10.) Consequently, the whole enterprise failed to become self-sufficient. Moreover, due to the short-term notice of Clay’s approval, the late guarantee of funding, and various unnecessary conditions, few top-rate performers made their way to Germany.¹⁰⁵ Harrison Kerr, convinced that any effort at reorientation could only produce effects when Germans would be exposed to homegrown US artists and music, did not help the program by using his authority to sideline several interested high-class artists on account of their not being American-born. The violinist Isaac Stern saw his offer to participate in the program declined for this reason, and ECR music officers had their proposal to invite Hindemith, Křenek, and Schoenberg to Germany crossed out.¹⁰⁶

The net result of this cocktail of setbacks, limitations, and miscalculations was a program that turned out very meager. To more or lesser extent, the concerts that did take place under the premises of the program failed to attract the audience rates necessary to keep it alive. In addition, German reviewers were often critical of the American works these artists performed, not to mention of their interpretations of works from the German

¹⁰³ Harrison Kerr, Chief Music, Arts and Exhibits Section, Reorientation Branch, Civil Affairs Division, Department of the Army, quoted in an interview with Edward F. D’Arms, Assistant Director for the Humanities, Rockefeller Foundation, March 5, 1948, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2.1, Series 200, 6-42.

¹⁰⁴ Memorandum for ICD Deputy Director, “Negotiations with Special Services on Performances by Front-Rank U.S. Artists,” March 11, 1948, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/271-2/30.

¹⁰⁵ Kerr, progress report on the Visiting Artists Program, July 19, 1949 Kerr happened to be a former director Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2.1, Series 200, 6-42.

¹⁰⁶ Carlos D. Moseley, Music Officer Bavaria, to Deputy Director, Education and Cultural Relations Division, memoranda “Visiting American Artists, April 14, 1948 and “Reorientation Funds for Music Activities,” September 15, 1948, OMGB/BHA, 10/48-1/8; Kerr to Evarts, May 20, 1949, OMGB/BHA, 10/120-1/20. The Rockefeller Foundation and Oberlaender Trust were administered by the American Music Center, a non-profit organization devoted to the promotion of American composers of which Kerr happened to be director.

repertory.¹⁰⁷ The deathblow to the program came with the currency reform of June 20, 1948, when all price and wage controls in the three western zones were abolished and the Reichsmark replaced with the Deutsche Mark at the ratio of ten to one. Although initially intended as a measure to check the unbridled black-market inflation, in the months leading up to the reform it had turned out to become the definitive breaking point for the Soviets, who, of course, were tenaciously opposed against the restoration of the free market capitalism and would answer the persistence of the western Allies with the Berlin Blockade. The overnight result of the currency reform was an exponential rise of ticket prices (which had previously been controlled) and a simultaneous devaluation of any pre-existing subsidy funds denominated in Reichmarks. Added to the fact that wages initially remained fixed by law, concert and theater attendance in the Western zones dropped drastically. Understandably, German music programmers relied on the staples of the standard repertory more than ever under these circumstances, thereby making it painfully clear to ECR's music officers that without renewed investments, all earlier efforts to acquaint German audiences with contemporary and American music would have been for nothing.¹⁰⁸

Although every visit was declared a success to the outside world (with a particular eye on the US Congress, which needed to be convinced of the success of the reeducation program lest it would turn off the money tap),¹⁰⁹ ECR's Music Section succeeded in equaling the success of Menuhin's 1947 visit only twice—and on both occasions, ironically, outside the scope of the Visiting Artists Program. While being on a European tour in May 1948, young Leonard Bernstein stopped over in Munich to conduct the Bavarian State Opera Orchestra on invitation of its musical director, Georg Solti, in two concerts. Without OMGUS support which he believed was denied because of Bernstein's alleged communist leanings, the local music officer

¹⁰⁷ Musicians who visited Germany on the terms of this program included, in order of appearance, Patricia Travers (violinist), Tom Scott (folk singer), Ralph Kirkpatrick (harpsichordist), Webster Aitken (pianist), The Walden String Quartet, the Yale Glee Club, and Mack Harrell (Metropolitan Opera baritone). Other artists who had been shortlisted but for various reasons did not participate include, besides Stokowski, Martha Graham's Dance Company, Benny Goodman, and the opera singers Helen Traubel, Mona Paulee, Risë Stevens, and Leonard Warren. For more details about the successes and failures of the Visiting Arts Program, see Monod, *Settling Scores*, 210–21.

¹⁰⁸ For an evaluation of the effects of the currency reform for Germany's cultural life, see Everett B. Helm, Chief ICD Theater and Music Branch in Hesse, semi-annual reports of January to June and July to December 1948, OMGUS/NARA, Office of Military Government in Hesse, Education & Cultural Relations, Theater & Music, A1 1401, 728-Historical Reports.

¹⁰⁹ For ICD's digest of reviews, see editorial, "Patricia [Travers] Praised," *Information Bulletin* [OMGUS] 140 (July 27, 1948): 9; John Evarts, Chief OMGUS Education & Cultural Relations Division, "Visiting American Artists," *Information Bulletin* [OMGUS] 142 (August 24, 1948): 12–14, 20; John Bitter, Monthly Report of the Berlin Music and Theater Section, June 1948, OMGUS/LB, 4/8-1/2.

Carlos Moseley had to go through quite some trouble to make everything and everyone work.¹¹⁰ Once he had managed to shush a demand for higher food rations from orchestra members with the promise of 115 packs of cigarettes, he had to overcome the challenge of finding transport for the musicians to and from the concert venue after Munich's streetcar workers had gone on strike. In the meantime, Bernstein won the sympathy of the State Opera Orchestra, which he had expected to be hostile towards him because "I am so young, American (which means no culture), and Jewish besides." One violinist even suggested that hardly any German conductor could equal Bernstein's interpretation of Schumann's Fourth Symphony.¹¹¹ (The next day, Bernstein would—in sharp contrast to Menuhin's experience in the previous year—receive a similar warm welcome from the residents of two local DP camps for whom he conducted a travelling DP chamber ensemble named the "Ex-Concentration Camp Orchestra.")

The path for a successful concert (at the Prinzregenten Theater on May 9) was open, and a success it was: the audience lauded the American conductor with a storm of bravos and insisted on him repeating the last section of Ravel's Piano Concerto in G Major, in which he performed as conductor and soloist at the same time. "There is nothing more satisfying than an opera-house full of Germans screaming with excitement!" Bernstein wrote to his secretary. "[The concert] really sold America to those Germans." This would have meant a great deal for OMGUS, he assumed, given that "music is the Germans' last stand in their 'Master Race' claim and for the first time it's been exploded in Munich."¹¹² Nothing was further from the truth, though. The ECR Music Section may well have regarded Bernstein's visit as "the most important musical event from a reorientation standpoint that ha[d] taken place in Bavaria since the war."¹¹³ However, not a single senior OMGUS representative had shown any interest in the conductor. Accordingly, the OMGUS leadership stuck to the stipulation that none of the exchange programs supported by government funds could be used for carrying across music professionals across the Atlantic. "[W]ere the motive behind [such an endeavor] merely to entertain the Germans, this

¹¹⁰ Moseley in an interview with David Monod, March 17, 1996, in *Settling Scores*, 205–7. Earlier, the ICD command had decided that Bernstein "was not to be considered for performances in Germany." Hinrichsen to Newell Jenkins, Chief TM Section Württemberg-Baden, February 26, 1947, cited in Thacker, *Music after Hitler*, 97.

¹¹¹ Bernstein to Helen Coates, May 5, 1948, Bernstein Papers, 13-nf; Bernstein to Sergey Koussevitzky, May 8, 1948, Bernstein Papers, 33-nf.

¹¹² Bernstein to Helen Coates, 11 May 1948, Bernstein Papers, 13-nf; Bernstein to Shirley Bernstein, 11 May 1948, Bernstein Papers, 7-nf; "Bernstein Scores in Munich Concert," *New York Times*, May 11, 1948, 28.

¹¹³ Evarts, "Bi-Weekly Report on Theater & Music from Period of 21 May to 5 June 1948," OMGUS/IFZ, 5/348-1/7.

would seem to me a very correct policy,” Moseley wrote to one of his superiors in an aggravated tone. Yet, given that “we are embarked on a program designed to unseal the prejudices and illumine the thinking of a music-loving but musically unaware people, a people whose self-complacency and smugness were long nurtured to an almost incomprehensible degree,” any effort to “conduct in earnest a reorientation...in the field of music without [first-class] performances by world figures of the stature of [Arthur] Rubinstein, [Vladimir] Horowitz, [Rudolf] Serkin, [Nathan] Milstein and [Joseph] Szigeti must be from the start as unproductive as making heroic attacks against Spanish windmills.”¹¹⁴

Moseley’s plea fell on deaf ears. If it came to music, it required inventiveness to realize anything of the reorientation mission. The ECR Music Section’s third and last success in the field of reorientation was the visit by Paul Hindemith in January and February 1949. Although Kerr had refused to send the composer to Germany as a visiting artist, the music officers in Bavaria found a way to invite him on the premises of a special program for educational consultants. In Munich, a gala performance of *Mathis der Maler*—an opera whose blatant defense of artistic freedom had elicited the wrath of the Nazi regime—was unmatched in its acclaim and symbolic power. In the next days, Hindemith lectured audiences of *Kenner und Liebhaber* of music in Munich, Frankfurt, Darmstadt and Berlin about his experiences of American musical life and his view on its German counterpart. In these lectures, America emerged most favorably. Music life in the United States might not be perfect, Hindemith argued, but the persistent “methodical” and “egotist” (*selbstsüchtig*) strain in the German mindset and education—here he explicitly referred to dodecaphony—was not conducive to artistic advancement and freedom, either. As to what music’s relation to society should be, Hindemith only vaguely stated that music was to serve “the spiritual (*das Geistige*) in the education (*Erziehung*) of citizens.”¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Moseley to Louis Minicler, Chief OMGUS Cultural Affairs Branch, memorandum “Visiting Musical Artists,” November 6, 1948, OMGUS Bavaria/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music Section, A1 1035, 21-Visiting US Artists Program.

¹¹⁵ Fritz Brust, “Musikalisches Kolloquium,” *Münchener Zeitung*, February 1, 1949; Helmut Schmidt-Garre, “Diskussion mit Hindemith,” *Münchener Merkur*, February 2, 1949, clippings in OMGUS Bavaria/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music Section, A1 1035, 21-Paul Hindemith; “Zur Aufführung von *Mathis der Maler* von Paul Hindemith am 29. Januar 1949 in der Bayerischen Staatsoper,” unattributed review, Dieter Sattler Papers, vol. 2. For an account by Carlos Moseley, see Monod, *Settling Scores*, 219–21. It should be recalled that Hindemith had not always been the fierce opponent of Nazism he pretended to be after the fall of the Third Reich. When he was asked to help reorganize Germany’s musical infrastructure in 1933, when the Nazi regime still considered using modernism as a promotional instrument, Hindemith did not decline. *Mathis der Maler* was not intended as a protest to the Nazi treatment of culture, and of the many positive reviews of its premiere under Furtwängler in March 12, 1934, many flowed from the pen of Nazi critics. See Kater, *The Twisted Music*, 179. Remarkably, two years earlier, this

From the perspective of ECR's music officers, the controversy that Hindemith's call for a new "ethos" in German music caused was the most concrete success in "cultural penetration," and increased their hopes that their superiors would authorize similar tours, especially by Hindemith's opposite number, Arnold Schoenberg.¹¹⁶ It did not happen, and not only because by March 1949 all funds had dried up. As the supervision of Germany's reconstruction (a divided Germany, that is) was transferred from military to civilian functions, Theater and Music lost the competition between OMGUS branches and agencies for their existence in the new Allied High Commission (HICOG): all Theater and Music offices across the country were closed and all but two of its officers discharged. "When the scramble was over, culture had lost," Everett Helm, the officer at charge of musical affairs in Hesse, wrote bitterly. "Theater and Music—representing precisely the fields in which *rapprochement* among nations can be most easily effected—had been wiped out," allowing "the carpers to repeat again the old refrain about Americans being cultural barbarians and not caring about matters of the soul and spirit."¹¹⁷

evidence had thwarted plans to approach Hindemith for ICD activities during a private visit to Frankfurt. Cable Adjutant-General's Office, War Department, to ICD, OMGUS, August 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, AG47/20/2.

¹¹⁶ Everett B. Helm, Chief Education and Cultural Relations Division, OMGUS Hesse, "Hindemith in Germany," OMGUS Hesse/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Theater and Music, A1 1401, 727-Articles by E. B. Helm; John Evarts and Carlos Moseley, "Hindemith Gives Germans New Outlook on Music," *Information Bulletin* 157 (March 22, 1949): 11–12, 23; Moseley, memorandum "Request for Arnold Schönberg as Visiting Expert," March 1, 1949, OMGUS Bavaria/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Cultural Affairs, Music Section, A1 1035, 21-Visiting US Artists Program.

¹¹⁷ Helm, "Music in Occupied Germany," *Musical America* (February 1950): 115, 256.

Musical Instrumentalizations

From Theorizing Musical Engagement to Practicing Musical Warfare

There are times and circumstances when indulgence or an exaggerated tendency towards impartiality become dangerous and even pernicious ‘virtues’. In our times they have become equivalent to complicity and negligence. When the existence of human culture is at stake there can be no indifference towards good and evil. To restrain one’s anger and to lock oneself in a guarded and calculated egocentrism means to push art into a yawning abyss beyond which lies chaos.¹

Andrey Olkhovsky (1955)

[A]ny account of the life and mind...of Europe...would be false if it failed to evoke the large topics upon which debate turns nowadays, almost to the point of obsession—freedom in works of art and the extent to which this freedom is limited by the function of the artist in society; the choice of techniques and aesthetic viewpoints and their application in bringing works of art to the mass audience; and the financial support of works of art by the masses, to whom, deliberately or not, they are not directly addressed. The present preoccupation with these problems is no mere intellectual exercise or esoteric discussion, for they cause many crises of conscience, internal tortures, and tragic renunciations. They invest the daily work of musicians with a climate of doubt, anguish, and hostility, which inevitably influences those whose morale is in the least unhealthy.²

Henry Barraud (1951)

Propaganda is rather a new word, and we do not often think of it in connection with classic music; yet any music which serves a definite purpose may be said to have some propaganda aspect.³

Henry Cowell (1946)

After Munich, one of Leonard Bernstein’s next stops on his 1948 tour of Europe and nascent Israel was Prague, where he conducted the Czech Philharmonic on the occasion of the third annual International Spring Music Festival. Established in 1946 as an effort to reposition Czechoslovakia in the

¹ Olkhovsky, *Music under the Soviets: The Agony of an Art* (New York: Praeger, 1955), 7–8.

² Barraud, “*La Musique engagée: Leibowitz, Sartre, and the Prague Manifesto—A Characteristic Dilemma of the Twentieth Century*,” *Musical America* 71 (February 1951): 13.

³ Cowell, “Music as Propaganda,” abstract of a paper read to the New York chapter of the American Musicological Society, January 23, 1945, Cowell Papers, 145-4.

musical world after its liberation from the Nazi occupation, the festival's incipient years showed a dedication to internationalism in the truest sense of the word. Aside from a fair representation of homegrown music and a politically safe selection from the German repertoire (Mozart, Beethoven, and Brahms), the concert programs featured old and new works mainly by composers from the four Allied nations, all performed by the star conductors and soloists of the day. The enthusiasm with which audiences greeted the achievements of British, American, French and Russian artists instilled hope in many that the festival might indicate a process of international reconnection in spite of the resurgence of political and economic rivalries.⁴

To the skeptic, however, such hope was ill-founded. Already at the time of the 1946 edition of the Spring Music Festival, the British Ambassador in Prague alerted Foreign Secretary Bevin that the impression of openness which the new Czechoslovak government—a fragile coalition of Social Democrats and Communists—apparently wished to convey was rather dubious. As the Communist-led Ministry of Information acted as “a filter through which news from the West must pass before it reaches the Czechoslovak public,” the Ambassador explained, the official policy of “letting as much fresh air [in] as possible” proved to be merely rhetorical. From the disproportional and exuberant press coverage devoted to the Russian share of the festival program, captured in headlines like “The Russians Won the Day,” it was clear to see whose fiddle the Czechoslovak authorities really played. The principal concert was offered by the Soviet Union, featuring a performance of Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto by David Oistrakh, and had been the only event attended by an “unusually large contingent of Ministers,” including musicologist and Communist Party member Zdeněk Nejedlý, at the time Minister of Social Security, who immediately after the Concerto's vigorous cadence “leaned forward and ostentatiously clapped the soloist quite alone.”⁵

Time proved the Ambassador's suspicions to be justified. In February 1948, the Stalinist section of the Communist Party forced a coup d'état. A Congress of National Culture was called soon thereafter, at which prominent proponents of the new regime announced the need for a unified vision of culture as a progressive force in the construction of a socialist state. Quite

⁴ “Prague Music Festival,” *The Times*, May 14, 1946, 3; Jan Lowenbach, “Prague's First Post-War Festival,” *New York Times*, June 30, 1946, X5, and “Festival Renews Hope,” *New York Times*, July 28, 1946, X5; Olin Downes, “Series in Prague and Edinburgh Indicate Europe's Recovery,” *New York Times*, March 30, 1947, X7.

⁵ Philip Nichols, British Ambassador in Prague, to Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary, June 14, 1946; J. C. Petrie, Press Department British Embassy in Prague, memorandum “The Prague International Music Festival,” June 13, 1946, Records of the British Council (TNA), BW 27/5.

predictably, Nejedlý, who after the seizure of power assumed the post of Minister of Culture and Education, recited Zhdanov's doctrine of socialist realism, calling upon artists to reflect in their work the national character of "the people" and renounce all "cosmopolitan" and "bourgeois" -isms. This turn of events decisively affected the answer to the question "whither music?" on which the Syndicate of Czech Composers had convoked an international assembly of composers and music critics in conjunction with the second edition of the Spring Music Festival the year before (May 1947). Back then, the delegates to this conference had subscribed to the observation that contemporary music found itself in a state of crisis, and the follow-up meeting in May 1948 was to come up with concrete solutions to redeem music from its wretched condition.⁶

After ten days of discussions and deliberations, both a diagnosis and a remedy were presented in a declaration signed on May 29, 1948, by representatives from both sides of the Iron Curtain. According to this declaration (later known as the Prague Manifesto), the perceived crisis of contemporary music and musical life arose from a conflict between so-called "serious" and "light" music. To the taste of the signatories, "serious" music was growing ever more "complex and constructivist in form" and "individualistic and subjective in content," thereby serving the interest of only a few who could appreciate it. Conversely, they considered "light" music—with explicit reference to "American entertainment music"—to be "perverting" the tastes of the "millions of listeners" it deluged by its "most vulgar, corrupted and standardized melodic clichés." Evolving from the same "nefarious social conditions" and manifesting "an equally falsely cosmopolitan character," both trends strayed from the "new and urgent tasks" which waited to be fulfilled in a time that saw the emergence of "new social forms." In order to overcome this crisis, the manifesto—while emphatically denying any desire to prescribe norms for writing music—recommended composers to renounce "the tendencies of extreme subjectivism," to turn decisively towards their national culture for inspiration, and to embrace genres "most concrete in their content," such as opera, oratorio, cantata, song, and chorus. If "progressive" composers and musicologists would unite on a national level, thereby paving the way for the formation of a worldwide union, music could be assured of regaining its "lofty and noble role in society," and become "a mighty factor in the solution of the great historic tasks facing all progressive mankind."⁷

⁶ For a discussion of the repercussions of the February 1948 coup for Czechoslovakia's musical life, see Thomas D. Svatos, "Sovietizing Czechoslovak Music: The 'Hatchet-Man' Miroslav Barvík and His Speech 'The Composers Go with the People,'" *Music & Politics* 4/1 (2010): 1–35.

⁷ "Proclamation of the Second International Congress of Composers and Musicologists in Prague" (See Appendix A1). After the Congress, the Syndicate of Czech Composers sent the proclamation

Although cast in less uncompromising language and not denouncing composers by name, the proclamation's resentment towards modernism and advocacy of musical nationalism undeniably resonates with the "historic decree" on musical "formalism" issued by the Soviet regime three months earlier, and for this reason the Congress has usually been construed by scholars as "the first important hub [*Schaltstelle*] for the export of the new musical directives [from Moscow]."⁸ According to the Polish composer-conductor Andrzej Panufnik, who fled to the United Kingdom in 1954 with the help of Nabokov, the proceedings were directed by the Russians, "with Khrennikov at the head, his friends the musicologist [Boris] Yarustovksy and the composer-teacher [Yuri] Shaporin dancing in unison."⁹ Witnesses, however, have refuted the prevailing assumption, spread by critics of the Czechoslovak Communist government, that the outcome of the Prague Congress was dictated by the newly installed apparatchiks of Russia's musical life of which the Soviet delegation consisted. By no means had they obtruded themselves during the drafting of the declaration, leaving most of the work to the representatives of Western countries instead.¹⁰ For the British participant Alan Bush, the "loud and long-continued applause" with which the proclamation and resolution were adopted with unanimous approval at the final session of the Congress reflected the unforced and cooperative atmosphere in which the discussions had taken place—an atmosphere quite incomparable to the internal display of power that the Moscow music conventions under Zhdanov's chairmanship had been. His fellow delegate, Bernard Stevens, too, depicted the conference as an open

and resolution to composers and musicologists of unrepresented countries, with a request for cooperation in the realization of the Congress's objectives. See, for instance, Virgil Thomson Papers, 29-57-6. Note that the memory of the Nazi occupation was still too fresh to invite a German delegation. As Eberhard Rebling, representative for the Communist Party of the Netherlands, remembered, the official languages to be used at the Congress were Czech, Russian, English, and French, but not German. Accordingly, Hanns Eisler started off his lecture in English, until he suddenly remarked with "a mischievous smile:" "Ah, let us speak in Swiss!" From that moment on German became the main language of communication at the Congress. Rebling, "Erinnerungen an Hanns Eisler," *Musik und Gesellschaft* 13 (1963): 421.

⁸ Frank Schneider und Ulrich Dibelius, eds., *Neue Musik im geteilten Deutschland* (Berlin: Henschel Verlag, 1993), vol. 1, 77; Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music—Vol. 5: Music in the Late Twentieth Century* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 11.

⁹ Panufnik, *Composing Myself* (London: Methuen, 1987), 181. Panufnik further relates how the Polish representative of the Prague Congress, Zofia Lissa, Deputy Director of the Music Department of the Ministry of Culture and the Arts, reported the resolutions to a general assembly of the Polish Composers' Union later that year, after which the Deputy Minister of Culture and Art, Włodzimierz Sokorski, exhorted Polish composers to follow the path paved "on the experiences of the Soviet Union and the ideological achievements of the Marxist-Leninist Party of the Polish proletariat."

¹⁰ Miloš Jůzl, "Music and the Totalitarian Regime in Czechoslovakia," *International Review of the Aesthetics and Sociology of Music* 27/1 (1996): 38; Jaromír Havlík, "The Prague Manifesto after (Almost) Sixty Years," *Czech Music* 9/2 (2007): 47.

platform for exchange of thoughts about common problems, enabling one to get a clear and undistorted picture of the musical state of affairs in each other's country.¹¹

Unfortunately, it is not possible to verify these testimonies, since the stenographic minutes of the Congress are lost. But the available evidence indeed does not warrant the suggestion that the Prague Congress was designed as a pretext to impose the Soviet decree against musical formalism on Eastern European socialist states. After all, from a Western perspective, Zhdanov might have pushed his reservations against modernist trends into the realm of the absurd, yet they touched upon an uncomfortable truth for those who cherished such trends: to the majority of music lovers, wherever and whenever, these modernist trends were not their cup of tea. The question, then, was how to overcome the sense of elitism which imbued many compositional trends since the beginning of the twentieth century—a question that indeed had been, and still was, a matter of great concern to many music professionals on both sides of the Iron Curtain. In their perception, the Prague Congress provided a stage for continuing the discussion on the rift between contemporary music and the non-specialized listener along the lines of the 1920s contributions of Hindemith and Weill—a stage which the International Society for Contemporary Music (ISCM), the professional organization founded in the wake of the First World War for the purpose of creating a wider audience for innovative trends in musical composition, failed to provide.

Indeed, as Eberhard Rebling, music reporter of the Dutch Communist daily *De Waarheid* (The Truth), observed, the relationship between music and society had been at the center of attention in Prague, whereas at the ISCM festival, which a few weeks later took place in Amsterdam (June 5–13, 1948), the considerably smaller audience seemed to be only interested in the artistic value of the works they heard. As he and many congenial colleagues saw it, the music festivals in “all capitalist countries” remained the preserve of “bourgeois gourmets, snobs and professionals.” So when the founding of a new society was proposed, an International Society of Progressive Composers and Musicologists which would emphatically concern itself with bringing music back into harmonious accord with society, many leftist composers saw an opportunity to resume the debate on contemporary music's role in society which had been cut short by the exigencies of World

¹¹ Bush, “The Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics,” *The Musical Times* 89/1267 (1948): 281; Bernard Stevens, “Congress of Composers,” *Philharmonic Post* 4/7 (1948): 8–9. Bush and Stevens attended the Congress as unofficial delegates, since the British government had withdrawn its participation to the Prague Festival after the Communist takeover. Both men were committed Marxists and had been deeply involved in the British workers' movement. While Bush remained a paid-up member of the British Communist Party for his entire life, Stevens resigned in protest at the Soviet suppression of the 1956 Hungarian uprising.

War II. This new association was to be structured on the same model as the ISCM, and to engage in the same activities—international music festivals and contests, publication projects, and musicological research on contemporary music—but then in serious consideration of, and consultation with, “the people.” The optimism was short-lived, though. National committees did materialize in both Western and Eastern Europe, but the increasingly divisive politics of the time prevented them to merge into an international body.¹²

Rather than as a straightforward implementation of the Zhdanovite directives in the Soviet satellite states, I interpret the Prague Manifesto as a document that addressed a set of “problems” that probably consumed its signatories ever since they started their careers. The effects of radio and recordings on concert attendance, the lack of interest of general audiences for their “new” music, and the successes of the fledgling “entertainment industry” seriously affected their profession as composers and critics, and prompted them to reconsider their relations to society and to what seemed an impervious music tradition. The first section of this chapter traces the roots of these positions in the Depression years, during which self-defined “progressive” composers in Europe and the United States sought to develop a politically engaged music that was both modern and accessible to the workers’ class. The second and third sections discuss the responses of Theodor W. Adorno, René Leibowitz, and Nicolas Nabokov to the Prague Manifesto, and review their (political) interpretations of the legacy of prewar musical modernism. The final two sections illustrate the concrete consequences of the East/West schism as it ruptured the wartime US-Soviet alliance. While Germany split up into two parallel worlds, where both sides reinterpreted German musical heritage according to their own political convictions, the US government kept struggling to perfect its instruments for waging a full-scale propaganda war against its ideological enemy.

Sounding the Revolution: In Search of a Proletarian Avant-Garde

The Prague proclamation was formulated in such a way that left-leaning, but not necessarily communist, participants could endorse it, and import it into

¹² Rebling, “De betekenis van volksmuziek: Resolutie van het congres van componisten en musicologen” [The Meaning of Folk Music: Resolution of the Congress of Composers and Musicologists], *De Waarheid* [Communist Party of the Netherlands], May 26, 1948, 3; “Vooruitstrevende componisten in Praag bijeen: Belangrijke besluiten” [Progressive Composers Convened in Prague: Important Resolutions] (report of the meeting of the preparatory committee of the prospective Association for Progressive Composers and Musicologists in Prague, 1949), *De Waarheid*, May 24, 1949, 1; and “Voorjaar in Praag: Terugblik op het internationale muziekfeest” [Spring in Prague: Retrospective on the International Music Festival], *De Waarheid*, June 29, 1949, 4; Rebling and Lin Jaldati, “*Sag nie, du gehst den letzten Weg*”: *Lebenserinnerungen 1911 bis 1988* (Marburg: BdWi, 1995), 421; Rebling to Maren Köster, April 21, 1999, cited in Köster, *Musik-Zeit-Geschehen: Zu den Musikverhältnissen in der SBZ/DDR 1945 bis 1952* (Saarbrücken: Pfau, 2002), 46–7.

the debate on the social relevance of contemporary music in their own country.¹³ Indeed, one contemporary commentator from France observed, “the theses of the manifesto have meaning of their own, and in these terms they have interested, and in some cases even seduced, musicians whose political positions—if they have any—are located far at the right.” Given that the musical life of various European countries exists by grace of taxes, is it not reasonable to expect from artists that they not deliberately dedicate themselves to “the delectation of a handful of specialists?”¹⁴ The proclamation did echo the Zhdanov decree in its disapproval of music that indulged in “extreme subjectivism” or a lack of melodic clarity and communicative power, but it did not go as far as to dictate the use of quasi-indigenous folk musics or classical-romantic models. Had that been the case, then a Congress participant like the Dutch composer Marius Flothuis, who positioned himself left of the Social Democratic Party while distancing himself from the Communist Party because of its blind loyalty to Moscow, would most likely have backed out of the project right away. This probably would have been true for Bush as well, who in contrast to Flothuis was a Communist Party member. Like Flothuis, Bush thought it to be an “absurd misunderstanding” of the whole theory of socialist realism to assume that social commitment consisted solely in the symphonic development of folk songs. In Flothuis’s memory, there was consensus among the Congress participants that composers like Britten and Bartók had succeeded in finding a style that was at once contemporary and acceptable to a large audience. But considering Flothuis’s, Rebling’s and Bush’s comments on the Congress, many participants seemed not to have concerned themselves as much with the question what “progressive” music exactly should sound like as with the question how an organization of progressive-minded professionals could pressure national governments to introduce reforms aimed at increasing working-class participation in Europe’s postwar cultural life.¹⁵

Other observers, however, did not let themselves be beguiled by the modest discrepancies in style and specifications between the Zhdanov

¹³ For the reception of the manifesto and attempts at implementing its resolution in Czechoslovakia, see Jůzl, “Music and the Totalitarian Regime in Czechoslovakia,” 31–51; Havlík, “The Prague Manifesto after (Almost) Sixty Years,” 42–51; in France, see Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Europe*, 37–49; in Great Britain, see Julie A. Waters, “Marxists, Manifestos, and ‘Musical Uproar’: Alan Bush, the 1948 Prague Congress, and the British Composers’ Guild,” *Journal of Musicological Research* 30 (2011): 23–45.

¹⁴ Henry Barraud, “*La Musique engagée*: Leibowitz, Sartre, and the Prague Manifesto—A Characteristic Dilemma of the Twentieth Century,” *Musical America* 71 (February 1951): 218–9.

¹⁵ Flothuis in an interview with Leo Samama, December 10, 1994, Oral History Project, Walter Maas Huis; Bush in an interview with R. Murray Schafer, *British Composers in Interview* (London: Faber & Faber, 1963), 60. For more on Bush’s interpretation of socialist realism, see Julie Waters, “Proselytizing the Prague Manifesto in Britain: The Commissioning, Conception, and Musical Language of Alan Bush’s ‘Nottingham’ Symphony,” *Music and Politics* 3/1 (2009): 1–23.

decree and the Prague Manifesto. For the Russian émigré composer and musicologist, Andrey Olkhovsky (see epigraph), both documents were symptomatic of a tendency to “enslave” music to the will of the state, thereby draining it from “expressive power” and “the divine spark of artistic insight”—a sinister fate to which none calling himself a “true” musician should be indifferent.¹⁶ Theodor W. Adorno, tireless critic of totalitarian traits wherever he saw them, deemed both the Moscow and the Prague indictments of “extreme subjectivism” instruments to suppress political dissent among the people whose leaders had decided to “socialize” them at all expense. Considering its true objective—selling Stalinist socialism on Western intellectuals—Adorno remarked that it was no more than prudent of the plotters master-minding the Prague convention not to display the whip that Shostakovich and Prokofiev, among others, had felt in the Soviet Union, and to couch their true agenda in crisis rhetoric containing “elements of truth” instead.¹⁷

Adorno hinted here at the Manifesto’s lip service to his own criticism of what he, as proponent of the Frankfurt School’s critique of capitalism, was wont to call the “culture industry.” According to this line of reasoning, culture contrived for commercial gains imposes on citizens a *trompe-l’œil*—and *trompe-l’oreille*—version of reality that anaesthetizes them for the ways in which the relentless bureaucratization and commodification of their social environment impinge on their autonomy. Holding out promises of full happiness, social mobility and freedom of choice, the products of the “culture industry” (pocket novels, glossies, movies, hit songs, etc.) appear to be nothing else than endless variations of the same rigid, standardized patterns and formulas, each of which appears just novel enough to keep the “masses” pulling their wallets. The fact that hardly anyone seems to notice this fraud, the theory suggests, is only indicative of the success with which the “culture industry” manages to mold free citizens into a conforming, consuming mass, thereby—willfully or not—eroding their capacity for critical thinking, perceptive observation, and genuine feeling.¹⁸

That a similar critique of the “culture industry” appeared in the Prague Manifesto is to the credit of Hanns Eisler, who was the Austrian

¹⁶ Olkhovsky, *Music under the Soviets: The Agony of an Art*, 276–7.

¹⁷ Adorno, “Die gegängelte Musik” [1948], in *Gesammelte Schriften* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1973), vol. 14, 52. Adorno wrote the essay immediately upon the completion of the manuscript for *Philosophie der neuen Musik* in the summer of 1948, but for unknown reasons did not publish it right away. The essay would appear for the first time in the May 1953 issue of *Der Monat*, a German-language magazine founded by OMGUS but by 1953 published under the auspices of the Congress for Cultural Freedom.

¹⁸ Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, “The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass Deception,” in *Dialectic of Enlightenment: Philosophical Fragments* [1944], ed. Gunzelin Schmid Noerr, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Library, 2002), 94–136.

representative in the Organizing Committee and had been mainly responsible for its drafting.¹⁹ At the time of the Congress, Eisler had just returned to Europe after having been expelled from the United States—the country in which he had lived in exile since 1933—on charges of having manifested himself as “the Karl Marx of communism in the musical field.”²⁰ In the early 1940s, Eisler, frustrated by his experiences as a Hollywood film composer, co-authored with Adorno—who at this time also resided in the vicinity of Los Angeles—a sharp critique of the practices of standardization they observed at work in the motion picture industry, particularly with regard to the production of soundtracks.²¹ Although both exiles agreed that

¹⁹ Eberhard Rebling, “Hanns Eisler,” *De Waarheid*, July 10, 1948, 3; Alan Bush, “Für Hanns Eisler,” in *Sinn und Form—Sonderheft Hanns Eisler* (Berlin: Rütten & Loening, 1964), 332.

²⁰ Characterization by Robert E. Stripling, chief investigator of Hanns Eisler’s case, in *Hearings Regarding Hanns Eisler before the House Committee on Un-American Activities*, House of Representatives, Eightieth Congress, First Session, September 24–26, 1947 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1947), 25. Eisler had been summoned before HUAC on a charge of having defended his brother Gerhart Eisler, who had become one of the first targets of the anticommunist witch-hunt that marked the end of America’s anti-Nazi alliance with the Soviet Union. In October 1946, Louis Budenz, a “renegade” cadre member of the American Communist Party (CPUSA), identified Gerhart as the “agent of a foreign power” and manager of all “Red activities” in the United States, an insinuation that was not only confirmed but also intensified by Gerhart’s sister, Ruth Fischer. A leading member of the German Communist Party (KPD) and Comintern in the early 1920s, Fischer had turned into a fervent anti-Stalinist and FBI informant after having been expelled by Stalin for alleged “Trotskyite sympathies,” for which she was sentenced to death in absentia at the 1936 Moscow trials. In a series of articles published in the *New York Journal-American* (November 1946), she accused her brothers of “subversive” activities on behalf of the Soviet Union. Evidence supporting charges of espionage was lacking, but nevertheless Gerhart was sentenced to four years in prison for contempt of Congress (he had refused to answer HUAC at his first trial) and misrepresenting his KPD affiliation on his immigration application. When his appeal to the Supreme Court threatened to fail, he fled the country by stowing away on a Polish freighter bound for London. Discovered by the crew while at sea, he was delivered to the British authorities at Southampton, who allowed him to proceed to what was about to become the German Democratic Republic, of whose government he would become a leading propagandist. HUAC was less successful in making a case against Hanns: the fact that he had applied for KPD membership in 1926 (which, on his own account, was never effectuated due to his failure to pay his dues in time) and that he had written Soviet-sponsored revolutionary songs did not suffice to trigger a formal prosecution. Subsequently, HUAC advised the Justice Department to start a deportation procedure, which failed as well. When Eisler, realizing that it would be impossible for him to work any longer in the United States, proposed to leave the country voluntarily, he was denied a visa and made to wait for a deportation hearing. Following pressure from his lawyers and professional acquaintances (including Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein and Roger Sessions, who established a committee for his defense), this hearing finally took place on February 6, 1948. The outcome was that Eisler would be given the opportunity to leave the country “voluntarily” provided he did so as quickly as possible. Under wide media attention, Eisler left the United States for Prague by the end of March. FBI file on Hanns Eisler, memorandum dated January 7, 1948 (Field Office Los Angeles); HUAC, *Hearings on Gerhart Eisler: Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States*, February 6, 1947 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1947). For a detailed discussion of Eisler’s FBI file, see James Wierzbicki, “Hanns Eisler and the FBI,” *Music and Politics* 2/2 (2008): 1–31.

²¹ Hanns Eisler and Theodor W. Adorno, *Composing for the Films* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

radically modern music could convey the essence of the actions on the screen in ways infinitely more efficient and appealing than the Wagnerite clichés on which film studios relied at the time, Adorno could not help but feeling skeptic at the feasibility of Eisler's alternatives, which amounted to an almost complete reversal of the picture/music hierarchy. As their study was being prepared for print (in 1947), Adorno withdrew his name as co-author—a move that was consciously intended to prevent himself from being drawn into the anticommunist smear campaign in which Eisler had been caught up by then.²²

The rupture in Eisler and Adorno's collaboration only confirmed the troubled nature of their relationship which had been evident ever since Alban Berg had brought them together in 1925.²³ Having witnessed the failure of post-1917 working-class revolutions on the one hand and the increasing success of fascist parties on the other, both espoused a Marxist critique of the bourgeois society they came from. As aspiring composers, they shared an affinity for the Second Viennese School (Adorno studied with Berg, Eisler with Schoenberg) and a strong dislike for the so-called neoclassicist movement orbiting around Stravinsky. They differed widely, however, as to how to reconcile their felt need for "social engagement" (*soziales Engagement*) with their personal interest in modernist music. Eisler, encouraged by his longtime artistic partner Bertolt Brecht, could not justify for himself to keep turning a blind eye and deaf ear to the proletariat's musical needs. In 1926, he broke with his mentor, Schoenberg (who dismissed his pupil's political activism as a passing fancy) and enrolled as an active member of the German workers' music movement, determined to transform music from a "stupefying and intoxicating agent of capitalism" into a weapon of class struggle. Heeding Lenin's theory that a proletarian culture is not to be invented *ex nihilo* but to be developed from "the best models, traditions, and results of the *existing* culture *from the point of view* of the Marxist world outlook," Eisler and Brecht strove to accomplish this mission by vitalizing outdated choral songs (i.e., the legacy of an allegedly decaying "counter-revolutionary" culture) with the resources of modern music (i.e., the potential source for a "progressive" or "revolutionary" culture).²⁴

²² See Adorno's explanatory note in the 1969 German edition, *Komposition für den Film* (Munich: Rogner & Bernhard, 1969), 213.

²³ Jürgen Schebera, "Adorno-Eisler: Ein spannungsvolles Verhältnis über vier Jahrzehnte im Spiegel von Brief- und Textzeugnissen," in *Hanns Eisler*, ed. Albrecht Dümling (Frankfurt am Main: Stroemfeld, 2010), 42–72.

²⁴ Eisler, "History of the German Workers' Music Movement from 1848," *Music Vanguard: A Critical Review* 1/1 (1935): 35; Lenin, "Rough Draft of a Resolution on Proletarian Culture," October 9, 1920, in *Lenin Collected Works* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1971), vol. 42, 217. For a discussion of Eisler's relationship with Schoenberg, see Nathan Notowicz, "Eisler und Schönberg," *Sinn und Form—Sonderheft Hanns Eisler*, 74–94.

Eisler's influence in the international workers' movement increased since November 1932, when he found himself elected into the presidium of the International Music Bureau (IMB), a Comintern-related body set up in February of that year for coordinating the activities of various associations of leftwing composers worldwide. With the official denunciation of modernist trends in music still four years ahead, this Bureau encouraged efforts designed to enlist the achievements of the "bourgeois" avant-garde for the emancipation of blue-collar workers.²⁵ Its aspirations corresponded at the time with those of Henry Cowell, who in 1929 had been among the first American musicians to visit the Soviet Union after the 1917 revolution. Back then, he had been impressed by the musical activity of the workers' communities he witnessed in Moscow and Leningrad. At the same time, however, he had been perceptive enough to notice the conservatism that prevailed in the domain of music, resulting in the irony that the officially sanctioned music from Soviet soil resembled the music that in the nineteenth century expressed "bourgeois feelings."²⁶ In the years after his Soviet experience, Cowell became active in IMB's American branch, the Workers Music League—more specifically, in the Pierre Degeyter Club (named after the composer of the "Internationale," the Belgian socialist, later Communist, Pierre De Geyter) and its New York-based affiliate, the Composers' Collective. There he advised his colleagues, all of whom were concerned with communicating with the "common man" rather than the wealthy patrons who had abandoned them since the onset of the Depression, to probe innovative approaches to proletarian song after the example of Brecht, Eisler and Kurt Weill.²⁷

²⁵ Eisler, "Die Aufgaben der Musikkonferenz der MRTO," speech presented in his absence at the second plenum of the International Workers' Theatrical Union (MRTO) in Moscow, November 1932, in *Hanns Eisler: Musik und Politik—Schriften 1924–1948*, 175–84. Prior to the 1936 launch of the Soviet campaign against musical "formalism," Eisler, who took over its leadership in July 1935, had lobbied in vain to bring the IMB into the ISCM. He also teamed up with the Leningrad musicologist Ivan Sollertinsky to persuade Soviet authorities to establish a contemporary music institute in the Soviet Union, to be led by his former mentor Schoenberg. This plan fell through as officials of the People's Commissariat for Education (Narkompros) were concerned about the "decadent" nature of Schoenberg's most recent work, which they feared might have a corrupting influence on young Soviet composers. Caroline Brooke, "Soviet Music in the International Arena, 1932–41," *European History Quarterly* 31/2 (2001): 239–40.

²⁶ Cowell, "Conservative Music in Radical Russia," *The New Republic* (August 14, 1929): 339–41. For a detailed reconstruction of Cowell's initially troublesome but in the end productive 1929 visit to Soviet Russia, see Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 162–72.

²⁷ The Workers Music League was established on June 14, 1931 by members of the American Communist Party for the purpose of fostering class consciousness within the American proletariat, mainly through choral activities. It promoted the creation of revolutionary musical organizations (the Pierre Degeyter Clubs) throughout the nation. Moved by the Depression and disenchanted with the course of art music, Cowell, among others, convened in February 1932 a group of composers (the Composers' Collective, including, for instance, Marc Blitzstein and Elie Siegmeister) determined to find a musical style that was revolutionary in both content and form.

This appeared to be easier said than done. “Eisler had done what we wanted to do, but we couldn’t,” Collective spokesman Charles Seeger remembered. Taking their cue from Eisler, who visited the group during his first trip to the United States in 1935, the Collective aimed to marry “left-wing political ideals to an uncompromising musical modernism.” Practically, this meant that its members experimented with novel ways of arranging conventional, Broadway-like harmonic and rhythmical patterns. “We thought *that* was revolutionary and therefore suitable for the workers to use,” Seeger explained.²⁸ But judging from the most widely approved result of this effort, Aaron Copland’s song “Into the Streets May First” (Example 1a), the ambition to find an accessible yet modern style was overshadowed by the anxiety of sounding too simplistic.

The song features all the characteristics of the 1930s mass song: unison and syllabic text setting, homophonic accompaniment saturated with bass octaves, and clear, propulsive rhythms—all ingredients for easily comprehensible songs. What makes Copland’s song complex, however, is the capricious melodic and rhythmic profile, uneven phrasing, and unexpected shifts of harmonic orientation (Example 1b). The exclamations of the first stanza are evenly divided in time ($2^{2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}} + 2^{2 \times 1\frac{1}{2}}$), but rather than modulating to the dominant, descend into the major/minor subdominant region (F/f). The second stanza starts as a common middle section in an ABA form in the sense that it consist of two identical dominant-oriented patterns, although initially the dominant is undermined by the pedal on the tonic (C-G). Suddenly, as if to capture the rising temperament of the lyrics, the melodic and harmonic dynamics increase: whereas the exhortations elide through a *Sekundgang* from C^{#2} to B¹, the third exhortation departs from A through a cadence pattern seemingly aiming for C (E-F-G), but then shifts direction via a voice crossing (on “belfries”) towards a cadence in B (D[#]-E-F[#]). The third stanza starts the same as the second stanza, but now turns out to be oriented towards C. This time the second and third exhortations are linked by a *Sekundgang* from C² to G¹. The outer voices of the final exclamation suggest a conventional cadence, but the inner voices reintroduce the B^b triad which led the first line into the subdominant region.

The Collective published the fruits of its labors in two volumes of the *Workers’ Songbook* (New York: Workers Music League, 1934 and 1935). For more about the Composers’ Collective, see Carol J. Oja, “Composer with a Conscience: Elie Siegmeister in Profile,” *American Music* 6/2 (1988): 158–80 and “Marc Blitzstein’s *The Cradle Will Rock* and Mass-Song Style of the 1930s,” *Musical Quarterly* 73/4 (1989): 445–75. For a general account of 1930s and 1940s left-wing cultural production on the American scene, see Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1997).

²⁸ Seeger, “On Proletarian Music,” *Modern Music* 11/3 (1939): 124–5; Seeger in an interview with David K. Dunaway, “Charles Seeger and Carl Sands: The Composers’ Collective Years,” *Ethnomusicology* 24/2 (1980): 164.

EXAMPLE 1a Copland, "Into the Streets May First!" Words by Alfred Hayes. Published in *New Masses* (May 1, 1934).

①

f 3 3

In-to the streets May First! In-to the roar— ing Square! Shake the mid-town tow-ers! Crash the

6 ②

down-town air! Come with a storm of ban-ner; Come with an earth-quake tread; Bells, ring

12 ③

out_ of your bel-fries; Red flag, leap out your red! Out of the shops and fac-tor-ies;

17 *ff*

Up with the sic-kle and_ham-mer, Com-rades, these are our tools; A song and a bann-ner!

ff

EXAMPLE 1b Copland, “Into the Streets May First!” Reduction.

The image displays a piano reduction of Copland's song "Into the Streets May First!". It is organized into three systems, each with a circled number (1, 2, 3) in the upper left corner. Each system consists of a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. System 1 (measures 1-4) features a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a supporting line. System 2 (measures 7-11) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a supporting line. System 3 (measures 15-21) shows a treble staff with a melodic line and a bass staff with a supporting line. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and dynamic markings.

Copland’s worker’s song might be “revolutionary” in its inflammatory text and unconventional application of harmonic patterns, but it is difficult to imagine that it would be as practicable for a workers’ choir as was, for instance, a song like Brecht and Eisler’s “Einheitsfrontlied” (Example 2a and b). Calling for a united Communist/Social Democratic workers’ front against National Socialism, the song follows a conventional voice-leading pattern which is not fundamentally affected but, if anything, spiced up by the sevenths, ninths, omission of thirds, and occasional false relations that enhance the melodic profile of inner voices (m. 3; m. 13) and/or to emphasize the bitterness of the text (mm. 5–6, “ein Geschwätz”; m. 7, “kein Essen”). In analytical terms, whereas Eisler maintains a “classical” background structure, Copland’s treatment of harmony, melody and rhythm, however simply they might seem on the surface, profoundly intercede in the structural background, making his song rather complicated to grasp for an amateur choir.

Despite its complexity, “Into the Streets May First” won the first prize—by unanimous vote—at the Workers’ Music League’s 1934 May Day song competition for being “the most practical song for our purpose.” Indeed,

EXAMPLE 2a Eisler, “Einheitsfrontlied” (Song of the United Front), 1934.
Words by Bertolt Brecht. Rhymed translation by author.

f

Und weil der mensch ein mensch ist, drum braucht er was zum Es-sen, bit-te sehr. Es macht ihn ein Ge-
A man's a man and that means, he'll need to sup-per, sure-ly that's no treat. Emp-ty words won't fill

f

6

schwätz nicht satt, das schafft kein Es-sen—her. Drum links, zwei, drei! drum links, zwei, drei! wo dein
him up, they will not bring him anything to eat. So left, two, three! so left, two, three! to the

11

Platz, Ge-nose ist! Reih dich ein in die Ar-bei-ter-ein-heits-front, weil du auch ein Ar-bei-ter bist!
place, Com rade, that is as-signed to you! Take you stand in the wor-kers' u-ni-ted front, for you are a wor-ker—to!

EXAMPLE 2b Eisler, “Einheitsfrontlied.” Reduction.

1 3 5

9 11 13

Copland's setting happened to be one of the less experimental submissions, and in the 1935 edition of the League's *Workers Songbook* it was listed as suitable for beginners. Granted, some of the intervals and unfamiliar harmonies "may be somewhat difficult upon a first hearing or singing," the jury reported, "but we believe the unsophisticated ear will very readily accustom itself to their sound."²⁹ Seeger, although agreeing that Copland's submission was the best from an artistic point of view, was less convinced that its "freak modulations" and large leaps in the vocal line would ever come easy to the amateur singer. As it appeared, Copland thought the same: when Seeger asked him whether he thought "Into the Streets" would ever be sung on the picket line, the laureate reportedly replied in the negative.

Like Cowell, Copland nevertheless defined the objectives of good mass songs as creating solidarity and inspiring action while insisting that "the music be of the finest caliber," since "a better musical setting will make a song a more thrilling experience and thereby increase its political drive."³⁰ However, Copland's and Cowell's version of Eisler's 'proletarian avant-garde' thesis—an advanced musical language making a better political song in the sense of morale building and agitation—appeared increasingly untenable. "Into the Streets," and indeed most of the musical output of the Composers' Collective, generally failed to fill any other social space than that of the working-class concert venue. One of the reasons why the Collective's composers failed to match the success of Eisler is that they sought to derive the 'advancement' of their songs too much from the application of early twentieth-century compositional innovations, many of which had been designed to undermine tonal stability, melodic lyricism, and metric regularity. The 'modernism' of the Brecht/Eisler song, however, does not so much reside in its use of advanced rhythms, harmonies, modulations and others novelties (which, if introduced at all, are carefully dosed) as in its parodic treatment of the "bourgeois" model it appropriated, stripping it from all traits of lyricism, embellishments and individual expression. By following the foundational structure of this model, i.e., its clarity in form and tonal scheme, the Brecht/Eisler song was convenient to learn for the untrained singer and easily adaptable to a variety of occasions (the street, the factory, or the music hall), thus perfectly suitable for the purpose it was to serve. Several Collective members, though, felt Eisler's style to be "inapplicable to the American situation"—a euphemistic way of saying that it was too

²⁹ Ashley Pettis, "Marching with a Song," *New Masses* (May 1, 1934): 15. See also *The Reminiscences of Charles Seeger*, collected in interviews with Adelaide G. Tusland and Ann M. Briegleb, Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles (1972), 219–20.

³⁰ Cowell, "'Useful' Music," *New Masses* (October 29, 1935): 26–7; Aaron Copland and Vivian Perlis, *Copland: 1900 Through 1942* (New York: St. Martin's, 1984), 225; Copland, "Workers Sing!" *New Masses* (June 5, 1934): 28–9.

“reactionary” for their taste—and continued to search for an idiom that was at once modern, distinctively American, and appealing to the untrained ear.³¹ That Tin Pan Alley and Broadway had already found this formula obviously did not cross their mind: the products that flowed from these pinnacles of commercialism simply ran counter to all standards that the conservatory-trained servants of the proletariat believed in, both ideologically and artistically.

Be it as it may, Zhdanov’s unexpected denial, first declared at the 1934 founding congress of the Union of Soviet Writers, of the usefulness of any form of “bourgeois” modernism to the project of socialist construction dashed any hopes for an international musical poetics of the proletariat. In fact, Zhdanov’s edict confirmed Stalin’s abandonment of the international revolutionary cause altogether. The construction of a socialist society was a project to be implemented according to the specific conditions of a country, Stalin theorized, and the cultural expression of the socialist society to be anchored in the local variety of cultural heritage rather than “invented” from scratch. Thus, in May 1936, four months after the attack on Shostakovich, IMB secretary Grigori Schneyerson called upon “our comrades on the musical front in America” to give up the theory, represented by Cowell, that contemporary music should sound as disagreeable as the conditions under which its audiences lived, and to start writing “music of realistic and genuine mass character, full of revolutionary spirit and ideas, clear in form and language.”³² Partly motivated by the rationale of mobilizing a social-wide resistance movement against fascism (the Popular Front) as dictated by Moscow, partly by homegrown forms of cultural nationalism, folklore was to become the new cornerstone of proletarian poetics. “If we are to compose for more than an infinitesimal fraction of the American people,” Seeger now argued, “we must write in an idiom not too remote from the one most of them already possess—their own musical vernacular.”³³ Until then, he, like Eisler, had not regarded folk music to be of any use for the revolutionary cause whatsoever.

³¹ See Marc Blitzstein’s minutes of a “special symposium-meeting,” June 16, 1935, Blitzstein Papers, 7-6 and 9-11. Discussed by Maria Cristina Fava, “Music as Political and Social Statement in the 1930s: Marc Blitzstein and Friends in New York City,” Ph.D. dissertation, Eastman School of Music, University of Rochester, 2012, 79–91.

³² Schneyerson, “About Some Mistakes,” *Sovetskaya Muzyka* (May 1936), quoted from a translation included in the Cowell Papers, 96-5. Schneyerson reacted to an editorial, titled “Why Modern Composers?,” that Cowell wrote for the March 1936 issue of the *Pierre Degeyter Music Club News*, a copy of which is located in the Cowell Papers, 96-6. For a discussion of Cowell’s correspondence with Soviet music institutions, including IMB, see Sachs, *Henry Cowell*, 246–57.

³³ Seeger, “Grass Roots for American Composers,” *Modern Music* 16/3 (1939): 148; Eisler, “Problems of Working-Class Music” [1935], in *Hanns Eisler, a Rebel in Music: Selected Writings*, ed. Manfred Grabs (New York: International Publishers, 1978), 95–100.

Thus, the international proletarian avant-garde petered out on both sides of the Atlantic. As Soviet officials averse to any cooperation with “bourgeois elements” gained influence at the expense of those who had advocated their co-optation in the revolutionary movement, Eisler soon found himself accused of being a “Western formalist,” who had purportedly denied the value of classical music and suggested that Soviet music had lost its class content. When Eisler dared to invite the ISCM, in the name of the Soviet government, to hold its 1936 festival in Moscow, thereby contravening express instructions that the IMB delegation may not act as an official Soviet institution, his detractors seized their chance to bring about the dissolution of the IMB.³⁴ The Composers’ Collective, too, folded somewhere in 1936, with many former members joining the New York Composers’ Forum, which was no less devoted to creating a modern musical style accessible to the “common man,” but no longer focused on its direct utility for social protest (not for the least, also, because the Forum was funded under the auspices of President Roosevelt’s New Deal program). Instead, its members were particularly concerned with exploring the possibilities of America’s indigenous musical traditions for the purpose of creating an identifiably American concert music repertoire. Ironically enough, perhaps the most iconic result of this search manifested itself only after federal support of the Forum discontinued: Copland’s idyllic, dignified, Western frontier idiom that made him famous in works like *Billy the Kid* (1938), *Rodeo* (1942), *Fanfare for the Common Man* (1942), *Lincoln Portrait* (1942), *Appalachian Spring* (1944), and the *Third Symphony* (1946).³⁵ Had the United States not continuously featured as a cultural-political *bête noire* in the imagination of Europe’s postwar progressive intelligentsia, this idiom might have been presented as the solution to the two-pronged crisis that according to the 1948 Prague conferees held the musical world in its grip.

Schoenberg the Disenchanter: Constructing the “True” Artist

For Adorno, neither the application of modernist techniques nor the appropriation of indigenous music constituted a viable path towards music with the potential to arouse class consciousness. In his analysis, the social

³⁴ Brooke, “Soviet Music in the International Arena,” 256.

³⁵ The New York Composers’ Forum was created in 1935 as part of the Works Progress Administration’s Federal Music Project. When federal support ceased in 1939–40, the New York Public Library and Juilliard School of Music stepped into the breach to keep the Forum alive. For a book-length study of the Forum, see Melissa J. de Graaf, *The New York Composers’ Forum, 1935–1940* (Rochester, NY: University of Rochester Press, 2013). For more on the shift of poetics among left-leaning musicians in the 1930s, see Robbie Lieberman, *My Song is My Weapon: People’s Songs, American Communism, and the Politics of Culture 1930–1950* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989) and Richard A. and Joanne C. Reuss, *American Folk Music and Left-Wing Politics, 1927–1957* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000).

commitment of art does not reside in the creators' intentions or their class origins, but in their "struggle" with what he called the "material," i.e., the sediment of centuries of "struggles" fought by artists before them, and, as such, an objective standard along which to measure "progress" (*Fortschritt*) and "authenticity" (*Authentizität*). As both the artists' imagination and their material have been conditioned by their social environment, art always mediates, through its own media and according to its own formal laws, the social tensions under which it has been conceived, *provided* that it is free from the obligation to respond to any ulterior objective, be it of political or commercial nature. In other words, only when allowed to be committed to nothing else than to itself, art can disclose the social reality in which it has been created. And that is where its critical potential resides: "autonomous" or "authentic" art never conjures up a wishful reality, but always conveys reality as it is, i.e., the net result of competing interests, social inequality, and increasing regulation. It points out "the ills of society, rather than sublimating those ills into a deceptive humanitarianism which would pretend that humanitarianism had already been achieved in the present." Following this line of reasoning, any attempt at politicizing art—that is, submitting it to one particular meaning and objective—turns it into a propaganda vehicle that affirms, instead of negates, the social reality as those in power wish to see it.³⁶

For many participants to the 1948 Prague Congress, Adorno's plea for protecting culture against political exploitation, regardless for what cause, was merely an excuse for not having to take a risk. They may have recognized the warning in the Frankfurt School's argument, but accepting its pessimistic determinism was a step too far. After all, if music really could only reflect rather than change reality, what possibly could composers contribute to the betterment of society? In Eisler's position, they found a way to marry their aesthetic aspirations with the cause of social reform. It gave them an alibi for blaming—as Eisler did in his address to the Congress—"bourgeois society" for having turned "all art [into] the thing of profit" and having brought "filthiness, garbage, tediousness and shallowness into artistic life." At the same time, it upheld the possibility of stemming this tide of degeneration by breaking *modern* music's isolation and thrusting her

³⁶ Representative writings of Adorno's social theory of art include "On the Social Situation of Music" [1932], in Adorno, *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert, trans. Susan H. Gillespie (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2002), 391–436; "Art, Society, Aesthetics," in *Aesthetic Theory* [1970], ed. Gretel Adorno and Rolf Tiedeman, trans. Robert Hullot-Kentor (London: Continuum, 2004), 1–20, 40, 151; and *Philosophy of Modern Music* [1949], trans. Anne G. Mitchell and Wesley V. Blomster (London: Continuum, 2007), 21–6, 96–9. For a critical discussion of the premises on which Adorno's theory is predicated, especially concerning the subject/object-relationship, see Carl Dahlhaus, "Adornos Begriff des musikalischen Materials" [1974], *Gesammelte Schriften* (Laaber: Laaber, 2005), vol. 8, 277–83.

back into the center of society.³⁷ Eisler's non-prescriptive alternative to Zhdanov's poetics of socialist music contained the perfect strategy to organize the world's "progressive composers and musicologists." The Soviet delegation, headed by Tikhon Khrennikov, the newly appointed chair of the Soviet Composers' Union, and his musicological companion, Boris Yarustovsky, realized this all too well. In a report written for their home front, both apparatchiks expressed their confidence that those who had not (yet) answered the "call of history" and stuck to Eisler's compromised position would soon follow in the wake of the "new, democratic states" (Poland and Czechoslovakia are explicitly mentioned) which had made considerable progress in the process of "rid[ding] themselves of the old ailments [i.e., "formalism"] and creat[ing] in the service of their people works of art that will be in full harmony with their age."³⁸

Had the Prague Congress been the equivalent of the inaugural Cominform meeting of the preceding year, then Eisler could not have praised Schoenberg in front of the assembly. Although he disapproved of his political aloofness, Eisler thought his teacher's music to convey capitalist society in its true appearance instead of varnishing it. For him, works like *Pierrot Lunaire*, *Erwartung*, and *Die glückliche Hand* refuse to provide listeners with a sanctuary in which they can "wallow in their own prettiness," forcing them to "reflect upon the intricacy and ugliness of the world" instead. Indeed, "[w]hatever objection may be taken against [Schoenberg], he cannot be thought a liar," Eisler assured the conferees. After all, had he not foreseen long before the invention of airplanes "the horror of people in bombproof shelters during an air raid"? Had he not been the "lyricist of Auschwitz's gas chambers, of Dachau's concentration camp, of common man's helpless despair under the boot of fascism [at] a time when the world still seemed safe to all"?³⁹

Adorno, too, heard in Schoenberg's convulsive and disjunctive musical language a revolt against bourgeois complacency. Like Eisler, he appreciated its veracity, in that it ostensibly registered without disguise the angst that haunted men in a society governed by bourgeois beliefs and ideals, and its

³⁷ Eisler, "Gesellschaftliche Grundfragen der modernen Musik" [1948], in *Hanns Eisler: Musik und Politik—Schriften 1948-1962*, ed. Günter Mayer (Leipzig: VEB Deutscher Verlag für Musik, 1982), 13-4, 22.

³⁸ Yarustovsky, "The International Composers' Congress and Music Festival in Prague: Impressions and Conclusions," *Soviet Literature: A Monthly Journal of the Union of Writers of the USSR* (October 1948): 146; Khrennikov, report on the Prague Congress, *Sovetskaya Muzyka* 5 (1948): 17; "Musik und Gegenwart: Internationaler Komponistenverband gegründet," *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], June 4, 1948, 3.

³⁹ Eisler, "Über Schönberg" [1935], in *Hanns Eisler: Musik und Politik—Schriften 1924-1948*, 272-3; "Mein Lehrer Arnold Schönberg," in *Hanns Eisler: Musik und Politik—Schriften 1948-1962*, 72-4; and "Gesellschaftliche Grundfragen der modernen Musik," 16-9.

potential of awakening those who remained unaware of how much these beliefs (e.g., in the infallibility of reason) and ideals (e.g., complete control of reality) dehumanized and alienated them from each other. By its very complexity and resistance to intelligibility and closure, Adorno believed this language to be the ultimate answer to the question what music after Auschwitz should effectuate, namely, resisting “social tendencies” that compel individuals to conform to an ideology about which they have no say, *including* the “social tendencies” that Eisler had embraced. In other words, for Adorno, Schoenberg’s music could disclose to listeners on both sides of the Iron Curtain the very social conflicts and contradictions that their administration(s) wished to conceal from them, i.e., the various ways in which they were being manipulated, disempowered, and aligned into an amorphous, conforming, and mute mass.⁴⁰ As such, Schoenberg demonstrated musically what “committed” art should do, namely, to “strip the magic” from those forms of cultural expression that are “content to be a fetish, an idle pastime for those who would like to sleep through the deluge that threatens them, in an apoliticism that is in fact deeply political.”⁴¹

One of the central arguments which both Eisler and Adorno advanced in their support of Schoenberg is that the composer confuted the entire ideological foundation on which the bourgeoisie rested by bringing about the dissolution of the tonal system through which it used to express itself. For the same reason, René Leibowitz, composer, conductor, music critic and principal advocate of the Second Viennese School in France, saw in Schoenberg the prototype of the subversive composer, and in his cantata *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46 (1947) the ultimate proof of the reconcilability of artistic radicalism and social engagement. Schoenberg could have chosen the smooth path to guaranteed success for which the cantata’s words lend themselves, Leibowitz suggested. Instead, he had the temerity to use his innovative idiom marked by fragmentation, asymmetry, unpredictability, and harsh dissonances to convey the anxieties and contradictions of humanity living in a century that witnessed two devastating global wars (Example 3). Likewise, Adorno heard in Schoenberg’s ghastly enactment of “a survivor” struggling to recall his/her experience of one of the most comprehensive raids in the Jewish ghetto of Warsaw “that inexpressible thing...that no one any longer wants to know about,” and “this alone would be enough to earn him every right to the thanks of the generation that scorns him.”⁴² This is,

⁴⁰ Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 26–37. Reference is made here to Adorno’s controversial 1949 dictum that “to write poetry after Auschwitz is barbaric.” “Cultural Criticism and Society” [1949], in *Prisms* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1983), 34.

⁴¹ “Commitment” [1962], in *The Essential Frankfurt School Reader*, ed. Andrew Arato and Eike Gebhardt (New York: Urizen Books, 1978), 301.

⁴² Adorno, “On the Contemporary Relationship of Philosophy and Music” [1953], in *idem, Essays on*

according to Adorno and Leibowitz, how “true” (*véritable*) or “authentic” (*wahrhaft*) artists can be recognized: they challenge the established order by challenging its musical values. They do not shun their obligation to venture beyond current taste and conventions, to face the “unknown, mysterious and frightening complexities of new means of expression,” and to advance the tradition of polyphony to the next stage of its evolution in spite of reactionary forces.⁴³

As Leibowitz (and Adorno) saw it, at a time when a new status quo crystallized from the chaos left by World War II, composers should follow Schoenberg’s example and confront the question whether or not to resist the tendency of simplification, nostalgia, and popularization stipulated by either governmental decree (as in the Soviet Union and its satellite states) or the “dictatorship” of public taste (as in the United States).⁴⁴ This appeal to the composer’s conscience echoed a similar appeal made by Jean-Paul Sartre, to whose journal *Les Temps modernes* Leibowitz regularly contributed. Sartre, however, had limited his appeal to writers exclusively, since he was convinced that awareness of the choice people have between either complying with reality or resisting it could only be created through a medium designed for communicating ideas: lucidly written prose. Who would dare require painters, poets, or musicians to commit themselves to a social cause if their artistic media by definition cannot, and should not, carry meaning in a way that is free of ambiguity?, Sartre reasoned. For the Existentialist philosopher, it was even more difficult to imagine how the music Leibowitz and Adorno advocated could achieve the objectives of committed literature. For all that could be said against its attempt to submit,

Music, 149–50. Incidentally, a decade after this appraisal, Adorno showed himself more ambivalent towards Schoenberg’s cantata. He still appreciated its objective of “prevent[ing] people from repressing from memory what they at all costs want to repress,” yet he had come to feel uncomfortable with the aestheticization of torture and genocide: “The aesthetic principle of stylization, and even the solemn prayer of the chorus, make an unthinkable fate appear to have had some meaning; it is transfigured, something of its horror is removed. This alone does injustice to the victims....When genocide becomes part of the cultural heritage in the themes of committed literature, it becomes easier to continue to play along with the culture which gave birth to murder.” Adorno, “Commitment,” 312–3. For an analysis that connects the process of recalling a traumatic experience and Schoenberg’s treatment of the cantata’s twelve-tone rows, see Amy Lynn Wlodarski, “‘An Idea Can Never Perish’: Memory, the Musical Idea, and Schoenberg’s *A Survivor from Warsaw*,” *Journal of Musicology* 24/4 (2007): 581–608.

⁴³ Leibowitz, “Illusions et conditions de l’art engagé” and “Le *Survivant de Varsovie* d’Arnold Schoenberg,” in idem, *L’Artiste et sa conscience: esquisse d’une dialectique de la conscience artistique* (Paris: L’Arche, 1950), 91–112. These two chapters have been published in English as “Arnold Schoenberg’s *Survivor from Warsaw*, or the Possibility of ‘Committed Art,’” *Horizon: A Review of Literature and Art* 20/116 (1949): 122–31.

⁴⁴ Leibowitz, “La signification de l’engagement musical,” in *L’Artiste et sa conscience*, 75–87; “On triche sur tous les tableaux: A propos des compositeurs ‘formalistes’ en U.R.S.S.,” *Les Temps modernes* 3 (1947/1948): 2072–8; and “Musiques d’Amérique: Déracinement et implantation d’une tradition musicale,” *Les Temps modernes* 4 (1948): 816–7.

EXAMPLE 3 Schoenberg, *A Survivor from Warsaw* for narrator, male choir and orchestra (1947), mm. 57–70. Revised edition by Jacques-Louis Monod. © 1979 Universal Edition.

a tempo [♩ = 80] **rit.** **60**

Cl. 1,2
 Ban. 1,2
 Hrn 2
 Hrp.
 Nar.
 Vi. II
 Va. div. I
 Va. div. II
 Vcl.
 Cbs.

There I lay a-side half conscious. It had become ver-y still— fear and

a tempo, più mosso tempo I (♩ = 80)
 (♩ = 112) a2 take Picc. 1,2 a2 Picc. 1,2 a2

Fl. 1,2
 Ob. 1,2
 Cl. 1,2
 Ban. 1,2
 Trp. 1,2
 Nar.
 Va.
 Vcl.
 Cbs.

pain.— Then I heard the sergeant shouting, „Abzählen!“ They started slowly, and irregularly:

TUTTI **pizz.**

EXAMPLE 3 (continued)

65

Picc. 1, 2 *a 2* [*ff*] *take Fl. 1, 2*

Hn. 1, 3 *1, 3 con sord.*

Trp. 1, 2 *1/2 senza sord. ff*

Nar. | one, two, three, four: „Achtung!“ The sergeant shout-ed a-gain,

Va. *(pizz.)* *arco* *SOLO 1 sul pont. pp*

Vcl. div. I *(pizz.)* *arco* *SOLO 1 sul pont. pp*

Vcl. div. II *(pizz.)* *arco* *SOLO 2 sul pont. pp*

Cbs. *(arco)* *SOLO 2 sul pont. pp*

70

Fl. 1, 2 *a 2* *colla parte*

Ob. 1, 2 *a 2* *colla parte*

Cl. 1, 2 *a 2* *colla parte*

Trp. 2 *(senza sord.) Flüg.* *Flüg.*

Nar. | „Ra-scher! Nochmal von vorn an-fangen! In einer Minute will ich wissen wieviele ich zur Gaskammer abliefern! Abzählen!“

Vi. I *colla parte non div. ppp sub. pont.....*

Vi. II *colla parte non div. ppp sub. pont.....*

2 Va. *(SOLO 1)* *TUTTI* *ppp sub. pont.....*

2 Vcl. div. I *(SOLO 2)* *TUTTI* *ppp sub. pont.....*

2 Vcl. div. II *(SOLO 1)* *TUTTI* *ppp sub. pont.....*

2 Cbs. *1* *2* *ppp sub. pont.....*

instead of commit, composers to an ideology, was there no truth in the Prague Manifesto's weariness of the "increasing complexity" of modernist music, considering that it had no bearing on any other audience than a specialized and privileged one?⁴⁵

Sartre's assumption that music cannot aspire to be more than "a beautiful mute with eyes full of meaning," capable of serving within one blink the causes of Stalin, Pétain, Churchill and Truman but incapable of exposing the contemporary *condition humaine*, was destined to meet with resistance. For Leibowitz and Adorno, art could only resist reality through its ever evolving *form*, and as such, the commitment of music did not reside in the texts to which it was set, but in the way it responded to them in purely formal terms. Neither could both advocates of musical modernism endorse Sartre's, or for that matter, the Prague Manifesto's suggestion that the avant-garde was too much aligned to the bourgeois establishment to play a role of significance in improving the position of those who found themselves excluded from that establishment. As Leibowitz asked rhetorically: has the "true artist" (*artiste véritable*) not always been relegated to "the class of the repressed" (*la classe des opprimés*)? Has he not always been "a subversive creature" (*un être subversif*)? And is the effort to bring the most advanced art and music to the proletariat, in defiance of the cultural conservatism espoused by its leaders, not an act of commitment in itself?⁴⁶

Ironically, the person who in Leibowitz's and Adorno's view matched the profile of a "subversive creature" *par excellence* declared always to have remained rather indifferent towards politics, let alone political activism. By his own account, Arnold Schoenberg had entertained a modest affinity with socialism in his twenties, held a "quiet belief" in the Habsburg monarchy during and after World War I, and acquiesced in a deliberate apolitical stance after his forced emigration to the United States out of respect for his newly adopted homeland. Neither did he consider himself to be subversive in his art: "I always attempted to produce something quite conventional, but I failed, and it always, against my will, became something unusual!"⁴⁷ This

⁴⁵ Sartre, *What is Literature?*, trans. Bernard Frechtman (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949), 7–16; and preface to Leibowitz's *L'Artiste et sa conscience*, 9–38, published as "The Artist and His Conscience," in *Situations*, trans. Benita Eisler (New York: George Braziller, 1965), 205–44.

⁴⁶ Leibowitz, "Réponse à Jean-Paul Sartre," in *L'Artiste et sa conscience*, 134–59; Adorno, "Commitment," 300–18. For a more detailed discussion of Sartre's and Leibowitz's positions regarding the intersection between social and artistic engagement, see Mark Carroll, "Commitment or Abrogation? Avant-garde Music and Jean-Paul Sartre's Idea of Committed Art," *Music & Letters* 83/4 (2002): 590–606.

⁴⁷ Schoenberg, "My Attitude Toward Politics" [1950] and "Criteria for the Evaluation of Music" [1946], in *Style and Idea: Selected Writings of Arnold Schoenberg*, ed. Leonard Stein, trans. Leo Black (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), 505–6 and 126 respectively. Schoenberg, incidentally, felt offended by Adorno's portrayal of both him and Stravinsky: "[Adorno] deserves a chastisement, if only for the vileness he displays towards Stravinsky. But

irony is beside the point, though. However much Adorno and Leibowitz might have held him for the revolutionary they desired to see in him, Schoenberg actually merely functioned as the *quod erat demonstrandum* in their defense of the music that mattered to them—*modernist* music—against what they experienced as the ever-swelling tide of artistic stagnation inspired by political or commercial motives. They could not bear to see innovative tendencies in musical composition to be denounced *a priori* for the inarticulate and often contradictory reasons given by Sartre and the Prague Manifesto, i.e., too individualistic, too complex, too abstract. Modernist composers might not have found yet the perfect balance between melody, harmony, and rhythm, Adorno conceded, but neither had Bach or Beethoven. And for the better so, Adorno added. For this failure to find perfection communicates exactly what should be faced: the imperfection of contemporary society.⁴⁸

Seen this way, stipulating music to be ‘perfect’ can result in nothing else than a false rendition of reality, also known as propaganda or advertising. Indeed, for Adorno and Leibowitz, “the ubiquitous hatred against complexity” in their time was symptomatic of a “steered reversal in education” (*gesteuerte Rückbildung*). If governments really were concerned with their citizens’ well-being, then they would neither impede the “true” composer’s search for musical perfection, nor demand easily comprehensible music for “the people” in the name of “the people.” To the contrary, they would do all in their power to educate their citizens, and free citizens from the numbing mass-produced culture forced on them by the “culture industry.” The true implications of the Prague Manifesto were, however, that “the people,” by being spoon-fed easily digestible music, were willfully immersed in an aural illusion of freedom that debilitated their volition to resist the ever tightening grip of bureaucratic and commercial institutions on their lives. How could “the people” be more disregarded? How much more could the Prague Manifesto’s demand of abandoning “extreme subjectivism” for music that expresses “the new and great progressive ideas and emotions of the broad masses” resemble fascist demagoguery? The real threat in his time, Adorno concluded, was not the specter of “extreme subjectivism,” but the image of false freedom and security that was upheld to “the people” in exchange for their acquiescence

also because of his vileness towards me.” Schoenberg to Josef Rufer, March 3, 1951, Deutsches Rundfunkarchiv, B006001180. See also Schoenberg’s letter to Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, December 5, 1949, cited in Stuckenschmidt, *Schoenberg: Leben, Umwelt, Werk* (Zürich: Atlantis, 1974), 462.

⁴⁸ Adorno, “Die gegängelte Musik,” 51–2; Leibowitz, “Le musicien engagé: A propos du manifeste de Prague,” *Les Temps modernes* 4 (February 1949): 322–39, repr. in *L’Artiste et sa conscience*, 53–74.

and conformism.⁴⁹

In interpreting Schoenberg's "emancipation of dissonance" optimistically as a sign of socio-political liberation, Leibowitz departed from Adorno, who heard the dissolution of tonality as a sonic reflection of a time when universal freedom was anything but a foreseeable prospect. The Frankfurt School critic had been too disillusioned with the revolutionary movements he had observed in Russia and Germany to accept Schoenberg's 'revolution' as the terminus of an emancipatory development. Had recent history not taught that the liberation from one order implies by definition the imposition of another one, one that may be more restrictive than the original one? Accordingly, was Schoenberg's twelve-tone technique (introduced in 1923 in the Five Piano Pieces, Op. 23), which emerged as a new organizing logic after the composer had "liberated" the twelve tones of the chromatic scale from the hierarchical "logic of tonality" (around 1908), not to be approached with suspicion? After all, since the "logic of tonality" had been derived from the physical principle of the overtone series, no one could claim sole authority over it. The new logic, however, which by necessity had to defy the objective laws of nature, lacked any standards against which the ear could measure its 'correctness'. Due to this unverifiability, the twelve-tone technique could easily turn composers into slaves of an empty set of rules. Writing in 1948, Adorno entertained no doubt that Schoenberg would be able to remain the master of his own method. He was, however, less optimistic about whether next generations would be able to resist enslavement.⁵⁰

Stravinsky the Apollonian: Nabokov's Discord with Schoenberg's "Apostles"

Eisler held similar reservations as Adorno about the results of the twelve-tone technique when applied by less gifted minds than Schoenberg's. After all, as the easiness with which a twelve-tone theme with its concomitant inversions, retrogrades, and transpositions could be constructed enabled "every fool [to] become Faust," it took "real masterly skill" to create a work that sounded like a spontaneous invention rather than a dull exercise. As Eisler saw it, the problem of "epigonism" (*Epigonentum*) equally affected someone who at the time was generally being considered as Schoenberg's antipode, Igor Stravinsky. Just as he preferred Schoenberg's free atonal works to those structured by the twelve-tone technique, so Eisler regretted the turn of the creator of *The Firebird*, *Petrushka*, and *The Rite of Spring* to neoclassicism—"an upper-bourgeois [*großbürgerlich*] phenomenon,... impart-

⁴⁹ Adorno, "Die gegängelte Musik," 53–5, 61; Leibowitz, "Les possibilités d'une musique engagée," 110–2.

⁵⁰ Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 83–92.

inent and cold in its relations to the men-in-the-street,...the style of good society.” (He even more disliked the flirt with Catholicism which adherents of Stravinsky’s school, including Nabokov, flaunted.) What Schoenberg and Stravinsky had in common is that both sought “in vain for firm uniting fundamentals.” Both tried to get a grip on music’s “disintegrating material” by a repertoire of “tricks and maneuvers”—the twelve-tone technique and style imitation respectively—that in the hands of their followers all too easily devolved into “snobbish aestheticism” (*sektiererischen Snobismus*).⁵¹

Whereas Eisler was rather balanced in his assessment of the two major trends in early twentieth-century composition, Adorno (in)famously construed neoclassicism as the aberrant antithesis of expressionism. To the view of the Frankfurt School critic, Stravinsky had forsaken his responsibility by ignoring history’s call for progress and entrenching himself into the past. To be sure, Adorno recognized Stravinsky’s innovations in harmony, rhythm and instrumentation, but he considered them to be too incidental and superficial to negate the “bourgeois” tonal system consistently and in all its dimensions like Schoenberg’s innovations had done. Especially unforgivable for Adorno was that Stravinsky, although his poetics of fragmentation and montage did reflect the conflicted nature of modern reality, failed to give voice to the lonely individual’s struggle with society. To the contrary, in *Le Sacre du printemps*, where the individual is literally sacrificed to the collective, the insistently repetitive music fails to speak up even once for the victim, numbing the collective’s awareness of its deed instead. In *Petrushka*, too, the music identifies with Pierrot’s bullies rather than with Pierrot himself, whereas in Schoenberg’s *Pierrot lunaire*, the music registers Pierrot’s estrangement, self-reflection, and final transcendence. In aestheticizing this indifference towards the lot of the individual, Adorno argued, Stravinsky denied music the chance to fulfill its critical potential. Indeed, considering the success he enjoyed with the bourgeoisie, his music affirmed instead of negated the status quo of late industrial society, a society in which citizens are expected to sacrifice their individuality on the altar of the collective.⁵²

Leibowitz, who visited both Schoenberg and Stravinsky in Hollywood in early 1948, assessed the achievements of both composers in a similar way. Bold as the new sounds and rhythmic devices of *Le Sacre* might have sounded in 1913, thirty-five years later they sounded “timorous and superficial” to his ears. Had Schoenberg’s harmonic innovations been consequential steps within a century-old “great tradition,” Stravinsky’s had

⁵¹ Eisler, “Gesellschaftliche Grundfragen der modernen Musik,” 18–21; “Soziale Verantwortlichkeit des Komponisten: Gespräch mit Hanns Eisler,” *Tägliche Rundschau*, October 7, 1948, clipping, Eisler Papers, 2911.

⁵² Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 100–5, 109–16, 122–9.

not transcended the stage of being more than *objets trouvés*: nice “effects” or “tricks” that cannot be used in another work without becoming “a mere imitation of themselves.” What disturbed Leibowitz as much as Adorno was Stravinsky’s failure to develop his materials “organically” into a “unified whole.” Instead, the Russian composer “simply juxtaposed” the themes and sections in his works, each of which might have been “brilliantly made as far as craftsmanship goes,” but as a whole, “these petrified sound forms” did convey “nothing except perhaps the illusion of music.” Moreover, although both Adorno and Leibowitz scorned Romantic aesthetics where they degenerated into “sweet sentimentalism (*Schmalz*),” they could not approve of Stravinsky’s deliberate pose of *impassibilité*, which completely ran against their ideal image of the artist as a risk-taker, i.e., as someone “who puts everything he owns on one last, final, perhaps fatal, stake.”⁵³

Leibowitz’s attack on Stravinsky’s supposedly “arbitrary and hedonistic” attitudes could not pass without a riposte. Nabokov, for one, had little patience for ill-considered attempts to prove, “under the cloak of impartiality,” the greatness of “the dodecatonal [*sz*] system and its Master” by smearing his friend Stravinsky. Was it not presumptuous to assert—as Leibowitz did at the beginning of his article—that the musical activity of the last forty years had evolved “essentially under Schoenberg’s influence”? Sure, Nabokov conceded, no one could deny that Schoenberg had drawn the final consequence from a development which began at the turn of the seventeenth century, and that his move was of historical significance. However, in hindsight, how “revolutionary” were Schoenberg’s innovations really? Had atonality, as a system of composition, not been rejected by most contemporary composers as soon as it was introduced? Was it not only a “small group of initiates led by Schoenberg [who] adopted the twelve-tone technique in its entirety”? Had not they created “a strange kind of fetish, a hermetic cult, mechanistic in its technique and depressingly dull to the uninitiated listener”? And, finally, was it not presumptuous to argue—as Leibowitz and Adorno did—that Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre* could not be accepted as a caesura in modern harmony *because* Schoenberg had drawn more radical conclusions some five to eight years earlier? Did it not seem much more likely and closest to the truth that the transformation of the language of contemporary music towards a new use of dissonance had been the result of a spontaneous development which occurred in several countries and in the works of several composers *at the same time* and quite independently?⁵⁴

⁵³ Leibowitz, “Two Composers: A Letter from Hollywood,” *Partisan Review* 15/3 (1948): 361–5; Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music*, 142–8, 153–7.

⁵⁴ Nabokov, “The Atonal Trail: A Communication,” *Partisan Review* 15/5 (1948): 580–5. Stravinsky thoroughly appreciated Nabokov’s answer to “the impudent René Leibowitz” and the “twelve-tonal obscurantism” he stood for. Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 160–3; Stravinsky to Nabokov, September

In the same breath, Nabokov jabbed at a kindred defense of dodecaphony published a few months earlier in the *Partisan Review* by Kurt List, an émigré composer and music critic from Austria. Like Nabokov, List deplored the evolution of composition that had culminated in the “Wagnerian trauma.” To him, music history’s digression consisted in squeezing polyphony and counterpoint into the straitjacket of the “unifying harmonic concept of tonality.” In Wagner’s hands, the seams of this concept came to burst, but it was Schoenberg “who took music all the way back to its essential polyphonic qualities.” The damage, however, had been done: having been raised with no tradition of polyphony, audiences could only be pleased by the “romantic cliché.” As a result, American composers resorted to “regressive tendencies” like folklorism (List specifically mentions Aaron Copland and Virgil Thomson), “political” music (Marc Blitzstein), neoclassicism (Samuel Barber) and orientalism (John Cage)—all manifestations of escapism from “the contemporary problems of society” as well as the “problems left by the Western tradition of music.” If Nabokov pointed towards the potential of time (rather than pitch) organization for the revitalization of modern music, List declared “atonal polyphony” as “the only valid guide” to guarantee the existence of music as an “artistic expression of modern America.”⁵⁵

For Nabokov, Leibowitz’s and List’s advocacies for Schoenberg’s legacy were “appallingly arrogant and superficial,” an indicative of the “impotent attitude which is now so apparent in most phases of cultural and political life in Europe.” As he saw it, Schoenberg had closed a chapter in music history by drawing the evolution of harmony to its logical conclusion, whereas Stravinsky had opened up a new one by turning to “the problem of musical time and its measurement, the function of the interval, the extension of a phrase, the juxtaposition in *time* of several melodic lines.” In this domain the composer of *Le Sacre* was seeking for ways to revitalize the Western musical tradition, the course of which—in Nabokov’s analysis—had been disturbed in the nineteenth century by, among others, the ideology of nationalism, i.e., “the extreme and, at times, perverse interest...in folk art, the deification of the natural, rural man and the resulting insistence on ethnographic and geographic truthfulness.” Those who failed to accept Stravinsky’s decision to abandon “the sacred soil of Russian subject matter” for the music of Bach, Handel, and Scarlatti not only proved the continued prevalence of

23, 1948, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 374–5. Leibowitz classed Nabokov among those “passing geniuses” whose career was characterized by a “rapid rise, even ‘sensational’, a moment of flowering (numerous performances of their works, commissions, critical articles dedicated to them, worldly success, etc.), followed by a more or less sudden downfall and a factual lack of interest—if not total oblivion.” *Les Temps modernes* 3/34 (July 1948): 173.

⁵⁵ List, “The State of American Music,” *Partisan Review* 15 (1948): 85–90.

nationalist thinking, but also misunderstood the novelty of what Stravinsky was trying to achieve: not “a kind of ‘musicological-historical’ revival” which indeed produced “so much academic dust” that “Soviet critics [were] quite right in discarding it as ‘absurd formalism’,” but a reconnection with “the polyphonic tradition” prior to its corruption by nationalism.⁵⁶

Technically, Nabokov explained, the “neoclassical” Stravinsky reverted to melodic and harmonic conventions in order to expose his rhythmical innovations. Without engaging in analysis, Nabokov advised listeners of Stravinsky’s neoclassical works to observe the composer’s treatment of time and proportion. The formal scheme of the first movement from the Symphony in C (1938-40) reveals at once the implications of Stravinsky’s predilection for balance and proportion: while the Introduction + Exposition is in ‘parallel’ balance ($x+y | x+y$) with the Recapitulation + Coda, the segments surrounding the Development are in ‘symmetrical’ balance ($x+y | y+x$) (Figure 1).⁵⁷

FIGURE 1 Stravinsky, Symphony in C, mov. I: formal structure.

	Section	Mm.	Material	Bars	Ratios	
151 (93+58)	Introduction	1	A	25	5	}
	Theme 1	26	A'	34 ⁽¹⁷⁺¹⁷⁾	7	
	Transition (a+b)	60+75	B	34 ^(14½+19½)	7	
	Theme 2	94	C	58 ⁽³⁴⁺²⁴⁾	12 ⁽⁷⁺⁵⁾	
1	Development	152	D	67½ ^(34+33½)	14 ⁽⁷⁺⁷⁾	
149½ (90½+59)	Theme 1 + Trans. (a)	219+261	C	56½ ^(24½+32)	12 ⁽⁵⁺⁷⁾	}
	Theme 2 + Trans. (b)	276+294	B	34 ⁽¹⁸⁺¹⁶⁾	7	
	Coda 1	310	A'	34 ⁽¹⁷⁺¹⁷⁾	7	
	Coda 2	344	A	25	5	

As Marianne Kielian-Gilbert has shown, these principles of parallel and symmetrical balancing not only work on the structural background, but also at the level of phrasing, i.e., the temporal spacing of the Symphony’s basic motive (B-C-G) in the primary theme (Example 4a and c).⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Nabokov “Stravinsky Now,” *Partisan Review* 11/3 (1944): 324–9; *Old Friends and New Music*, 125–6.

⁵⁷ This formal structure was first exposed by Edward T. Cone, “The Uses of Convention: Stravinsky and His Models,” *Musical Quarterly* 48/3 (1962): 293. For elaborations on Cone’s analysis of durational proportions in the Symphony in C, see B. M. Williams, “Time and the Structure of Stravinsky’s Symphony in C,” *Musical Quarterly* 59/3 (1973): 355–69.

⁵⁸ Kielian-Gilbert, “Stravinsky’s Contrasts: Contradiction and Discontinuity in His Neoclassic Music,” *Journal of Musicology* 9/4 (1991): 464–71. The Example is my conflation of Kielian-Gilbert’s and Cone’s observations. The only problematic aspect of Kielian-Gilbert’s argument concerns the measures surrounding the center of the movement (Example 4b): she notices a symmetry (6+2+4|4+2+6) that I cannot see. (I see 6+4+2|2+2+?).

On closer look, the symmetrical principle not only informs the division of time but also the organization of pitch. A perfect illustration of how Stravinsky at once refers to and redefines the classical tradition, the main gamut of the Symphony's outer movements—as Paul Johnson has observed—is constituted by a merger of two diatonic pitch collections a fifth apart (Example 5).⁵⁹ The symmetry of this collection (spelled as 0245679A11 in set theory jargon) provides the possibility for a bipolarity (with $F\flat/F\sharp$ as differential tone) that Stravinsky deftly exploits in the Symphony—not in a 'traditional' dialectical fashion, but in a complementary fashion. Indeed, as the first movement unfolds, the collections on C and G never seem to untie themselves from each other, thus creating a state of ambiguity and stasis from which E emerges as a mediating, and at times, alternative tonal center.

The described rapport between C, E, and G emerges immediately from the Symphony's 'Beethovenesque'⁶⁰ opening (Example 6a). Upon first hearing, the three-note motive (B-C-G), despite its ambiguity due to its unison appearance, alludes to C major (rather than to the other possibility,

EXAMPLE 4 Stravinsky, Symphony in C, mov. I: parallel and symmetrical phrasing principles

a) Exposition (mm. 26–36)

⁵⁹ Paul Johnson, "Cross-Collectional Techniques of Structure in Stravinsky's Centric Music," in *Stravinsky Retrospectives*, ed. Ethan Haimo and Paul Johnson (Lincoln/London: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 55–75.

⁶⁰ Rhythmically, the opening of Stravinsky's Symphony in C refers to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. Melodically, it seems—as Stephen Walsh and Martha M. Hyde suggested—to hint at the first theme of the same composer's First Symphony. Walsh, *The Music of Stravinsky* (London: Routledge, 1988), 177; Hyde, "Stravinsky's Neoclassicism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 115.

before the introduction of the first theme pulls towards both C and G (Example 6b). The resulting tetrachord (C-E-G-B or 047A11)—a synthesis of the C-major and E-minor triads—turns out to function as the tonic of the Symphony.

EXAMPLE 6a Stravinsky, Symphony in C, mov. I.

a) Introduction, mm. 1–25.

Moderato alla breve ($\text{♩} = 66$)

Flutes 1 & 2

Oboes 1 & 2

Clarinets in B \flat 1 & 2

Bassoons 1 & 2

Horns in F 1, 2, 3 & 4

Timpani

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

Contrabass

Dynamics: *p*, *mf*, *f*, *sub.*, *dir.*, *unis.*

EXAMPLE 6 (continued)

7

Ob. 1 *p*

Bsn. 2 *p*

Vln. II *p*

Vla. *p*

13

Picc. *f*

Fl. *f* *à 2*

Ob. *f* *subito*

Cl. *f*

Bsn. 1 *f*

Bsn. 2 *f*

Hn. 1 *f* *secco*

Hn. 2 *f*

Tbn. *mf*

Tba. *mf*

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *mf* *cresc.*

Vla. *mf* *cresc.*

Cb. *f* *unis.*

2

2

3

3

EXAMPLE 6 (continued)

19 4

Picc. *mf*

Fl. *mf*

Ob. *mf*

Cl. *mf*

1. *mf*

2. *f*

Hn. 1 *mf*

Hn. 2 *mf*

Tbn. *mf*

Tba. *mf*

Vln. I *f assai*

Vln. II *simile*

Vla. *simile*

Vc. *f assai* *mus. mf*

Cb. *f assai* *mus. mf*

b) Reduction

Indeed, in Stravinsky's interpretation of the sonata form, bipolarity is at the foundation of the traditionally stable passages. Whereas a 'traditional' first theme usually establishes the tonic key, Stravinsky's first theme 'establishes' the bipolarity. Circling around the B-C-G motive of the opening statement, the theme is accompanied by an E-G pedal, the pivot dyad between C major and E minor (Example 4a). The C/E tension is played out in favor of E on several levels (Example 7): in the progression from the beginning to the end of the Exposition, from the Exposition to the center of the movement (m. 184), and from the Exposition to the second Coda. Within the Exposition, the trajectory from C to E via D (bridge) and F (first half of the second subject area) is an example of what Joseph Straus has called "pattern completion," i.e., Stravinsky's alternative to the harmonic trajectory in the classical transition.⁶¹ At the center of the movement, the primary theme is stated—in another Haydnesque or Beethovenian feature—as a 'false' recapitulation, which might be construed as a recapitulation of the three tonal centers around which the movement revolves (C, E, and G), as if to remind us of a tension that needs to be resolved (Example 4b).

This resolution comes (at least thus it seems)—not in the recapitulation, but in the final coda (mm. 344ff.), when the high E takes precedence over the 'swinging' C's that we have grown accustomed to (Example 7). However, as soon as the flute finishes the first 'clearly' E-centered presentation of the primary theme, the oboe and bassoon bring back the C/E ambiguity (mm. 354-6). The cello decides in favor of C (m. 358), which is subsequently taken over by the bassoon and sustained for five full measures. Stravinsky does not leave the listener long in the illusion that this is the confirmation of the Symphony's title ("in C"). Mimicking a closing gesture typical of many of the Symphony's classical counterparts, the composer brings the movement to a close by a series of marcato chords. Yet, only the timpani (alternating G and C) seem to be aware that in the classical model such a series consists of alternating dominant and tonic chords. All the other members of the orchestra alternate the tonic with the

⁶¹ Joseph Straus, *Remaking the Past: Tradition and Influence in Twentieth-Century Music* (Cambridge, MA: University of Harvard Press, 1990), 98–101.

subdominant's dominant contained in the 0245679A11-collection on F (Example 7). As the B \sharp in the third voice at once 'correctly' resolves and is transferred to the first voice, these two chords express—as Jonathan Cross aptly describes it, “[t]he movement's polarity of directness and stasis.”⁶² Indeed, by restoring the C/E ambiguity through its very last chord (047A11 with E, not C, in the bass), Stravinsky confirmed once more that synthesis, not antithesis, is the 'driving' force in the Symphony.

EXAMPLE 7 Stravinsky, Symphony in C, mov. I: reduction.

In summary, Symphony in C is based on a polarity between two tonal areas a third apart (C and E) which are treated synthetically. In other words, rather than as two diametrically opposed poles engaged in a 'conflict' from which the tonic has to emerge as the 'resolution', both tonal centers are implied in the traditionally stable sections of the classical model and drift apart from each other in the traditionally transitory sections. In this dynamic between attraction to and repulse from the C/E 'tonic', voice-leading gestures typical of 'common practice' harmony continuously appear on the surface, but they never resolve accordingly, thereby creating an impression of stasis. Indeed, what concerned Stravinsky was—in his own words—not so much “what is known as tonality” as “the polar attraction of sound, of an interval, or even of a complex of tones.”⁶³

This poetics perhaps nowhere appears more clearly than in the Symphony's final 'chorale' (Example 8a–b). A condensation of the entire Symphony's harmonic material, the upper voice of the 'chorale' suggests

⁶² Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 209.

⁶³ Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*, trans. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1947), 26 and 36.

EXAMPLE 8 Stravinsky, Symphony in C, mov. IV.

a) Concluding 'chorale', fig. 181–186⁺³.

The score for measures 181-186 is divided into two systems. The first system covers measures 181-183, and the second system covers measures 184-186. The instruments listed on the left are Fl. 2, Ob. 1, Cl. 1, Bsn. 1, Hrn. 1, Hrn. 3, Tbn. 1, Tbn. 3, Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., Vc., and Cb. Dynamic markings include *p*, *pp*, *ppp*, and *pppp*. The score shows a complex texture of chords and moving lines, with some instruments playing sustained notes while others have more active parts. The woodwinds and brasses play a prominent role in the texture.

b) Reduction.

The reduction shows a simplified harmonic structure of the concluding 'chorale'. It consists of a single melodic line on a treble clef staff, featuring a series of chords and intervals that capture the essential harmonic content of the original score. The reduction is presented in a single system, highlighting the core harmonic relationships of the passage.

classical patterns containing (incomplete) neighboring and passing tones, but the lower voice does not support them in expected fashion. On the contrary, in terms of classical voice-leading, the outer voices ‘miss out’ on each other with every step they make. Yet, as Jonathan Cross convincingly argues, when the bass voice, after several ‘failed’ attempts, finally manages to pass through to C, a sense of closure nonetheless is felt.⁶⁴ I would suggest that an additional factor contributing to this feeling is the alternation of density in the diatonic clusters that color in the gestures outlined by the outer voices. In Stravinsky’s harmony (governed by “the polar attraction of sound”), the clusters that support the ‘non-harmonic’ tones are more complex than the ‘harmonic’ tones, and as such compensate for the loss of the gravitational pull that classical harmony provides. Consequently, the two chords on C in the ‘chorale’ are the mildest in terms of dissonance. The final one, however, due to spacing and instrumentation, is even milder than the preceding one in terms of sound. In other words, the whole ‘chorale’ can be construed as a movement towards the ‘brightest’ chord on C. Just as in the first movement, however, this chord is not the final one. In Stravinskian fashion, the last chord in the strings seems at once more and less conclusive: more, because it ‘resolves’ the V_2/C placed on C in the preceding chord; less, because the bass voice jumps to E, resulting in a chord that might be interpreted as a first inversion ninth chord on C (again milder in sound than the preceding chord), but in reality leaves open the ambiguity between C/E. Indeed, if the C-E-G-B chord in Stravinsky’s harmonic language functions as the ‘tonic’, and the E-G-B-D as the ‘dominant’, then the final chord captures the essence of Stravinsky’s poetics: a rapprochement of “poles of attraction...without compelling [them] to the exigencies of tonality.”⁶⁵

Particularly relevant for present purposes is the meaning commentators assigned to Stravinsky’s poetics in the late 1940s. For Leibowitz and Adorno, Stravinsky’s active interpretation of the classical music tradition is defined by the absence of what they value most in Schoenberg’s interpretation: motivic unity and “organic” development. Indeed, rather than as processes of thematic development and preparation of impending key areas, Stravinsky’s transitions appear as a series of self-contained segments of varying material centered on one or more pitches—a procedure that accounts for the collage-like quality which so often has been praised as typically ‘modern’ (the ‘cutting’ points are indicated in the score by an inverted comma). But the composer’s refined techniques of variation, rhythmical treatment, and alternative ways of modulation were lost on his critics. In Adorno’s view, Stravinsky’s music was to be faulted for

⁶⁴ Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 206–7.

⁶⁵ Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music*, 37.

“eliminat[ing] all becoming,” as a result of which it “feigns an eternity in which only a few satanic metric tricks relieve the monotony.”⁶⁶

Stravinsky’s insistence at the time that music is only about the “combination of notes” seems to indicate a need to compensate for the ‘lack of coherence’ criticism. The challenge Stravinsky seemed to have posed for himself is to find “a quality of interrelation between constituent parts” of the classical forms he adopted *beyond* the dialectic treatment of the tonic/dominant polarity.⁶⁷ The idea for his alternative—sustainment rather than liquidation of polar tension—may have been quickly found, but at the same time this alternative created another challenge. Traditionally, functional harmony provided the answer to both pitch and temporal organization, and thus to a considerable extent helped the composer to shape his work. By dispensing with functional harmony, Stravinsky also lost this structure-directing quality, obliging him to find new ways of organizing time and pitch. Stravinsky’s unitary solution to these two problems—as Nabokov noted, albeit only with respect to temporal organization—was “measurement,” i.e., a symmetrical or an otherwise proportional ordering of time and pitch. The balancing between the tonic and dominant qualities of the 0245679A11-collection on the one hand, and the transformation of the sonata form into an arch form on the other (Figure 1), attest to this solution. Note also that the key areas in the first movement of the Symphony in C are organized symmetrically around the C/e-axis: in the Exposition, the second subject area is presented in F/f (rather than the expected G) and in the Recapitulation in G (rather the expected C). On a higher level, the equilibrium principle might also be seen informing Stravinsky’s music with respect to the relation between convention and innovation, continuity and discontinuity, past and presence.⁶⁸

If Stravinsky’s principled statement on musical autonomy was indeed an apologetic expression, then Adorno was not convinced by it. Neither could he accept Stravinsky’s alternative to the dialectical model, since the very dispense of this model implied that the form did not emerge from the “material,” but from the drawing table before the work’s first note was written. The author of the *Philosophy of New Music* did not comment on the Symphony in C, but he did on the *Symphony in Three Movements* (1945). “[H]ardly ever before had [Stravinsky] so openly presented the ideal of authenticity,” Adorno introduced the work to his reader. Granted, “[t]his

⁶⁶ Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 145.

⁶⁷ Stravinsky, “Avertissement,” in *The Dominant* (December 1927), repr. in Eric Walter White, *Stravinsky: The Composer and His Works* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1979), 531–2. See also Joseph N. Straus, “Sonata Form in Stravinsky,” in *Stravinsky Retrospectives*, ed. Ethan Haimo and Paul Johnson (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987), 141–3.

⁶⁸ Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 237–8.

orchestral achievement is totally suited to that ideal: it is totally sure of its goal; it is economical; and it is not found wanting in new coloration.” Nevertheless, he apparently still could not otherwise than rap the composer over the knuckles for “not undertak[ing] the dialectic work,” thereby letting the work “crumble” and “degenerate monotonously.”⁶⁹

That Stravinsky’s music could not meet Adorno’s standards would not have been of consequence, were it not for the widely shared assumptions and, most importantly, the socio-political implications of his theory. For if cultural expression mediates social reality—the basic axiom on which Adorno’s philosophy is predicated—then Stravinsky’s “impotence” for “development” and “authentic” expression renders him an unfree subject, destined to cater to the “regressive” taste and “concepts of normality” of the status quo which should be shaken up by art. Indeed, the language in which he couches his criticism of Stravinsky is identical with the language with which he denounced the “spoon-fed music” (*gegängelte Musik*) produced under commercial or political dictates. In fact, the implications go even further. In Stravinsky’s music, Adorno heard the “spirit of pseudo-hedonistic complacency and shallow showmanship” that under the Nazi regime had corrupted the “great music” tradition that only Schoenberg truly knew to appreciate and expand.⁷⁰ The unflattering qualification was directed here at Richard Strauss, but in *Philosophy of New Music*, Adorno bestowed similar epithets on Stravinsky with clockwork regularity. Being a victim of the Hitler regime, cognizant of Stravinsky’s admiration for Mussolini and acceptance by some influential Nazi bureaucrats, and perhaps—as Jonathan Cross suggests—aware of Stravinsky’s anti-Semitism, it is no wonder why Adorno identified with Schoenberg, who underwent the same fate as him.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Adorno, *Philosophy of Music*, 152-3. Over a decade later, in response to his critics whom he felt attacked him for the wrong reasons, Adorno faulted his own 1949 criticism of Stravinsky for measuring the composer’s music to a norm of organic development that was not his, and conceded that “the objective despair” he discerned in his 1949 reading of *Le Sacre* may be heard as “a more complete indictment than the expression of musical subjectivity would have done.” Nonetheless, he still considered the lack of consistency and developmental progression as essentially—in his own words—“quelque chose qui ne vas pas” with Stravinsky’s music. “Stravinsky: A Dialectical Portrait” [1962], in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone (London: Verso, 1998), 148–51. For a discussion of Adorno’s criticism of Stravinsky over three decades, see Max Paddison, “Stravinsky as Devil: Adorno’s Three Critiques,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, ed. Jonathan Cross (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 192–202.

⁷⁰ Adorno, “What National Socialism Has Done to the Arts” [1945], in *Essays on Music*, 380.

⁷¹ Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, 229. After the xenophobic early years of Nazi rule, some German music critics managed to present Stravinsky as an “Aryan” composer with acceptable political views, whose tonally based music comprised the potential to reintegrate Germany within the European cultural community, if not to regain its traditional position as a leading musical power. Joan Evans, “Stravinsky’s Music in Hitler’s Germany,” *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 56/3 (2003): 525–94. About Stravinsky’s anti-Semitism, see Richard Taruskin, “Stravinsky and Us,” *The Cambridge Companion to Stravinsky*, 260–84.

Indeed, in *Philosophy of Music*, Adorno explicitly interprets the static and repetitive quality of Stravinsky's music, *Le Sacre* in particular, as infested with fascist features: "anti-humanistic sacrifice to the collective," "undisguised joy at the vulgar splendor of [war]," "petty bourgeois dreams [of] hermetic culture," "liquidation" of one's own and other identities, etc. By its "authoritarian" repetition and "dictatorial instrumentation," *Le Sacre* forces the listener to submit to something which is "nothing but a façade of power and security."⁷²

Nabokov's interpretation of Stravinsky's neoclassicism could not be further removed from Adorno's. "[I]n the tragic world in which we live," he wrote to the composer from Berlin's ruins wrought by Nazi belligerence in 1946, "...only a few encouraging, reasonable, and beautiful things remain, [one of which] is your art, with all of its nobility, beauty, and intelligence...It is in thinking of the Symphony in C that one begins to see clearly, and to feel again the meaning of *homo sapiens*."⁷³ This would have sounded toe-curling to Adorno, for whom the "infantile" argument that art should bring "beauty and harmony" in a "world of destruction, terror and sadism" seemed "highly indicative" of nothing less than "the perseverance of the Nazi frame of mind." As he saw it, "an artist who still deserves the name should proclaim nothing, not even humanism."⁷⁴ For Nabokov, however, Stravinsky's music opened a way towards restoring what the composer himself had described on the eve of the World War II the loss of "values and sense of proportions" that constitute the "human equilibrium."⁷⁵ Like Stravinsky, Nabokov postulated that music embodies all the principles that oppose revolution, violence and disorder, and that therefore, every attempt to adapt it to revolutionary/political purposes can only lead to "degradation" and "vulgarization." Precisely because Stravinsky composed by the principles of order, measure, and proportion, Nabokov wrote in 1944, his music "should give us courage and hope in the confusion of our era, of our thought and of our art, with their succession of destruction, waste and despair."⁷⁶ Writing about the final 'Chorale' of the Symphony in C:

When the music begins to quiet down and the various rhythms, as it were, return to their elements, the divisions of time become longer, quieter and more serene; large, soft, subtly measured chords move slowly on the horizon of vanishing musical time. These are the shadows of the "present" which Stravinsky is about to cease measuring. A broad, noble melody which has been one of the main instruments of this exquisite measurement slowly

⁷² Adorno, *Philosophy of New Music*, 107–8, 124, 133, 145–6.

⁷³ Nabokov to Stravinsky, March 22, 1946, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 371–2.

⁷⁴ Adorno, "What National Socialism Has Done to the Arts," 381, 387.

⁷⁵ Stravinsky, *Poetics of Music*, 47.

⁷⁶ Nabokov "Stravinsky Now," *Partisan Review* 11/3 (1944): 334.

returns to its modal center, its root, and the whole body of this ideal musical being acquires a serenity, a motionless beauty.⁷⁷

It would be incorrect to construe Nabokov's position as the counterpart to the positions represented by Adorno, Eisler, List, and Leibowitz, in the sense that it does not emanate from an urge to define music's function in society or to commit composers to a program of political (dis)engagement. Indeed, whereas he scorned Leibowitz's (and by implication, Adorno's) efforts to objectify what in essence are aesthetical preferences and prejudices, he could not see the need for the Eisler-Brecht concept of "music for amateurs," either, wondering whether not "every work that is truly beautiful is accessible to amateurs in some form or other."⁷⁸ Nabokov's writings are essentially anecdotal, opinionated and witty in tone, and demonstrate a general disaffection with verbose rhetoric, sweeping theorizing, and prescriptive instructions. Having said that, his characterization of Schoenberg's legacy as something of a bygone era and devoid of creative potential leaves no doubt where his sympathies lay, and would seriously cast doubts on his professed impartiality in compiling the programs of his future festivals.⁷⁹

Nabokov nonetheless did touch plenty of common ground with his contenders when it concerned the post-World War II growth spurt of the middle class and its concomitant consequences for the cultural tradition they intended to protect. Like the practitioners of "mass culture critique"—a burgeoning field of intellectual activity in the 1950s and 1960s—Nabokov saw in the commodification of culture the same ill as in politically engaged culture: the negation of individual freedom and watering down of artistic quality. Indeed, "why would one make a simplistic kind of music and subject oneself to the mercy of the lower class's dilettantism?" Nabokov asked rhetorically about the "amateur music" concept.⁸⁰

On a superficial level, Nabokov explained to his Western readership, Zhdanov's high-sounding attacks on "formalism" could be explained as a move to institutionalize the "incredibly old-fashioned provincial taste" of the Soviet (lower) middle class, a stratum in Russian society that since the latter half of the nineteenth century had filled the vacuum between the

⁷⁷ Ibid., 333–4.

⁷⁸ Nabokoff, "Radiophonie et Film sonore: Le Festival de Baden-Baden," *Musique: Revue mensuelle de critique, d'histoire, d'esthétique et d'information musicales* 2/11–12 (September 15, 1929): 1056.

⁷⁹ Someone who at the time pointed out the bias in Nabokov's rejoinder to Leibowitz was Dika Newlin, Letter to the Editor, *Partisan Review* 15 (1948): 845–7. Newlin was the translator of Leibowitz's monograph *Schoenberg et son école: L'étape contemporaine du langage musical* (Paris: Janin, 1947), published as *Schoenberg and his School: The Contemporary Stage of the Language of Music* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1949).

⁸⁰ Nabokoff, "Le Festival de Baden-Baden," 1056.

intelligentsia and the peasants, and from which many (and since the purges, most) members of the “grey mass of [Soviet] party and army bureaucracy” hailed, including Stalin himself. On a deeper level, however, the Politburo’s “compulsion to transform the production of its composers into a musical gruel conforming to the low-brow tastes of the period between 1890 and 1910” (i.e., “the world of Russian sentimental romance, of Viennese operetta, oozy Tchaikovskiana, and French importations of the Chaminade variety”) must have been incited by its fear of “creative individualism,” an independent state of mind which might lead to politically subversive behavior. Not understanding what composers of ‘formalist’ music were communicating, was it not only natural for the Soviet government to dictate to them to write music that was pleasing and comprehensible to the new Soviet middle class? Under such circumstances, no new development in Russian music was to be expected, implying that—in the words of Kurt List which Nabokov undoubtedly agreed with—“the salvation of Russian music [was] inseparable from the freedom of the Russian people.”⁸¹

What emerges from the various polemics and debates discussed thus far is that to those who participated in them, music had a moral role to fulfill in a society that sought to recover from two decades of economic depression and war. Indeed, on both sides of the Cold War divide, music, far from being Sartre’s “beautiful mute,” was being infused with ideological meanings that in some respects converged, but on one significant point diverged: the issue of artistic freedom. For Leibowitz—although recognizing the difference between a government dictating standards to which artists had to comply and a government unconcerned with what artists produced—the criteria of artistic freedom by which Western commentators judged the Zhdanov decree no longer had a concrete reality in an environment dominated by impresarios and conservative audiences either. In both situations composers could choose for either a “*purely artistic* existence” in obscurity, financial poverty, and “bureaucratic troubles,” or an “*artistic compromise*” which ensured them financial security and even fame. True, Leibowitz conceded, one may object that the Western composer was still freer in his choice than his Soviet confrere, but that is not the essential point: “Either man is always free regardless of the pressure put on him, in which case the Soviet composer possesses the power to say ‘no’ to those

⁸¹ Nabokov, “The Music Purge,” *Politics* 5 (Spring 1948): 103–4; “Music under the Generals,” *Atlantic Monthly* 196 (January 1951): 52; and “The Changing Styles of Soviet Music,” CCF II-248-12, published in abridged form in *The Listener* [BBC] (October 11, 1951): 598–9; Kurt List, “The Music of Soviet Russia,” *Politics* 1 (May 1944): 108. As to Stalin’s taste, Nabokov knew to tell on basis of “trustworthy accounts” that it ran to “Russian sentimental songs and famous arias, snatches of the merry Widow, a few tunes from Tchaikovsky’s operas, Red Army marches and songs, fake night-club Caucasiana, and one or two slow movements of Beethoven’s string quartets which he likes to hear performed by three quartets all playing at once.”

who want to alienate him, or, if one admits that such pressures lead to the alienation of the artist, the Western composer is more or less as much pitiable as the Soviet composer.”⁸²

For Nabokov, Leibowitz’s Existentialist theorizing about “choice” was absolutely unacceptable. True, in many ways the growth of contemporary music in the West was being “perverted [by] the control of managers, boards of directors of symphony associations, and the famous ‘box office’ supply and demand theory.” Yet “no manager has ever prevented the actual writing and in fact the ultimate performance of an experimental work of music sooner or later.” Indeed, “if the work has quality,” Nabokov argued in reference to Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck*, “it will break the managerial barriers and come out into the open.” Whereas no manager can or even intends to prescribe to “a courageous and sincere artist what kind of music he has to write,” the composer working under the “ruthless control of the totalitarian state” always faces the risk of becoming an outlaw if he does not comply with the demands of his government. Therefore, every attempt at explaining the fate of man and art in the Soviet Union and the West as two sides of the same coin attested to a denial of the crime the Soviet regime perpetrated on Russian culture—a crime to which to which no civilized being should remain indifferent. After all, if civilization is “one living body,” any attempt at “divi[ding] the world into East and West,” i.e., separating Russian culture from “that great sublime structure of human endeavor that we call Western civilization,” poses a “burning issue to every citizen of the world concerned [about] the evolution and the future life of Western civilization.”⁸³

Broken Harmony: Cold War Musico-Logica

Perhaps nowhere else in the world was the “burning issue” that Nabokov pointed out to his audience more tangible than in postwar Germany. Initially, there had been little that divided the occupying powers with regard to music. Apart from the diverging standards in denazification and the competition for the best musicians and broadcasting facilities, all could easily approve of the performance of music by the uncontested exponents of Germany’s “great musical tradition,” irrespective of how the Nazi regime had seen them: Bach, Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, Brahms, and soon even Wagner dominated postwar concert programs just as they did before and during the Nazi period. Equally self-evident was the rehabilitation of those composers who had been banned on racial grounds: Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, and—as far as the performance of his symphonies was

⁸² Leibowitz, “Situation du compositeur de musique,” in *L’Artiste et sa conscience*, 123–9.

⁸³ Nabokov, “Free or Controlled Music,” unpublished typescript, undated but written after 1953, Nabokov Papers, 45-1. See also Nabokov, “Music in the Soviet Union: A View of the Shifting Battlefield,” *Musical America* (February 1951): 12, 144, 174.

practicable in the early postwar years—Mahler. Less obvious from a post-1948 perspective is that the Soviet Military Administration was initially just as supportive as the Western Allies of efforts to reintroduce German audiences to developments in contemporary composition that under Nazi rule had been denounced as instances of leftist radicalism (*Kulturbolschewismus*, “cultural bolshevism”). Within two months after the Third Reich’s collapse, German audiences could already hear, with Soviet approval, the formerly tabooed sounds of Hindemith, Weill, Schoenberg, and—of course less surprisingly—Shostakovich, Prokofiev, and Khachaturyan.⁸⁴

Indeed, given the almost unanimous wish within Berlin’s artistic community to restore the international breadth and diversity that had characterized German cultural life during the Weimar period, the investment in Germany’s cultural renaissance presented the ultimate opportunity for the Americans, British, and Soviet occupation administrations to evince their goodwill and to prove the disparaging Nazi propaganda about their cultural sophistication wrong. (Having just emerged from five years of German occupation, the French were not as concerned with demonstrating their goodwill, nor did they see any reason to prove the viability of French culture.) The resulting “competition for souls” was a “blessing” to local artists, recalled the music critic Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, whose antifascist credentials soon earned him a leading position in Berlin’s postwar musical life. (Goebbels had expelled him from the journalistic profession because of his commitment to Jewish avant-garde composers.) By virtue of its deliberately apolitical appearance, the Kulturbund’s Music Committee managed to persuade Stuckenschmidt to organize a contemporary chamber music series for its Club der Kulturschaffenden, a salon-like sanctuary for Berlin’s cultural elite located in the Soviet sector.⁸⁵ At the same time, Stuckenschmidt led the Studio for New Music at the American-sector radio station RIAS and ran *Stimmen*, a journal dedicated to the cause of musical modernism, for which Nabokov had arranged the license.⁸⁶ “For twelve

⁸⁴ Fritz Brust, “Moderne Musik,” review of a concert of July 4, 1945, *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], July 6, 1945, 3. Stravinsky was also on the program, but, as noted before, his music had been anything but forbidden in fascist Germany and Italy.

⁸⁵ The programs of the twenty-two “Evenings of Contemporary Music” that the Kulturbund’s Music Committee organized between December 9, 1946, and June 20, 1949, showcased a cross-section of both well-known and lesser known composers from Germany, Austria, France, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States, Soviet Russia, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. To achieve the greatest possible educational benefits, all concerts were preceded by an introduction. Archives of the Kulturbund (BA-Berlin), DY27/215.

⁸⁶ Stuckenschmidt became acquainted with Nabokov early in June 1946 and, as it appears from his agenda of that year, met him at regular intervals in the months thereafter. Stuckenschmidt Papers, 2625; Stuckenschmidt, *Zum Hören geboren*, 178.

years we have been taught to despise and reject the principle of *l'art-pour-l'art*," Stuckenschmidt—who, incidentally, twenty years earlier had done precisely that—wrote in the first issue. "The correction of this false teaching, be it temporarily through the opposite extreme of pure aestheticism, is the most important task of musical instruction in the years ahead."⁸⁷

Such a statement would have given SMAD's cultural officers the shivers, one would think. Nothing seemed to be less true, though. Sergey Barsky, the Soviet music officer (a great-nephew of Anton Rubinstein and a musicologist in civilian life), appeared to Stuckenschmidt as a "highly educated musician with an open mind for much that is modern"—a preference that he did not dare to indulge in openly. Once he asked the music critic to procure him a portfolio of Picasso drawings from Berlin's Maison de France, as "you must understand that in this uniform I cannot do such a thing." To another music critic, he confided his distaste for the epic cantata *On the Field of Kulikovo*, a model work of socialist realism by the Soviet composer Yuri Shaporin.⁸⁸ Indeed, until Moscow's February 1948 directive on music policy, Barsky seemed not to have been interested in promoting a folklore-based musical poetics at all. In a portrait of Shostakovich written for SMAD's *Tägliche Rundschau*, he described the composer's satirical music-theatrical works *The Nose* (1927–8), *The Golden Age* (1929–30), and *The Bolt* (1930–1)—all of which had been declared to be out of tune with the people's will and taste by Soviet officialdom—as "significant and lasting successes."⁸⁹ When asked to submit an article to the Kulturbund's *Aufbau*, he chose not to write on Soviet music ideology, but on a topic that at the time concerned music professionals anytime and anywhere, namely, the "harmful and essentially non-artistic tendency" toward showmanship rather than musicianship.⁹⁰ As late as January 1948, he provided Stuckenschmidt's *Stimmen* with an article by Ivan Sollertinsky, the

⁸⁷ Stuckenschmidt, "Maßstäbe," *Stimmen: Monatsblätter für Musik* 1/1 (November 1947): 15. During the Weimar period, Stuckenschmidt was a member of the radical November Group (*Novemberruppe*), which was founded and named after the 1918 revolution. At this time, he advocated politically engaged music along the lines of Eisler, whom he befriended around the mid-1920s. "Aktualität und Ewigkeit" [1926] and "Sozialisierung der Musik" [1927], in Stuckenschmidt, *Die Musik eines halben Jahrhunderts, 1925–1975: Essays und Kritik* (Munich: Piper, 1976), 19–23 and 33–36.

⁸⁸ Stuckenschmidt, *Zum Hören geboren: Ein Leben mit der Musik unserer Zeit* (Munich: Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag; Kassel: Bärenreiter Verlag, 1982), 177–81; Borgelt, *Das war der Frühling von Berlin*, 379–80.

⁸⁹ Barsky, "Der Sinfoniker Dimitrij Schostakowitsch," *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], July 5, 1946, 3.

⁹⁰ Barsky, "Von der Kunst der musikalischen Interpretation," *Aufbau* [Kulturbund] 2/4 (1947): 341–4. Although not a piece of propaganda, Barsky's assessment was not devoid from partisanship: while numbering, besides Sergey Rachmaninov, Jascha Heifetz, Sergey Prokofiev and Vladimir Sofronitsky, also Arturo Toscanini, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Artur Schnabel and Pablo Casals among the exemplary musicians of his day, he located the "non-artistic tendency" exclusively in Western Europe.

Russian apologist of Mahler and Schoenberg who in the wake of the 1936 campaign against musical formalism had been vilified for his supposedly corrupting influence on Shostakovich.⁹¹ Apparently, in this early stage of the Soviet occupation, ideology hardly interfered with the reconstruction of Germany's cultural life. Indeed, when Nabokov asked in November 1946 Major Alexander Dymshitz, Tulpanov's right-hand man in cultural affairs (and Barsky's superior officer), whether Soviet musicians should prepare themselves for a similar storm of purges that was raging at the time on the literary "front," the answer was emphatically negative. After all, Dymshitz reasoned, in contrast to Anna Akhmatova and Mikhail Zoshchenko, who were specifically targeted by the literary anti-formalism campaign, Prokofiev and Shostakovich had been war heroes.⁹²

Dymshitz's reply to Nabokov's question should not be dismissed as dishonest. Although he was sincerely concerned with fostering a politically engaged art and literature (more than Barsky, it seems), there are indications that he did not expect Stalin's rigorous methods of persuasion as practiced in the 1930s to return. As late as March 1947, when the last ties of the wartime Grand Alliance were about to snap, he still ensured his Western counterparts that, as far as he was concerned, "no political differences should split the Allied effort to re-orientate the German people through the medium of art." Neither did he believe it desirable (at least for the time being) to politicize art in Germany. To Benno Frank, the ICD officer in charge of theater and music, such statements did not sound as empty rhetoric. SMAD's cultural department demonstrably made more efforts to get American plays and musical works performed in the Soviet zone and sector than vice versa. As he saw it, a greater cooperation in the fields of the arts was desirable in order to stress "the significance of an unpolitical art in Germany" as well as to demonstrate a united sense of purpose between the Allies, thereby discrediting the then current rumor of an imminent split.⁹³

Indeed, in the immediate aftermath of the war, the expertise SMAD's cultural officers possessed on Germany and "bourgeois" culture through their background and education (many of them were, like Nabokov, born into privileged families with a tradition in German-style *Bildung*)—had made them the ideal candidates to foster acceptance among the German intelligentsia through a decisively conciliating rather than divisive agenda. That same expertise, though, came to cost them dearly once the inter-Allied tensions reached boiling point and Moscow deemed it time to synchronize

⁹¹ Sollertinsky, "Symphonische Dramen," *Stimmen* 1/3 (January 1948): 70–6.

⁹² Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 201–2.

⁹³ Frank to Clarke, memorandum "Implications of the Stuttgart Theater Convention," March 5, 1947, OMGUS/IFZ, 5/348-3/4.

the socialization of Germany's cultural life with that of the Soviet Union. Overnight, SMAD's cultural officers, who had seen their task as one of gently preparing the German mind for the Soviet way of life, were expected to expedite the class struggle and launch the anti-formalist campaign in Germany—an assignment that brought them in an awkward position vis-à-vis their German contacts. Had the situation of musical censorship at the end of 1947 been such that a British intelligence report could conclude that the German Communists showed “an understandable reluctance to demand politico-musical composition” or to “discourage ‘modern’ music,”⁹⁴ now it was up to SMAD's cultural officers to tell Germany's musical contingent, which was just about to recover from the Nazi experience, that “their” modernist composers, including Schoenberg, Berg, and Hindemith, were “decadent, pathological, erotic, cacophonous, religious or sexually perverted monsters” whose music reminded of “either a dentist's drill or a musical gas-wagon.”⁹⁵

Although one of his colleagues was quick to adopt the tone of Zhdanovism (Stravinsky's “pathetic clownerie,” Britten's “pathological sexuality” and “sick obsessions,” etc.),⁹⁶ Barsky had the astuteness to see that, if it would stand a chance to be accepted, the message had to be brought in a more restrained tone. Moscow's position on musical modernism was to be seen as emanating from a concern for “an art that is worthy of the people,” Barsky explained to his German readership in a language free of invective and censorship. All that happened is that some composers were pointed to their loss of “every contact with the people” by which they had “disturbed the essence of music.” Comradely criticism was only meant to assist the artist in his “noble mission to create the most democratic art in the world.”⁹⁷ Barsky's colleague, Roman Peresvetov, also brushed aside Western reports that construed the Zhdanov decree as a sign of “a dreadful campaign” against modern music masterminded by “evil forces in the East.” Unlike Barsky, however, he coupled his justification of Moscow's music politics with a jeer towards the United States, noting HUAC's accusations against “progressive artists” in Hollywood, which had led to Hanns Eisler's expulsion. The true danger, then, came from the West, where music, rather than being derived from its “human-artistic substance,”

⁹⁴ Research Department, Foreign Office, memorandum “Cultural Policy in the Soviet Zone of Germany,” November 6, 1947, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA), FO 945/217.

⁹⁵ Khrennikov and Zhdanov quoted by Werth, *Musical Uproar in Moscow*, 93 and 82.

⁹⁶ Vasily Gorodinsky, “Jenseits des Schönen: die Musik der dekadenten Bourgeoisie,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], January 17, 1948, 3.

⁹⁷ Barsky [Barskij], “Für eine volksverbundene Kunst,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], February 13, 1948, 3.

relentlessly “loses itself in the empty space of aesthetic abstractions.”⁹⁸ Indeed, the problem with Western composers was that they “completely disregard[ed] the social function of music” and sought for meaning in “mysticism,” “apocalypticism,” and “extreme subjectivism,” B. Sergejev concurred in a language that anticipated on the Prague Manifesto.⁹⁹ But, as far as Barsky was concerned, it could not be overemphasized that the Zhdanov resolution was an internal affair, and that German composers worried about its implications had nothing to fear. In the Soviet Union, “fascistic” terms as “undesirable” and “forbidden” were not used, nor was music assessed in terms of “good” or “bad.” Soviet composers were only exposed to constructive guidance as to how to confer “character” on their work, a “character” that can be understood by “the people.”¹⁰⁰

Barsky’s reasoning might have sounded convincing to himself and others, but Stuckenschmidt, for one, entertained no illusions about the true implications of the Zhdanov decree. The entire decree boils down to “the struggle against two things, which are stressed in modern bourgeois music,” Stuckenschmidt explained, namely: “lack of melody and dissonance.” It could not escape the reader’s mind that these, and their concomitant charges of “subjectivism” (*Subjektivismus*) and “alienation of the people” (*Volksfremdheit*), were the very same charges which the Nazis had leveled against the music of Berg and Hindemith and all those who championed them:

It is quite shocking to see the art doctrines of Joseph Goebbels almost completely having returned in *Die Weltbühne* [i.e., Sergejev’s aforementioned article] only three years after his death. One asks oneself why the struggle for modern art has been fought, why an elite of German artists and intellectuals took upon itself and endured the suffering of persecution, of banning, and of emigration, if today almost exactly the same arguments...are set against them. Was Hitler right then in artistic matters by marking as “degenerate” those who today are upbraided as representatives of western-bourgeois decadence?¹⁰¹

Needless to say, the equation with Nazism was deadly for the Soviet authorities in Germany whose propagandistic efforts were aimed at

⁹⁸ Roman Peresvetov [Pereswetow], “Von wo kommt die Gefahr? Zu den Auseinandersetzungen um die ‘bedrohte’ Musik,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], March 24, 1948, 3.

⁹⁹ B. Sergejev [Sergejew], “Das Recht des Volkes auf Kunstkritik,” *Die Weltbühne*, April 13, 1948, 275–7.

¹⁰⁰ Barsky to Karl Laux, April 8, 1948, repr. in Laux, *Die Musik in Rußland und in der Sowjetunion* (Berlin: Henschel, 1958), 412–5. Barsky responds here to nine questions that Laux, Kulturbund representative at Dresden who with Soviet approval had set up a modern music series there, asked him about the Zhdanov decree.

¹⁰¹ Stuckenschmidt, “Was ist bürgerliche Musik?,” *Stimmen* 1/7 (1948): 211, repr. in Stuckenschmidt, *Die Musik eines halben Jahrhunderts*, 88.

convincing Germans that they and their allies were the one and only antifascists in the country. Barsky and his congenial colleagues probably sensed that this would happen, and their attempts to moderate the offensive language of the Zhdanov decree was the best strategy to make it palatable to as many German music professionals as possible. They were not appreciated for it, though: as the Berlin Blockade put East/West relations definitely at sharp, all cultural officers (including Barsky, Dymshitz, and Tulpanov) who had entertained too close connections with “bourgeois elements” in German society or their counterparts in the Western occupation administrations were discharged from service and repatriated.¹⁰²

After the American and British authorities had decided to ban the Kulturbund from their sector in Berlin (November 1947), Stuckenschmidt and others retreated from the Kulturbund’s Music Committee, despite the efforts of the Committee’s chair to convince them of the Kulturbund’s non-partisanship (*Überparteilichkeit*).¹⁰³ Kulturbund officials did not give up on Stuckenschmidt and tried to persuade him to take up membership in the organization, but in vain: in February 1949 Stuckenschmidt left for the United States as part of a special cultural exchange program for German experts, informing American readers of the resilience of Berliners despite their isolated position.¹⁰⁴ Upon request of *Musical America* to pass judgment on American musical life, he reassured his readers that the United States had all it takes for the “highest cultural achievements,” although “the commercial influence and speed of life” resulted “in much superficiality,” too. When asked whether he could discern a distinctly American musical style, he replied in the negative while emphasizing the positive side of a lack of national idiom. Undoubtedly with the experience of Nazism and the most recent manifestation of cultural manipulation in his country in mind, he could appreciate that “after a century of strictly national music, we have now turned to a more universal way of musical thinking.” He left the New World

¹⁰² The anti-Semitic purge which Stalin launched at the end of 1948 after the nascent state of Israel showed itself aligned to the West was an additional reason for certain cultural officers to be replaced. The demobilization of headmen like Tulpanov and Dymshitz was also due to shifts of power between rivaling factions within the Moscow Politburo. Tulpanov’s fate, for instance, was contingent on that of his protector, Zhdanov, whose position within the Central Committee got ever more challenged in the course of 1948 until his (dubious) death in August of that year. Barsky was ordered back in May 1948 where he was appointed to the less than enviable position of leader of the music department of Radio Leningrad. For portraits of Tulpanov and Dymshits, see Hartmann and Eggeling, *Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR*, 147–52, 165–74; on Barsky, see Köster, *Musik-Zeit-Geschehen: Zu den Musikverhältnissen in der SBZ/DDR 1945 bis 1952*, 54–67.

¹⁰³ Heinz Tiessen, cited in the Minutes of the Meeting of the Music Committee [Kulturbund], July 21, 1948, SAPMO/BA, DY27/433.

¹⁰⁴ Stuckenschmidt, “Berlin Keeps Cultural Supremacy in Germany in Spite of Isolation,” *Musical America* (February 1949): 246, 375; and *Zum Hören geboren*, 185.

“a champion of its way of life.”¹⁰⁵

Although it was perhaps one of the last fields of German culture in which individuals of different political persuasions could cooperate, by early 1949, when the split of Germany and Berlin was imminent, music, too, had become irreversibly divided along ideological lines. The Kulturbund’s Music Committee increasingly occupied itself with a full reconceptualization of music life in the Soviet Zone along Marxist-Leninist principles. If a year earlier Stuckenschmidt could lecture in the Soviet sector of Berlin about how pioneering works most of the time met with resistance from the audience,¹⁰⁶ the group that gravitated around Ernst Hermann Meyer (who had joined the Committee in November 1948 and would become the leading exponent of the GDR’s music establishment) now insisted that music should always be in accordance with the taste of “the people.” Yet, in marked contrast to the Soviet Union, energies were not so much to be spent on disciplining music professionals as on raising the cultural standards of peasants and workers. Consequently, the agenda of the Music Committee shifted from planning concerts of music that attested to Stuckenschmidt’s “universal way of thinking” to “two-year plans of cultural production” (*Zweijahr-Plan [der] Kulturschaffenden*) and the need for expanding the musical repertoire for workers’ choirs.¹⁰⁷

By October 1949, the bifurcation of Germany was completed in both politico-economic and cultural terms. While in the German Democratic Republic the process of shaping music as a force for “the construction of socialism” was up and running, “new music” found more support in the Federal German Republic than ever before in German history. Indeed, the programming of radio stations in Frankfurt, Cologne, Baden-Baden, Hamburg, and Berlin as well as the Donaueschingen Festival (resumed in the summer of 1946), the Darmstadt Summer School for New Music (started summer 1946), and the concert series of Karl Amadeus Hartmann (*Musica Viva*, started in October 1945) and Hans Rosbaud (*Studio für Neue Musik*, started in February 1946) in Munich, reflect a shift from the “new music” trends from before 1933 to the labors of a new generation—including, among others, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Pierre Boulez, and Luigi Nono—that theorized and experimented its way to what was to congeal into an entirely new musical language, unencumbered by the burden of the troublesome and bloodstained past. Everett Helm, music officer at OMGUS Hesse, considered the Darmstadt Summer School (*Darmstädter Ferienkurse*)

¹⁰⁵ Stuckenschmidt, “A German Critic Views America,” *Musical America* (June 1949): 5, 33.

¹⁰⁶ Stuckenschmidt, “Schönberg und die Ästhetik des Behagens,” speech delivered at the Klubhaus Jägerstrasse, January 27, 1948, Records of the Kulturbund (BA), DY 27/299.

¹⁰⁷ Minutes of the Meeting of the Music Committee [Kulturbund], November 16, 1948, SAPMO/BA, DY27/433.

particularly noteworthy. An initiative by the local mayor Ludwig Metzger and his *Kulturreferent* Wolfgang Steinecke, “[t]his remarkable enterprise gives interested students, at a very modest fee, the opportunity to study with a carefully selected faculty for a three week period. Contemporary music *only* is taught and performed—and then only the more advanced varieties. R. Strauss and J. Sibelius do *not* come into consideration.” Yet, Helm added dispiritedly, “[i]f the professional musicians are forging ahead, the public is decidedly not....It is astounding how often the public will listen to the same works, divine as they may be.”¹⁰⁸ Had it not been for the cultural competition OMGUS entered with SMAD, then it would be difficult to imagine why General Clay complied with Helm’s request to compensate the Darmstadt Summer School for the losses it had suffered from the currency reform of June 1948.¹⁰⁹ In a time when—in the words of one German official—“the cultivation of the arts [had become] a principal concern of the Cold War,”¹¹⁰ the West German avant-garde profited from the attempts of both German authorities, who aimed to present to the general public a “free” as opposed to “controlled” Germany, and American authorities, who wished the German intelligentsia to recognize the United States as an advanced, or at least advancing, musical nation in its own right that shared many of the Germans’ own aspirations.¹¹¹

For less avant-garde-minded music listeners, the Cold War inspired a range of musical events for their enjoyment, too. Concerts abounded at the occasion of the bicentennial of Bach in 1950 in both West Germany (Göttingen) and East Germany (Leipzig). Not surprisingly, attendants would encounter two different Bachs: in the GDR the composer was presented as a proto-socialist who, despite feudal patronage, had always written for the common man; in the Federal Republic he featured as the embodiment of

¹⁰⁸ Helm, “Music in Germany,” 1948, OMGUS Hesse/NARA, Education and Cultural Relations, Theater and Music, A1 1401, 727-Articles by E. B. Helm.

¹⁰⁹ Helm, “Wiederaufbau des deutschen Musiklebens nach 1945 und Paul Hindemith,” *Hindemith-Jahrbuch* 9 (1980): 132–3. Between 1949 and 1951, US authorities contributed about twenty percent of Steinecke’s annual budget. Amy C. Beal, *New Music, New Allies: American Experimental Music in West Germany from the Zero Hour to Reunification* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2006), 40. After 1951, the *Länder* administrations fully sponsored the Summer Courses by paying students’ fees. Thacker, *Music after Hitler*, 177–8. For more on the early history of the Darmstadt Summer Courses, see the introduction to Martin Iddon, *New Music at Darmstadt: Nono, Stockhausen, Cage, and Boulez* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013) and *Im Zenit der Moderne: Die Internationalen Ferienkurse für neue Musik Darmstadt 1946–1966: Geschichte und Dokumentation in vier Bänden* (Freiburg: Rombach, 1997), vol. 1.

¹¹⁰ Dieter Sattler, Secretary of State for the Fine Arts, Bavarian State Ministry for Education and Culture, to Hans Ehard, Prime Minister of Bavaria, December 22, 1950, Sattler Papers, vol. 14.

¹¹¹ Gesa Kordes, “Darmstadt, Postwar Experimentation, and the West German Search for a New Musical Identity,” in *Music and German National Identity*, ed. Celia Applegate and Pamela Potter (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 205–16; Monod, *Settling Scores*, 228–9.

liberal and spiritual values, whose music united the politically divided.¹¹² In the meantime, the High Commission for Germany (HICOG) feverishly worked to design an answer to the third edition of the Soviet-sponsored World Youth Festival scheduled for East Berlin in August 1951. The answer was to stage a large-scale festival directly after the Youth Festival, September 1951. Presenting the most prestigious specimens of the performing arts that the “free world” had to offer, the festival was to demonstrate to both East and West the “Western international solidarity and the confidence of the Western World in Berlin.”¹¹³ What started as a grandiose plan, however, soon turned into a disappointment. As happened so often with American official attempts at cultural presentation, money problems surfaced, meaning, as far as the US contribution was concerned, that the planned tour of *Porgy and Bess* and two symphony orchestras had to be abandoned for a small-scale production of *Oklahoma!* and an appearance of the Juilliard String Quartet.¹¹⁴ A program that could show the best of the United States, and, for that matter, of the “free world” simply was not meant to be, it must have seemed.

Sound Weaponry: Fine-Tuning Music for Psychological Warfare

The Prague Manifesto’s explicit reference to the American entertainment industry as one of the greatest ills of the postwar state of affairs in music articulates a concern deeply ingrained among the Old World’s intelligentsia. Wherever US troops were stationed in postwar Europe, a black market thrived on iconic American products (Coca Cola, Hershey bars, and Lucky Strike cigarettes), whereas the ether brimmed with jazz, swing, boogie-woogie, and sentimental ballads. Much to the dismay of those who looked with disdain at what they saw as a “consumption culture” revolving around all but *Kultur*, all this—not to mention the presence of GI soldiers themselves—evidently attracted the attention of Europe’s youth. Communist spokesmen relentlessly capitalized on this anxiety of American “cultural imperialism” and its potentially corrupting effects on Europe’s adolescents, accusing the United States of “invading Italy with rivers of Coca Cola” and admonishing Europeans that, as long they allowed themselves to be “chloroformed by the ‘salutary’ Marshall injections,” they might one day

¹¹² For a discussion of the 1950 Bach Festivals, see Thacker, *Music after Hitler*, 127–50.

¹¹³ Memorandum “Cultural Festival 1951,” February 1, 1951, Office of the Executive Secretary, Berlin element, HICOG, Records of HICOG (NARA), UD 34, 1-Berlin Festival.

¹¹⁴ The organizers did succeed to secure the participation of the *Porgy and Bess* production for the next edition of the Berlin Festival in September 1952. For more on the Berlin Festival, see Monod, *Settling Scores*, 234–52.

“wake up to find [themselves] Americanized.”¹¹⁵ Of all kinds of music filling Europe’s postwar soundscape, Eisler, Adorno and Leibowitz deemed—in the words of the Prague Manifesto—the “most vulgar, corrupted and standardized melodic clichés” emanating from the American “culture industry” certainly to be the worst obstacle in their efforts to engage Europeans for the mission of restoring the exalted cultural values that had been perverted by the nationalist excesses of previous decades.¹¹⁶

Ironically, these “vulgar clichés” had proven to be perhaps the most suitable vehicle of engaging audiences for greater causes. When the Japanese attack of Pearl Harbor (December 7, 1941) forced the United States to enter the state of war, the Roosevelt administration saw itself confronted with a lack of involvement on the part of the average American citizen. To shape public opinion in favor of a concerted war effort, President Roosevelt brought into existence an agency for the central coordination of war-related “information” activities, the Office of War Information (OWI). Although their interest in entertainment was initially limited, the OWI learned soon after its foundation that it had better acknowledge the importance of pleasure in conveying an anything but pleasurable message. Yet, in the analysis of OWI officials, Hollywood, Broadway and the major broadcasting companies treated the global conflict in a way that responded more to commercial interests than the need to explain what the United States was fighting for. As they saw it, radio networks and show business—rather than belittling the enemy, glorifying the American way of life, arousing feelings of nostalgia, or winking at the minor discomforts in a soldier’s life—were to represent the war effort as an unasked-for but necessary investment for the own good of the United States and its allies. Without intervention on their part, they felt the entertainment sector would fail to do what it was expected to do, i.e., enhancing the sense of involvement of citizens at home and boost the morale of troops abroad. Thus, through subtle, and at times not-so-subtle, persuasion, OWI encouraged radio networks to weave the official war message into their programs, whereas it teamed up with Hollywood, Broadway, and Tin Pan Alley in the quest for the “right” coating of the

¹¹⁵ Jakub Berman, “The International Arena,” *For a Lasting peace, for a People’s Democracy!*, April 15, 1948, 5; “Peace Congress Ends in Rome; U.S. Hit Again,” *New York Times*, October 31, 1949, 6.

¹¹⁶ For more on European perceptions of the United States in this period, see Richard F. Kuisel, *Seducing the French: The Dilemma of Americanization* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1993); Reinhold Wagnleitner, *Coca-Colonization and the Cold War: The Cultural Mission of the United States in Austria after the Second World War*, trans. Diana M. Wolf (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994); Ralph Willet, *The Americanization of Germany, 1945–1949* (New York: Routledge, 1989); and the collected volumes *Americanization and Anti-Americanism: The German Encounter with American Culture after 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2005) and *The Americanization of Europe: Culture, Diplomacy, and Anti-Americanism after 1945* (New York: Berghahn, 2006), both edited by Alexander Stephan.

bitter pills to be administered to both the home and the war fronts.¹¹⁷

Initially, OWI's broadcasts to the occupied or liberated zones overseas—known as the Voice of America (VOA)—suffered from a similar lack of balance as its domestic counterparts between informative and entertainment value. The selection of music was left to radio speakers and technicians, who most of the time drew from the hit parades. At a certain moment, however, the one-sided diet of jazz, swing, popular classics and hit-parade tunes that made up OWI's radio programs was assessed as working more to the effect of worsening than of strengthening relations with those whose trust had to be gained. Especially damaging to the US image was a number of misguided music choices that issued from OWI's dearth of music-historical expertise. The Voice of America became the butt of ridicule for its Nazi counterpart by presenting “Maryland, My Maryland” as an example of an American folksong (whereas it is a contrafactum of the German Christmas carol “O Tannenbaum”). Program makers also seemed to have forgotten that the Soviet Union and Finland were at war (June 1941–September 1944) when they opened a broadcast destined for Soviet ears with a theme from Sibelius's symphonic poem *Finlandia* (a piece widely heard as an expression of Finnish independence in the face of Soviet aggression) and a broadcast for Finnish ears with Tchaikovsky's “1812 Overture” (a piece hailing Russian victory over Napoleon). Neither did VOA leave a good impression on Italian listeners when it tried to demonstrate American love for Italian opera by a jazzified version of the Sextet from Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*. The worst *faux pas*, however, was made by some programmers who apparently had been wont to rave about American music's superior qualities, which they saw confirmed in a single request for some jazz music from Iceland. When it turned out that the Icelanders on average actually disliked jazz, the programmers failed to stop bothering them with jazz on the strength of its having been “requested.”¹¹⁸

Eventually it dawned upon the OWI administrators that music could not be considered as a nonpolitical accessory to its main mission. If only because of the “emotional authority [it lent] to every context in which it occurred,”

¹¹⁷ For an analysis of OWI's short-wave broadcasting, see Holly Cowan Shulman, *The Voice of America: Propaganda and Democracy, 1941–1945* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990). On OWI's involvement in the tireless but futile search for appropriate war songs, see Kathleen E. R. Smith, *God Bless America: Tin Pan Alley Goes to War* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 2003). For a thorough study on the enlisting of music for the war effort on the American scene, see Annegret Fauser, *Sounds of War: Music in the United States during World War II* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).

¹¹⁸ Henry Cowell, “The Use of Music by the OWI,” *MTNA [Music Teachers National Association] Proceedings* (1946): 61–5. Cowell also recalls that the VOA beamed Chopin's “Revolutionary” Etude, Op. 10, No. 12 to Poland at the time when the Red Army advanced on Warsaw (but never pushed towards the center of the city) in August 1944. Chopin's composition was alleged to have been written in resistance to Russia's takeover of Warsaw in 1830–31).

more thought was to be given to the selection of music in VOA's programs.¹¹⁹ Acting upon this acquired insight, OWI created a Music Section in its Radio Program Bureau, for which it hired Broadway composer Macklin Marrow in the position of director, and Bess Lomax Hawes, a young folk-music expert and sister of the folklorist and ethnomusicologist Alan Lomax, as his assistant. When American boots touched ever more ground world-wide and the need for expertise on "exotic musics" was ever more paramount, Marrow called in Henry Cowell, whose inexhaustible expertise on musics from all over the world was recognized by one of President Roosevelt's officials to be so unusual that "this should be made use of by the government in several ways."¹²⁰ Initially appointed (on June 23, 1943) as associate music editor for broadcasts to Continental Europe but soon supervising the selection of music for various other parts of the world, Cowell advised the obvious: if OWI broadcastings were to attract the attention of its targeted audiences, it should prove American comprehension of their music and avoid the impression of imposing American music at the expense of theirs. In the next months, European followers of OWI's broadcasts, apart from a cross-section of American homegrown avant-garde and popular music "in such proportion as we feel will appeal to the particular district to which we are broadcasting," could hear the music they were thought to like: pieces from their own national music repertoire and the German classics performed by American orchestras, songs pertaining to their religious convictions, and other types of music that appealed to their aural self-images.¹²¹ One of the highpoints of this approach was an OWI movie featuring Toscanini conducting Verdi's collage of European anthems, *Hymn of the Nations* [*Inno delle Nazioni*] (1862), which, as one *New York Times* music critic proudly reported, has made and reinforced "friendships for us everywhere" and created "an awareness of the maturity of America's civilization." Once more "the potency of music as an instrument of goodwill" had been proven.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Bess Lomax Hawes, *Sing it Pretty: A Memoir* (Urbana/Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2008), 48. Hawes was the only OWI employee involved in the Music Section through its entire existence. She was, incidentally, the sister of Alan Lomax, the renowned folk-music specialist who was also employed by OWI but with a domestic mission: he was to develop activities aimed at groups in American society that were not reached adequately by ordinary information media. Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 80.

¹²⁰ Morton W. Royse, Director Foreign Nationalities Section, US Department of Justice, to Cowell, January 14, 1940, Cowell Papers, 88-3.

¹²¹ Henry Cowell, "Music as Propaganda," *Bulletin of the American Musicological Society* (September 1948): 9-11. See also Frances Q. Eaton, "Music as a Weapon," *Musical America* (February 10, 1945): 27; and Burton Paulu, "Music: War's New Weapon," *Music Educators Journal* 35/4 (1949): 25, 55-7.

¹²² Howard Taubman, "Music Speaks for America," *New York Times*, January 23, 1944, SM12, 31. Originally broadcast to demarcate the fall of Mussolini in February 1943, the composer Marc Blitzstein, music director of OWI's post in London, aired the *Hymn* via OWI's European radio

Cowell implemented the same strategy in the programs he came to supervise for listeners in the Middle East, North Africa and the Pacific war theater, which included their traditional musics, often recorded by Cowell himself, who combed immigrant communities in San Francisco and New York City for “indigenous” musicians. The programs also featured compositions by American composers based on tunes from these traditional musics, like Cowell’s own symphonic *Improvisation on a Persian Mode* (1943), a composition written at the request of the OWI Overseas Radio Bureau’s Iranian Desk which—as Cowell’s wife remembered—was both during and after the war so constantly played over the Iranian radio that many Iranians believed it was their national anthem.¹²³ By addressing younger generations in particular, these “hybrid” forms, as they were called at the time, proved—according to Cowell—particularly helpful in establishing the desired “bond between East and West.” Just as Americans might prefer Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherazade* to the product of “a real Oriental orchestra,” Cowell explained, American popular tunes were found in various countries performed on native instruments in the declared national style. In reverse, American broadcasts of the Chinese “March of the Volunteers” (*Yiyǒngjūn Jìnxíngqǔ*) worked to increase America’s esteem in the “Oriental” world, for example in the rendition of Paul Robeson, who performed this song in praise of the Chinese people’s resistance against its Japanese oppressors (then known by its opening exhortation, “Chee Lai” [*qi lai*], “Arise”) in westernized style to audiences all over the world.¹²⁴

This custom-made approach got pushed aside in April 1945, when Cowell suddenly found himself fired without warning due to his past involvement in radical politics.¹²⁵ After the unsuccessful attempt of Bali

network (ABSIE) several days before D-Day, alternating it with SHAEF instructions concerning the coming invasion. He would later describe the Toscanini sound track as “the most potent single musical weapon of World War II.” “Blitzstein on Toscanini,” *New York Times*, April 14, 1946, 51; Eric A. Gordon, *Mark the Music: The Life and Work of Marc Blitzstein* (Lincoln, NE: iUniverse, 1989), 246–53. Toscanini, incidentally, supplemented the *Hymn* with the “Star-Spangled Banner” and “The Internationale.” Three years after V-E day, the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) which handled the *Hymn*’s commercial distribution, saw to it that “The Internationale” would be removed. Toscanini strongly opposed this surgery, but in vain. “Toscy’s Vodka Toast,” *Variety* (April 21, 1948): 1.

¹²³ Sidney R. Cowell, “HC’s First Contact with Official Iran,” November 23, 1988, Cowell Papers, 88-2. Kindred compositions from Cowell’s hand were *Philippine Return: Rondo on a Philippine Folk Song* (1943) and *United Nations: Songs of the People* (1945).

¹²⁴ Cowell, “Shaping Music for Total War,” *Modern Music* 22/4 (1945): 223–6.

¹²⁵ When Charles Seeger, who as chief of the Pan American Union’s Music Division had recommended his protégé Cowell for the OWI job, learned that Cowell was about to be promoted to head of OWI’s music department, he informed Cowell’s superiors about their employee’s political past in order not to get himself involved in a potential scandal. Seeger’s political record was not clean, either, of leftist affiliations that became suspect in the 1940s either. Joel Sachs, *Henry Cowell: A Man Made of Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 393.

expert Colin McPhee to continue his friend's well-tried policy, Roy Harris assumed the combined post of chief music editor and director of the Music Section of the OWI Radio Program Bureau.¹²⁶ A leading exponent of the group of American composers who derived their concept of what a unique American musical style should entail from the mythology of the "Wild West" rather than European art music or jazz, Harris—unlike Cowell—considered it his responsibility to use his influence as OWI official to promote American music abroad. Although continuing Cowell's formula of tailoring the music supply to its demand in a particular region, radio programs under Harris's supervision were "as American as pie à la mode," consisting of prime-time broadcasts of symphonic and chamber music performed by American ensembles (25% of air time) and 50% of American popular music ("hot" and "sweet" jazz, Latin American dance music and hit songs), the rest being reserved for "folk music in all manner of forms."¹²⁷ If we may believe contemporary testimonies, OWI's music choice did not miss its intended goal: captured Germans reported that the favorite Allied program heard in Germany was "Music for the Wehrmacht," which featured entertainment by topnotch performers like Glen Miller, Bing Crosby and Dinah Shore. Harris, however, particularly delighted in informing the home front that requests from Europe for "serious American music" had quadrupled since OWI's establishment in June 1942. Together with performances of the canonic European art music repertoire by American musicians and orchestras, this selection of "serious" music from North American soil, broadcast at prime-time hours, formed the core of OWI's musical propaganda.¹²⁸

These successes notwithstanding, OWI kept having a hard time convincing skeptics of the value of its programs, certainly after the hostilities in Europe had ended. How unfortunate it was that the OWI music section had not begun earlier with "curing" Hitler and Himmler by means of "hot jazz or Harlem rhythm," one critic remarked sardonically. Another could not hide his indignation when reporting that the Truman administration was spending "approximately \$82,000 a day of American taxpayers' money to broadcast swing music" throughout the world. Behind this sarcasm went a deeper concern for the potential danger OWI posed to civil liberties. After all, what could assure Americans that a government with a propaganda

¹²⁶ Harris succeeded solo cellist and conductor Daniel Saidenberg, who held Macklin Marrow's post from June 1944 to April 1945. On Harris's self-fashioning as the quintessential American composer, see Beth E. Levy, "The White Hope of American Music"; or, How Roy Harris Became Western," *American Music* 19/2 (2001): 131–67.

¹²⁷ Harris, "Vast Musical Program for All of World," *The Milwaukee Journal* (July 15, 1945): 3.

¹²⁸ "OWI's ABSIE [American Broadcasting Station in Europe]," *Time* (July 16, 1945): 69. For more on the OWI's musical activities, see Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 76–93.

capacity such as this would not use it against its own citizens? In this regard, the deliberate employment of Communists and other New Deal sympathizers was most alarming to OWI's adversaries. One critic spoke for many when he dismissed OWI as "another New Deal alphabetical agency, designed on the totalitarian pattern, to tell us what we ought to know, and by the same token, suppress what it thinks we shouldn't know."¹²⁹ For OWI's advocates, however, the fear that the US government would propagandize its own people was irrational. After all, as befits a democracy, the Roosevelt administration employed—according to Archibald MacLeish, who as was deeply involved in OWI's establishment—a "strategy of truth," i.e., insofar military objectives allowed their declassification, facts of war were disseminated to the public, even if they proved to be unfavorable to the Allied cause. The problematic nature of MacLeish's philosophy—dictatorships produce propaganda, democracies the truth—emerges from the many internal conflicts and external pressures as to what the "truth" consisted of, and how much of it should be made public, which plagued OWI throughout its existence.¹³⁰

Despite the severe criticism it was confronted with, OWI was determined not to give up its mission to project the United States' image to the world favorably, and as the war drew to a close, its supporters, including President Truman, lobbied for the maintenance of the agency's activities on the argument that misperceptions of the United States and its policies needed to be addressed in peacetime as well as wartime. As one supportive letter to the editor of *The Washington Post* poignantly put it, "[m]oney spent firing good music to break down opposition—and to hold goodwill—is better spent than American lives and bullets."¹³¹ It is to the merit of the persuasive powers of MacLeish's successor as Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, William Benton, a seasoned advertising executive and owner of, among others, the Muzak Corporation, that this program found half-hearted

¹²⁹ Editorial, "Maybe This Only Prolongs the War," *The Spokesman-Review* [Spokane, Washington], May 28, 1945, 4; Arthur S. Henning, "House Prepares Quiz of Foreign OWI Propaganda: Growing Signs of Red Tinge Are Noted," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, August 3, 1943, 6; "OWI Spends Millions on Radio Music for Foe: Programs Sent to Nazis and Japs Defended against Boondoggle Charge," *New York World Telegram*, April 23, 1945, 3; Willard Edwards, "U.S. Is Radioing Swing to World At \$82,000 A Day," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, December 3, 1945, 1; Editorial, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, June 17, 1945, cited by Monod, *Settling Scores*, 15. For an historical study of US perceptions of propaganda, see Brett Gary, *The Nervous Liberals: Propaganda Anxieties from World War I to the Cold War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999).

¹³⁰ MacLeish, "The Strategy of Truth," address delivered at the annual luncheon of the Associated Press, April 20, 1942, repr. in *A Time to Act: Selected Addresses* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1943), 21–31. For an account of OWI's conflict-ridden history, see Allan M. Winkler, *The Politics of Propaganda: The Office of War Information, 1942–1945* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1978).

¹³¹ "Europe Learns from OWI about Culture in U.S.," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, April 7, 1945, 7; Leonard C. Rennie, "Sing Out, America!," *The Washington Post*, June 12, 1945, 6.

approval with a generally reluctant Congress, albeit in a considerably pruned form. “Because we have risen to be one of the most powerful nations in the history of the world,” Benton reasoned, “we may reap envy, fear and hate” that might evolve into a “threat to our national security” should the United States shirk its responsibilities to explain itself and its foreign policies to the world.¹³²

Benton’s plea turned out to be more prescient than he himself might have expected at the time. While he had hoped to prolong the wartime alliance into peacetime by encouraging US-USSR cultural exchanges, he, together with many others, was left bitterly disappointed when Stalin suddenly blamed the global conflicts of the twentieth century on “monopoly capitalism,” and interpreted the victory in the war against fascism not as an allied achievement, but a triumph of “our Soviet social order.”¹³³ In response to this reinstatement of the Soviet regime’s prewar animosity towards the West, George Kennan, at the time chargé d’affaires at the US Embassy in Moscow, counseled the Truman administration not to expect any concessions towards peace to be reciprocated, since Stalin’s Politburo—in Kennan’s psychoanalytical reading—depended on a permanent state of hostility with capitalism in order to sustain its repressive dictatorship at home. Although the United States could rest assured that Soviet Russia was too weak to risk a military confrontation, it was beyond doubt for Kennan that the Kremlin’s moves on the global chessboard were inspired by an innate lust for power rather than security concerns. Therefore, US administrators did not need to have any qualms about entering upon “a policy of firm containment, designed to confront the Russians with unalterable counter-force at every point where they show signs of encroaching upon the interests of a peaceful and stable world.”¹³⁴ Two weeks after Kennan’s telegram, Winston Churchill dramatically warned the world of the Soviet Union’s “expansive and proselytizing tendencies,” and went a step further than Kennan by suggesting an Anglo-American military alliance to take the lead in “facing [them] squarely while time remains”—a message that Stalin immediately decried as a call to arms from someone who bore “a striking resemblance to Hitler and his friends.”¹³⁵

¹³² William B. Benton, “Self-Portrait—By Uncle Sam: The State Department Is Making a New Effort to Give the World a Realistic Picture of America,” *New York Times*, December 2, 1945, SM7.

¹³³ Benton, Assistant Secretary of State for Public and Cultural Affairs, to Kennan, Chargé in the Soviet Union, October 5, 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1945*, vol. 1, 893–4; Stalin, Pre-Election Speech for the Supreme Soviet, February 9, 1946, in J. V. Stalin, *Works*, ed. Robert H. McNeal (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution, 1967), vol. 3, 1–20.

¹³⁴ Kennan (pseudonym “X”) to State Department, cable, February 22, 1946, in *FRUS, 1946*, vol. 6, 696–709.

¹³⁵ Churchill, “The Sinews of Peace,” speech delivered at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, March 5, 1946; “J. V. Stalin’s Reply to Churchill,” *Pravda*, March 13, 1946. Both documents are

By mid-1946, most leading segments of the US polity subscribed to Kennan's foreboding analysis of Soviet intentions, and subsequently agreed that a serious investment to explain the United States and its foreign policies to the world in permanence could no longer be held off. Moscow's comprehensive foreign broadcast program, which incessantly portrayed Washington and London as the nucleus of "zealous warmongers" bent on thwarting the hopes of all who longed for a future marked by peace, democracy, international cooperation, and universal security, had a disastrous effect on the goodwill towards the Anglo-American alliance in areas plagued by political and economic instability.¹³⁶ At the urgent insistence of the US Embassy in Moscow, Benton decided that the State Department's International Broadcasting Division (IBD) should start to beam the Voice of America to the Soviet Union to give the Russians the "true facts" about the United States and its policies. He entrusted Charles Thayer, a veteran diplomat and specialist on Nazi and Soviet propaganda, with the organization of a Russian Desk. In addition, on recommendation of Kennan, Nabokov—"an extraordinary man with a fifth [*sic*] sense, with remarkable intuition and understanding of Russian psychology"—found himself appointed as editor-in-chief.¹³⁷

Thayer and Nabokov did much to meet the concerns of those Congress members who questioned the efficacy of the Voice of America. To avoid the impression that they were running a quixotic propaganda outlet, they rejected applicants for their unit's staff positions who were "too anti-Soviet," and made sure that their programs were free from "polemics, invective, argumentation, or otherwise" that could "inspire active opposition" to the Soviet regime or, for that matter, "distortions of fact" that showed the United States as a "Utopia." Echoing the line of Archibald MacLeish five years earlier, Thayer briefed his staff that the sole purpose of the daily one-hour programs was to provide accurate and objective

reproduced in Martin McCauley, *Origins of the Cold War, 1941–1949*, rev. third edition (Harlow: Pearson, 2003), 141–3.

¹³⁶ Central Intelligence Group (the direct predecessor to the CIA), "Analysis of Soviet Foreign Propaganda Broadcasts," July 23, 1946, *Declassified Documents Reference System* (Gale Digital Collections).

¹³⁷ Kennan cited by Benton, Assistant Secretary of State, to William T. Stone, Director, Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs, 5 November 1946, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Office Files of Assistant Secretary of State William Benton, Correspondence-Subject Files, A1 568I, 15-Memoranda 1945–1947. Nabokov initially was appointed as Thayer's chief assistant in the process of setting up the Russian Desk. His main task was to identify suitable Russian-language editors and announcers among the numerous volunteer applicants by which the IBD was swamped when word of the State Department's plans first went out. Nabokov had initially put his cousin Vladimir on the list for the position of editor-in-chief, but in the end obtained the job himself. Nabokov, memorandum "Personnel Interviewed for Russian Desk," November 7, 1946, Thayer Papers, 5-VOA Correspondence.

information to Russian audiences concerning events abroad and conditions in America in order to enable them “to reach sound conclusions as to the Soviet regime’s claim of infallibility of judgment and to the superiority of the Soviet system in its relative ability to produce the material and spiritual rewards of labor.” Any skepticism about the results VOA could actually achieve in Russia failed to sway Thayer from his mission: “If we can convince even a small audience that we are not hopelessly decadent, that we are not a nation of stinkers and that we are not trying to encircle the Soviet Union, then we have made a worth-while start.”¹³⁸

After a brief and strenuous period of preparation with a minimum of resources, the first Russian-language broadcast penetrated the “Iron Curtain” on February 17, 1947, featuring a news summary, an explanation of the US constitutional system, and a musical selection consisting of “The Battle Hymn of the Republic,” “Turkey in the Straw,” a medley of cowboy songs, “Hoedown” from Copland’s *Rodeo* ballet, and Cole Porter’s “Night and Day.” Although the program was slightly too wordy and bad transmission made Copland’s music sound like “a bagpipe solo,” the general reaction of Russian listeners seemed favorable, the US Ambassador in Moscow reported.¹³⁹ The choice to concentrate on “light” rather than “serious” music—the reverse of the music policy advised for Germany—was made on the basis of surveys (conducted in 1945) showing that American swing programs and folk songs were most popular among Soviet owners of short-wave radios. “Russian people are starved for humor, bright music, folk songs and any form of entertainment which offers an escape from [the] grim reality of daily existence” as well as the “long-winded ideological abstractions” which the Soviet radio fired at their ears day and night.¹⁴⁰ Adding in the sheer impossibility of competing with the Soviet radio in the field of classical music, there seemed to be more gained, then, by focusing on light music, particularly of the kind that was censured in Soviet Russia. When sensing that VOA might adopt an increasingly more ‘cultured’ tone, the Ambassador promptly advised a return to the original line, i.e., an alternation of newscasts and “entertaining music” at about fifteen-minute intervals. Benton and Thayer took this advice to heart, and adjusted the information/entertainment balance in favor of more light music, in

¹³⁸ “Basic Guide for Russian Language Broadcasts,” February 6, 1947, Thayer Papers, 5-VOA Correspondence; “U.S. Beams News to Russia February 17,” *New York Times*, February 2, 1947, 11; Arthur Kavalier, “Talking to Russia: State Department Opens New Service Next Week,” *New York Times*, February 9, 1947, X11; Thayer as cited by Edward P. Morgan, “Ivan Gets an Earful,” *Collier’s Weekly* (June 7, 1947): 59.

¹³⁹ Walter B. Smith, US Ambassador to the USSR, to Benton, February 18, 1947; and Smith to Marshall, Secretary of State, March 1, 1947, in *FRUS, 1947*, vol. 4, 533–4, 541–3.

¹⁴⁰ Averell W. Harriman, US Ambassador to the USSR, to Byrnes, Secretary of State, December 21, 1945, in *FRUS, 1945*, vol. 1, 930–2.

particularly jazz (for which they attracted Benny Goodman as adviser), next to a compilation of well-known classics “by topnotch American performers,” operettas, folk music, hit parade tunes, “popular music that is not too sentimental,” and, significantly, songs banned in Soviet Russia.¹⁴¹

Additional advice for the improvement of the VOA’s Russian programs came from a rather unexpected corner. While being in Berlin to evaluate the reception of the broadcasts in terms of their transmission, contents and presentation, Nabokov was complimented on the quality of the VOA’s programs by none other than Tulpanov, the head of SMAD’s propaganda apparatus. Especially the cultural aspect of the VOA broadcasts had impressed Tulpanov so much that he counselled “to emphasize it more and cut down on the straight news.”¹⁴² Whether SMAD’s propaganda manager was sincere or sarcastic in his recommendation is open to interpretation—it would, of course, have been in his interest if his competitors were to “cut down on the straight news.” Yet, there are indications that Tulpanov was more sincere than might be expected. Nabokov’s conversations with several Russian sergeants and “non-party, low-grade officers” at the SMAD headquarters in Karlshorst had revealed “a great interest among Russian troops to all news from the West.” (Nabokov had been given an access pass and was free to speak to anyone.) This interest was apparently fed by a distrust of Moscow newscasts as well as a general dissatisfaction with the slow pace of reconstruction at home, consistently poor rations, and increased talk of newly impending war. Although they were genuinely interested in the United States, Nabokov’s Russian interviewees nevertheless believed that the VOA program from time to time exaggerated “the beauties of America” and talked down to the Russian people, assuming that they did not know anything about the United States. Instead, they advised to appeal more to the interest among the Soviet intelligentsia for American literature and poetry as well as to bring forth “our political ‘ideology’ and such burning questions as ‘the Negro problem.’”¹⁴³ (It should be noted that most, if not all, of the SMAD officials whom Nabokov spoke with—like Colonel I. E. Feldman, writer in civilian life—found themselves arrested or remanded to Moscow within the next two years.)

¹⁴¹ “U.S. to Liven Broadcasts to Russia with Jazz Tunes and More News,” *New York Times*, February 27, 1947, 8; interview with Thayer and Nabokov in *The New Yorker* (March 1, 1947): 21-22; Dorothy O’Leary, “Jazz for Russia: Benny Goodman Discusses Broadcasts to Soviet [Union],” *New York Times*, May 4, 1947, X9.

¹⁴² Tulpanov cited in “‘Voice of America’ Program Praised by Soviet Colonel,” *The Washington Post*, July 5, 1947, 2.

¹⁴³ Nabokoff, report on VOA’s “Russian Program,” July 6, 1947, Records of the United States Information Agency (NARA), Advisory Commission on Information Records Relating to the Division of International Broadcasting, P 217, 2-df. This report was based on interviews with “23 Soviet Russians, a few DPs and émigré Russians, and many of our own people.”

The official appraisal of the VOA from the Kremlin was less equivocal, though. After an initial silence of two months, the Central Committee's Propaganda and Agitation Department bitterly attacked the voice of "American reaction" as a continuation of Nazi propaganda.¹⁴⁴ For Nabokov, the manner in which the Russians were using their 'overt' press in Germany and Austria for continued slander and attacks on the United States "only too justified a claim on our part over the Russian controlled networks." As to the content of the VOA programs, Nabokov advised "less talk about non-political, non-essential matters," and a 50% reduction of the time allocated to "serious music" so as to make room for press reviews and some pungent quotes from editorials gleaned from leading American newspapers. This is remarkable to hear from a composer, but—as previously noted—orchestral music generally passed the ether with great distortion. Percussive and highly rhythmical pieces worked best, whereas a piece with sustained strings and high registers like Samuel Barber's *Adagio for Strings* came through "so distorted that it became totally incomprehensible." The best solution seemed to prerecord musical programs and ship them to Munich, where they could be broadcast through ICD's transmitter. In conclusion of his report, Nabokov impressed on his superiors that he felt "very strongly" that, given "the present psychological and political warfare which the Russians are conducting all over Europe," the United States "should take a firmer political line."¹⁴⁵

Nabokov's advice fell on deaf ears, however. In fact, the entire VOA operation hung in the balance. Despite the Kremlin's rebuff, which refuted doubts—often advanced by VOA's critics—about whether broadcasting to the Soviet Union would make any impression at all, congressional conservatives stuck to their view that a government had no business in broadcasting and cultural representation activities, and since legislation to justify its existence in peacetime was lacking, they used their veto to terminate the State Department's entire information program as of 1948. The veto was partly reversed after the personal intervention of President Truman and Secretary of State Marshall, but the incident was typical of the challenge the State Department faced to safeguard the existence, let alone the continuity, of programs aimed at promoting the "American way of life" abroad. Benton's annually recurring struggle for appropriations would only come to an end with the passage of the so-called Smith-Mundt bill in January 1948, which authorized the State Department to continue its

¹⁴⁴ Ilya Ehrenburg, "A False Voice," *Culture and Life*, cited in "Broadcasts by U.S. Assailed in Russia," *New York Times*, April 12, 1947, 4. At the time of this attack, American correspondents noted an increase of VOA's popularity in several provincial cities of Soviet Russia. Drew Middleton, "'Voice of America' Wins Larger Audience in Soviet Union," *New York Times*, March 28, 1947, 6.

¹⁴⁵ Nabokoff, report on VOA's "Russian Program," July 6, 1947.

overseas information and cultural activities.¹⁴⁶ Named after its creators, Representative Karl E. Mundt (Republican-South Dakota) and Senator H. Alexander Smith (Republican-New Jersey), this bill bridged political differences by departing from the assumption that the world's understanding of the United States could only begin to improve once Communist-inspired anti-American propaganda campaigns had been effectively neutralized. In order to avert the specter of a government-controlled agitprop apparatus that could be abused to propagandize American citizens at home, the new legislation stipulated that the State Department utilize, to the maximum extent practicable, the services and facilities of the private news, media and entertainment sector, and prohibited the dissemination of US governmental information materials to the general public. In addition, it provided for the exchange of students, scholars and educators on a reciprocal basis. Finally, in a nod toward conservative distrust about the alleged leftist leanings of State Department personnel, the Smith-Mundt bill required all information officials to obtain a security clearance. (Nabokov failed to obtain this clearance due to his “deviant” amorous escapades—some of them being real, others merely suspected.¹⁴⁷) This legislation enabled the United States to enter the cultural competition with the Soviet Union, although it did not come with the required appropriations. Other sources needed to be tapped, and were tapped.

¹⁴⁶ “United States Information and Educational Exchange Act of 1948,” Public Law 402, Eightieth Congress, Second Session, January 27, 1948, US Code 22, Ch. 18 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1948). On the troubled path that led toward this legislation, see Laura A. Belmonte, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008), 26–33. According to Benton’s successor, Edward W. Barrett, the phrase “educational exchange” had been adopted as “a euphemism for cultural relations, because of a fear that voters who might sneer at ‘culture’ could scarcely oppose ‘education.’” Barrett, *Truth Is Our Weapon* (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1953), 58–9. For a detailed study of the VOA under Harry Truman’s presidency, see David F. Krugler, *The Voice of America and the Domestic Propaganda Battles, 1945–1953* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2000).

¹⁴⁷ By the time the Smith-Mundt act passed, Nabokov had already resigned as editor-in-chief of VOA’s Russian desk to take on a position as professor of composition at the Peabody Conservatory of Music in Baltimore, Maryland, but he continued to contribute as a music commentator to its broadcasts. See Appendix D for more details on Nabokov’s FBI investigation.

Checkmate/Stalemate at the Waldorf

The Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace

There we were, a roomful of talented people and a few real geniuses, and in retrospect neither side was wholly right, neither the apologists for the Soviets nor the outraged Red-haters; to put it simply, politics is choices, and not infrequently there really aren't any to make; the chessboard allows no space for a move.¹

Arthur Miller (1949)

Music is an international language, and your visit will serve to symbolize the bond which music can create among all peoples. We welcome your visit also in the hope that this kind of cultural interchange can aid understanding among our peoples and thereby make possible an enduring peace.²

Welcome message from American composers to Shostakovich (1949)

In the struggle between democracy and totalitarianism it is the duty of every intellectual not merely to keep his own end up but from time to time to make clear to the world on which side he stands.³

George Orwell (1949)

Berlin, Tempelhof Airport, March 22, 1949. Gazing out of the larger than life leaded glass windows in one of the airfield's impressive lounges, Dmitry Shostakovich witnessed the well-oiled choreography of planes landing and taking off at two-minute intervals, each bound to replenish the rapidly shrinking provisions of Berlin's western sectors that had been cut off from the city's vital resources on the orders of his nation's leader, Joseph Stalin. The Russian composer was on his way to New York City to star in what can be counted among one of the most controversial gatherings in the history of the Big Apple: the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace (hereafter referred to as the "Conference"). Convoled during the last weekend of March by the National Council of the Arts, Sciences and Professions (NCASP), a left-wing association of US citizens who insisted their government appease instead of confront the Soviet regime, the

¹ Arthur Miller, *Timebends: A Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1987), 236.

² "Global Unity Call, Cheered by 18,000, Ends Peace Rally," *New York Times*, March 28, 1949, 1.

³ George Orwell as cited in a press release from the Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF), "Leading Philosophers Denounce Communist-Front Meeting," March 23, 1949, Records of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), 14-18.

Conference was an event after Stalin's heart. In riposte to the obstruction of Soviet interests by his wartime allies, the United States and Great Britain, the despot had deeply invested in propagandizing his Soviet Union as the guardian of world peace in the face of "imperialist and warmongering enemies," and now even his principal antagonist's own denizens seemed to heed his call. Resolved not to miss this opportunity, he applied his irresistible way of persuasion to get a reluctant Shostakovich, once described by *Newsweek* as "the USSR's most potent propaganda instrument in the Western world," to join the Soviet delegation for the sake of telling the Americans the truth about the land of socialism.⁴ Having only recently lapsed for the second time from grace with the Politburo for indulging in "formalism" and "cosmopolitanism," he wisely consented once he sensed that the Man of Steel was not prepared to take no for an answer.⁵ A few days later the composer found himself waiting at the Berlin airport for his

⁴ "Shostakovich and Sonya," *Newsweek* (August 15, 1943): 9. Besides Shostakovich, the delegation, which was headed by Alexander Fadeyev (Secretary of the Soviet Writers' Union), included Sergey Gerasimov (director of the screen adaptation of Fadeyev's *The Young Guard*, for which Shostakovich had written the film score), Mikhail Chiaureli and Pyotr Pavlenko (director and screenwriter of *The Fall of Berlin*, which reflected the Stalinist view of the USSR's role in the ending of World War II, also with a score by Shostakovich), Alexander Oparin (a biochemist whose theories about the origin of life were embraced by the Party), and Ivan Ruzhansky (who served as the interpreter of the delegation).

⁵ In response to the NCASP's invitation for a Soviet delegation to the Conference, the Soviet Ministry of Foreign Affairs selected six representatives, including Shostakovich. Records in the Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI) show that the list was approved on February 16, 1949. Leonid Maximenkov, "Stalin and Shostakovich: Letters to a 'Friend,'" in *Shostakovich and His World*, ed. Laurel E. Fay (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004), 54–5. Four days later the NCASP released the names of the delegates to the press. From the outset Shostakovich felt uncomfortable with the idea of going to a place where those of his symphonies were being performed that had been blacklisted in his own country. As he confided to his friend Isaak Glikman, he feared to be subjected to "an unceremonious onslaught by sensation-seeking American journalists and by ignorant critics who would be neither tactful enough nor knowledgeable enough to appreciate the delicate position of an artist precluded from speaking the truth." Isaak Glikman, *Story of a Friendship: The Letters of Dmitry Shostakovich to Isaak Glikman, 1941–1975*, trans. Anthony Phillips (London: Faber and Faber, 2001), 35–6. In a letter dated March 7, Shostakovich informed the Party's Agitprop Section of the great strains that the trip would put on him given his poor health condition. As no one dared to burn their fingers in the matter, Shostakovich's message was passed on to the highest authority, Stalin. In a tactic move for which he was renowned, the Soviet leader phoned Shostakovich at home in the morning of March 16, offering him all the medical assistance he needed and asking him to join the delegation to the New York conference. When Shostakovich explained the difficulty he anticipated in answering questions about the Party's recent policy line on modernist music, the dictator played the innocent, disclaiming any knowledge of a ban on the music of the composer and his colleagues, and promised to "take care of that problem." Yuri Abramovich Levitin, "The Year 1948," in Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered*, second edition (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 244–6. On the very same day, Stalin sent out a directive that rapped the State Committee for Repertoire (Glavrepertkom) over the knuckles for publishing an "illegal" ban and ordered it to be lifted. Both the blacklist and Stalin's directive have been reproduced in facsimile in *Sovetskaya Muzyka* 4 (1991): 17.

transfer to the heart of the capitalist world, fearing the media spectacle he anticipated to be created around him upon his arrival.⁶

And a spectacle it was—the climax of weeks of heated public debate about the Conference’s intentions and the permissibility of letting it happen. Its organizing committee, chaired by the Harvard astronomer Harlow Shapley, had expended considerable effort to assure the public that the event was intended to be nothing more than a nonpartisan gathering of artists, writers, scientists, and professionals seeking to avert a Third World War,⁷ but to no avail. Hours before the first delegates strode along the red carpet of the luxurious Waldorf-Astoria Hotel for a sumptuous opening banquet, several hundreds of war veterans, Eastern European émigrés, Russian exiles, labor union members, and devout Christians praying for the souls of the banqueters defied the drizzling rain to picket the Waldorf’s Art Deco entrance.⁸ Armed with banners, patriotic songs, or the words of Divine Scripture, this motley coalition of protesters supported the State Department and the House Committee on Un-American Activities in their denunciation of this glittering manifestation as part of a calculated Soviet campaign to discredit America’s foreign policy in its own backyard, and reproached its roughly one thousand delegates and non-attending sponsors, including luminaries such as Albert Einstein, Thomas Mann, Leonard Bernstein, Charlie Chaplin, Marlon Brando, Aaron Copland, Arthur Miller, and Paul Robeson, for having enabled, out of ignorance or not, the “wolves in sheep’s clothing” (i.e., official and/or unofficial representatives of communist-style socialism) to carry out their devious scheme in the world’s “last citadel of freedom.”⁹

⁶ Marguerite Higgins, “Shostakovich Gets ‘Headache’ Meeting Press,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 23, 1949, 6. In his travel journal (or a journal kept in his name), Shostakovich repeatedly expressed his abhorrence at the “wild herd” of American reporters and photographers who awaited him everywhere he went: “These people were pests of the worst kind, who stopped at nothing to get a few words for their newspapers...[W]e were literally handed over to the mercy of these gangsters of journalism.” “Travel Journal” [Putevye zametki], *Sovetskaya Muzika* 6/5 (1949): 15–17. A typescript translation of this article can be found in the Virgil Thomson Papers, 29-57-6 or the Aaron Copland Collection, 222-25.

⁷ “Rally No Red Front, Shapley States,” *The Harvard Crimson*, March 24, 1949, 1.

⁸ “Uncle Joe’s Poor Relatives to Get Taste of Capitalism,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 25, 1949, 3; “Reds to Stuff \$10 a Plate Culture Down Their Throats,” *New York World-Telegram*, March 25, 1949, 1; “Massed Pickets Besiege Waldorf to Protest ‘Cultural’ Conference,” *The New York Sun*, March 25, 1949, 1, 6; “9,000 Demonstrators Condemn Russia and ‘Peace’ Conference,” *New York Daily Mirror*, March 26, 1949, 2; “‘Peace’ Rally Opens at Waldorf,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 26, 1949, 1, 6.

⁹ John S. Wood, Chairman of the House of Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), “The Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace,” remarks in the House of Representatives, March 23, 1949, *Congressional Record: Appendix* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1949), A1751-3. Other sponsors from the field of music included George Antheil, Marc Blitzstein, Lukas Foss, Morton Gould, Roy Harris, Alan Lomax, Artur Schnabel, and Nicolas Slonimsky.

Resistance to the convention did not only come from outside the Waldorf. Inside the hotel, encamped in one of its fancy bridal suites on the tenth floor, an ad hoc committee named Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF) worked incessantly to expose the Conference as a propaganda vehicle for the Soviet position. Apart from urging non-Communist participants and sponsors to dissociate themselves from the Conference, issuing press releases that exposed others for being “the Communist Party members or inveterate fellow travelers that they are,” lining up an international group of sponsors for themselves (including, among others, Benedetto Croce, T. S. Eliot, George Orwell, André Malraux, Bertrand Russell, and Igor Stravinsky), and organizing a counter-rally at the Freedom House a few blocks from the Conference venue, the AIF volunteers intervened at panel sessions with comments that aimed to reveal the Kremlin’s hypocrisy in the pacifist rhetoric by which it tried to win over the world.¹⁰ Thus, at one moment, after a lengthy testimony to the peaceful intentions of his nation had been delivered in his name, Shostakovich found himself confronted with the question he had feared: Did he personally agree with his leaders that the music of such “decadent bourgeois formalists” and “lackeys of imperialism” like Hindemith, Schoenberg, and Stravinsky should be banned from the Soviet stage? Did he think that this kind of wholesale attack on Western modernist music was conducive to reach the stated aims of the Conference, i.e., world peace and cultural exchange? A shock went through the Russians on the dais (“Provokatsiya!,” one of them audibly muttered) and the delegation’s interpreter (whose task obviously went beyond merely interpreting) whispered Shostakovich in the ear. Then the visibly disconcerted composer, who in the previous days had combed Manhattan’s music shops in search of the newest recordings of Stravinsky’s works, walked to the microphone and replied, in docile fashion, in the affirmative. He would never forgive his inquisitor, Nicolas Nabokov.¹¹

¹⁰ AIF press release, “Communist Sponsorship of Waldorf Meeting Unmasked,” March 23, 1949, Records of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), 14-18; George S. Counts, AIF Co-Chairman, “Kulturfest at the Waldorf: Soapbox for Red Propaganda,” *The New Leader*, March 19, 1949, 1.

¹¹ Willard Edwards, “Red Secret Police in U.S.,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 24, 1949, 1; Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 235–8; Wilson, *Shostakovich*, 272–4. Regarding this cross-examination scene performed by “that swine Nabokov,” the former GDR conductor Kurt Sanderling, an intimate of Shostakovich, remembered that Shostakovich had described this as “the worst moment of his life.” Sanderling in an interview with Wendy Lesser, *Music for Silenced Voices: Shostakovich and his Fifteen Quartets* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2011), 300. As Nabokov related to a State Department official a few days after this episode, he posed his questions when it turned out that Aaron Copland, third speaker in the panel, went—to Nabokov’s opinion—not far enough in his criticism of Soviet music as he did not want to embarrass Shostakovich. The Soviet composer answered Nabokov saying “he fully associated himself with the critics of Hindemith and Stravinsky as expressed in the Soviet Union and that good works of the [W]est find their place in the Soviet repertoire.” When Nabokov asked him if he had not forgotten to include Schoenberg in the condemnation,

The first section of this chapter introduces the New York Intellectuals, a group of academics, writers, critics, and artists who shared a past in radical politics but after World War II came to support the efforts of the Truman administration to “contain” Communism and to expose the Kremlin’s hand in the international peace movement. The second section argues that, although Communist Parties did indeed take advantage of existing leftist but non-Communist civil associations by way of fronting tactics, there is no reason to believe that the main organizers of the Waldorf Conference were not steered by their own personal concerns and intentions. Indeed, Olin Downes, the *New York Times* music critic and the NCASP’s most active member from the field of music, insisted on his independence. The third section presents Downes’s struggle to defy allegations that questioned his political allegiances, a struggle he shared with many others who did not wish to choose sides for either Truman or Stalin as Cold War tensions increased in the late 1940s. The fourth section discusses the Waldorf Conference’s Fine Arts Panel (including presentations by Downes, Copland, and Shostakovich), which is exemplary of the impasse which conceptions of music’s social and/or political function had reached. The fifth section concentrates on what I call the ‘victimization’ of Shostakovich by, among others, Nabokov. By representing the Soviet composer as a captive of his regime, Nabokov turned Shostakovich into a “living” example of what “totalitarianism” meant to humankind. The last section concludes that by 1949, it had become virtually impossible to hold a center position in what had become an intensely polarized world.

Averting World War III: Nabokov and the New York Intellectuals

After one and a half years of service with the US Military Government in Germany and a stint at the Voice of America, Nabokov had quit public service, vowing never to return, and resumed a part-time teaching appointment at the Peabody Conservatory in Baltimore which he had held prior to his conscription. He remained committed, though, to exposing the Soviet regime as the surviving half of what he called twentieth century’s “double-headed evil” by demonstrating how much musical life under “Messrs. Zhdanov and Stalin” resembled that under Goebbels and Hitler: seemingly rich on the surface, but in reality “nothing but a façade [concealing] a great despair.”¹² In New York, the city of his residence, he

Shostakovich agreed that he had indeed forgotten to include Schoenberg. D. M. Davis, report on the Waldorf Conference, 53–5, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Records of the Special Assistant to the Secretary for Intelligence, Office of Libraries and Intelligence-Acquisition, Division of Acquisition and Distribution, A1 1236, 9-CSCWP.

¹² Nabokov, *Bagazh*, 213, 232, and “Music under Dictatorship,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 169/1 (1942): 99.

found congenial minds in a group of socially engaged cultural critics—later to be designated as the New York Intellectuals—who derived their identity largely from their experiences of the poverty-stricken 1930s. Back then, they found in Marxism both a diagnosis and remedy of the Depression as well as a call to assume the role of an intellectual vanguard dedicated to a radical transformation of the society and academy that had marginalized them—or their colleagues with whom they sympathized—for their Jewish, immigrant and/or working-class backgrounds. Accordingly, many of them supported, if not actually joined, the rapidly growing American Communist Party (CPUSA). However, as the decade unfolded and Stalin’s socialist dreamworld revealed itself as a nightmare with purges, show trials, and countless casualties of the ruthless collectivization and industrial overhaul campaigns, they grew increasingly disenchanted with the Soviet experiment, until by 1937 they abandoned communism altogether.¹³

Since that decisive moment, the dissidents invested much of their time and energy in trying to open the eyes of those who still persisted in their faith in the Soviet promise by confronting them with “Stalinist” violations of international agreements and human rights, including the right to artistic and intellectual freedom. No agreement existed among them on what should replace their earlier convictions, though. Some resorted for a while to Trotskyism or anarchism, but in the long run, these currents, too, proved unsatisfying. In the immediate aftermath of World War II, several of them searched for alternative forms of radicalism, initiating projects aimed at uniting American and European socialists, ex-communists, and trade unionists in an anti-statist community that would demonstrate the moral superiority of liberal over communist-style socialism by example rather than by force. However, as Moscow and Washington headed on a collision course in the late 1940s, the support for this non-interventionist strategy was drowned out by those who aligned themselves with the Truman administration’s view that all means were permitted to arrest Stalin’s expansionary drift, including military mobilization and nuclear deterrence.

This disagreement on how to respond to America’s shifting rapport with the Soviet Union affected, among others, the Europe-America Groups

¹³ For book-length studies of the New York Intellectuals, see, for instance, Alexander Bloom, *Prodigal Sons: The New York Intellectuals and Their World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986); Terry A. Cooney, *The Rise of the New York Intellectuals: Partisan Review and Its Circle* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1986); Alan Wald, *The New York Intellectuals: The Rise and Decline of the Anti-Stalinist Left from the 1930s to the 1980s* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987); Neil Jumonville, *Critical Crossings: The New York Intellectuals in Postwar America* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1991); Hugh Wilford, *The New York Intellectuals: From Vanguard to Institution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Harvey M. Teres, *Renewing the Left: Politics, Imagination, and the New York Intellectuals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

(EAG), one of the first postwar attempts at developing a practical alternative to Marxist politics. Conceived as early as the summer of 1945 (but only reaching concrete shape three years later) by the New York Intellectuals Dwight Macdonald and Mary McCarthy, and an exile activist writer from fascist Italy, Nicola Chiaromonte, EAG aimed to provide some “center of solidarity” with European social democrats who found themselves excluded from, and demoralized by, “the great power blocs” that had come to divide the world.¹⁴ Through the extension of material and moral support to impoverished intellectuals across the Atlantic, Macdonald, McCarthy, and Chiaromonte hoped to restore what their French ally, the writer Albert Camus, called an international *civilisation du dialogue*, i.e., a decentralized world comprised of small libertarian “communities of thought” committed to sociability, tolerance, solidarity, and provisional, consensus-based truths—a world, for that matter, antithetical to a world ruled by totalizing ideologies, party orthodoxies, Kafkaesque institutions, and statist realpolitik.¹⁵

However, if the EAG initiators conceived their venture more as a charity project, ideally auxiliary to the shaping of an alternative “force on the democratic left whose absence is so acutely felt everywhere,” a faction of its membership, spearheaded by Sidney Hook, a philosopher from New York University who had been one of the first Marxists to turn into an outspoken anti-Stalinist, held such forays into outreach as too softhearted to address the political reality of the time, and intended to turn the EAG into a weapon with which to fight Stalinism. Thus, when it was proposed that Nabokov and others lecture on the Soviet cultural purge at the Rand School of Social Science for the purpose of filling the EAG treasury, one exponent of the hardliner faction suggested to back up words with actions by picketing the Soviet Embassy in protest at Stalinist infringements of cultural freedom. For those siding with Macdonald and McCarthy, such proposals were too much attuned with a ubiquitous “get-Russia-at-all-costs attitude” from which they wished to distance themselves.¹⁶ Indicative of the conflicting opinions and priorities which increasingly divided the group, it came as no surprise that

¹⁴ EAG manifesto, undated, probably March 1948, Macdonald Papers, 108-516; “Ubi Libertas,” *New York Times*, April 18, 1948, BR8; Macdonald, “Europe-America Groups,” *Politics* (Summer 1948): 204-5.

¹⁵ Albert Camus, “La crise de l’homme,” lecture delivered at Columbia University, New York City, March 28, 1946. Published as “The Human Crisis,” *Twice a Year: A Semi-Annual Journal of Literature, the Arts, and Civil Liberties* 14-15 (1946-47): 19-33; Dwight Macdonald, “Prospects for Europe-America Groups,” undated, Macdonald Papers, 108-516.

¹⁶ The suggestion was made by Philip Rahv, one of the editors of the main New York Intellectuals forum, the *Partisan Review*. Minutes EAG meeting, April 4, 1948, Macdonald Papers, 108-516; Macdonald to McCarthy, July 30, 1948, Macdonald Papers, 31-779; Chiaromonte to Macdonald, September 3, 1948 and October 15, 1948, Macdonald Papers, 10-241; McCarthy to Chiaromonte, October 6, 1948, Chiaromonte Papers, 2-52; Macdonald to Chiaromonte, December 10, 1948, Chiaromonte Papers, 2-53.

the EAG, after little more over a year of inactivity, dissolved.¹⁷

The global drama that was unfolding at the time of EAG's disbanding was too urgent to be left without an answer from the independent left, Nabokov must have thought when he decided to unite EAG's factions in an alternative organization with a more clear-cut agenda, the Friends of Russian Freedom (FRF). In the face of the "continuous war of nerves, propaganda, espionage, coercion and purge [that] the Soviet government ha[d] been waging against its own people and others subject to its total dictatorship," FRF saw it as their responsibility to provide a refuge for those who had managed to escape from Stalin's clutch. It particularly contested prejudices, widely shared among Americans, which held Russians collectively responsible for Stalin's crimes because of their presumed congenital xenophobia and predilection for authoritarian forms of government. Rather than as accomplices of "Stalinism," the FRF argued, most citizens living in Soviet Russia and its satellite states were to be considered as its victims, and as such, as "potential allies in all our efforts [to] avert the danger of a Third World War." Concretely, it proposed to encourage social organizations and universities to assist exiled dissidents in finding their way to provide the world with the sober facts about life behind the Iron Curtain.¹⁸

The FRF first met in early March 1949 to plot its strategy to realize a "world free from the totalitarian government which now enslaves the peoples of Russia."¹⁹ As could be expected, the line of fracture that had been cutting through EAG soon came to the surface again. Suggestions to explicitly mention in the foundation's declaration of intentions that the FRF was to be independent from governmental agencies and opposed to a preventative war with the Soviet Union—points unattributed in the minutes of the meeting but clearly brought in by the Macdonald/McCarthy faction—were outvoted by those who did not find themselves in disagreement with the Truman administration's analysis of the world situation and who held

¹⁷ For more on the Europe-America Groups, see Wilford, *The New York Intellectuals*, 171–8; Gregory D. Sumner, *Dwight Macdonald and the Politics Circle* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996), 203–9; Carol Gelderman, *Mary McCarthy: A Life* (London: Sidgwick & Jackson, 1989), 139–142; Carol Brightman, *Writing Dangerously: Mary McCarthy and Her World* (New York: Clarkson Potter, 1992), 305–11, 319–22.

¹⁸ "Program of the Friends of Russian Freedom," 1949, Macdonald Papers, 17–428. Around the time of the FRF's foundation, Nabokov wrote a paper aimed at falsifying stubborn "Russian Soul" fallacies prevailing in the West that construe the Russian people as being intrinsically "inscrutable and irrational," indeed "so perverse in terms of Western liberal traditions...that [they] must be treated with the highest degree of caution." Throughout their history, Nabokov argued, the Russian people had just as much been devoted to the ideals of justice, liberty, and human progress, up till the moment that the Bolshevik minority violently silenced their "freedom-loving instincts." "Misconceptions about the Russian People," March 11, 1949 (incomplete), Merlyn S. Pitzele Papers, 60–10.

¹⁹ Nabokov to Louis Fischer, February 18, 1949, Louis Fischer Papers, 8–19.

that “a war against Russia might be regarded by many people as a war of liberation.”²⁰ As the second order of business, Hook, the FRF’s appointed chairman *pro tempore*, reported on the peace conference for which a call had gone out. Struck by several suspect omissions in the Conference’s provisional list of speakers, he had requested of the Program Committee an opportunity to read a paper on the irreconcilability of science and ideology. Although the Program Committee initially granted his request, Hook soon thereafter received a rejection from the Organization Committee, which to him was indicative of a hidden hand.²¹

Indignant to the core, Hook subsequently persuaded the FRF members to adopt a motion to form a committee to expose and counteract in what in his eyes was to be a “grandiose fraud” perpetrated on the American public. But here, too, members of the meeting came to lock horns over how to orchestrate this protest. Hook proposed to resuscitate the Committee for Cultural Freedom, a body he had brought into existence ten years earlier, in the months before Hitler invaded Poland, in an effort to urge US citizens to resist totalitarian repression, regardless of whether it came from the right or the left.²² In Mary McCarthy’s recollections of the operation, her suggestion to infiltrate the Conference by simply registering as a delegate was brushed aside by Hook and consorts as “ridiculous” and revealing her lack of insight into the workings of communism. Was she really so naïve to think that the Stalinists would welcome any anti-Stalinist to their conference after they had denied Hook a place on the program?²³

The “Stalinists” actually did—McCarthy, Macdonald, and Nabokov did not experience any trouble in registering as attendees. Annoyed that McCarthy’s faction would get to the Conference meetings and they would not, Hook’s faction chose to beard the lion in his den, entrenching its headquarters in room 1042 of the Waldorf where it furnished an “agitprop apparatus” that soon operated “as efficiently as any communist governmental outfit.” On the eve of the Conference, Hook’s infantry, which

²⁰ Minutes of the FRF foundational meeting, March 4, 1949, Macdonald Papers, 17-428.

²¹ Hook’s request to the Program Committee, dated February 25, 1949, is included in the Shapley Papers, 10c-Important letters on Peace Conference.

²² Hook, *Out of Step*, 382–4. For the manifesto of the Committee of Cultural Freedom, see *The Nation*, May 27, 1939, 626.

²³ McCarthy to Nabokov, November 18, 1976. McCarthy wrote this letter to correct Nabokov’s suggestion, made in his memoirs, that the AIF intervention had been her initiative (*Bagázh*, 232–3). In his reply, Nabokov pointed out to McCarthy that he had not ascribed to her any more initiative than bringing the call for the Conference to his and his then wife’s (Patricia Blake) attention. The latter would subsequently have raised the question whether “we shouldn’t do something about it.” From then on the formation of the ad hoc committee would have been “a matter that was rather rapidly taken over by S. Hook and his cohort of friends.” Nabokov to McCarthy, December 20, 1976, McCarthy Papers, 214-12.

had been officially baptized as the Americans for Intellectual Freedom committee, got in touch with McCarthy, probably through Nabokov who in the meantime had joined the Trojan horse operation, and summoned her and her friends to the AIF headquarters. There, the holders of the three-dollar admission tickets received instructions how to disrupt the peace convention. First, they were to write speeches with which they could disrupt the question rounds of the panel sessions. Second, as they surely would not be permitted to speak even though they had been registered, McCarthy and partners were to bring ropes and umbrellas: the former to tie themselves to their chairs, the latter to bang on the floor for attention. Third, in the likely event they would be tossed out of the meeting with chair and all, they were to give their mimeographed speeches to the press. Although McCarthy thought this plan to be more than exaggerated, she and her companions finally consented, and the next day they arrived at the Conference “with umbrellas and a truculent state of mind.”²⁴

As humorous as Hook’s scenarios and precautions might seem in hindsight, the more so because none of them turned out to be necessary (AIF members could, just like any other attendant, apply for a three-minute response to a panel after the floor was opened to the audience), they were born out of a deep frustration with what he perceived to be the “false pretenses” under which the Waldorf Conference’s Organizing Committee was soliciting support from the US intelligentsia, i.e., by posing as a nonpartisan meeting while failing to include in its program a single person openly critical of Soviet foreign policy and the CPUSA line. What provoked Hook most, however, was that the Conference call unilaterally critiqued Truman’s foreign policy for endangering world peace at a time when Stalin had encapsulated much of Central and Eastern Europe in his sphere of influence, pressured his former allies into abandoning their sectors of Berlin by starving its population, and “destroyed thousands of innocent men and women by exile, imprisonment in concentration camps, and execution, for

²⁴ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 234; Gelderman, *Mary McCarthy*, 148–50; Brightman, *Writing Dangerously*, 322–5. Nabokov’s and McCarthy’s description of the origins and nature of the AIF offended Hook. According to him, the AIF initiative did not emanate from Nabokov’s apartment, and no one would have dictated members what to do, nor had anyone proposed “violent disruption” instead of “civilized discourse.” Hook, *Out of Step*, 396. In a letter to historian John P. Rossi, Hook claimed that “it was I who organized the Committee AIF in opposition to the Communist controlled Waldorf Astoria peace meeting.” To historian William L. O’Neill, he explained that at this time, McCarthy had not challenged his leadership of the AIF and that no one had been “under orders.” Hook to Rossi, March 1, 1982, Hook Papers, 112-5; Hook to O’Neill, February 6, 1989, Hook Papers, 23-24. In Dwight Macdonald’s reminiscences of the AIF operation, Hook and “the Hookites” recommended precisely the opposite of what McCarthy and Nabokov recalled them recommending: “They said that this was not a good idea at all [to disrupt the panel sessions]; we would make fools of ourselves. We would also give the Stalinists a talking point.” Diana Trilling, “An Interview with Dwight Macdonald,” *Partisan Review* 51 (1984-85): 809–10.

heresies in thought and style.” Adamant in his belief that such offenses against individual rights and freedom could under no conditions be condoned, Hook saw it his mission to confront those who supported the Conference with their blind spot for the horrors of Stalin’s regime.²⁵

Warring about Peace: The Politicization of Postwar Pacifism

The Conference call’s one-sided critique of US policies, as well as the assembly’s line-up of speakers and sponsors, reminded the skeptics of the World Congress of Intellectuals for Peace, convened August 25-28, 1948, in the previous year in Wroclaw, Poland, at which the Soviet delegation had stunned most of the international attendees with blistering attacks on American culture and politics.²⁶ In a keynote address that three times exceeded the given twenty-minute time limit, Alexander Fadeyev, novelist and, as Secretary of the Union of Soviet Writers, responsible for the purges of Russia’s literary ranks, sang the praises of his country and the Red Army while demeaning the United States as the world’s newest fascist dictatorship in which “typewriting jackals” and “fountain pen scribbling hyenas” (i.e., writers and intellectuals critical of the Soviet Union) slavishly supported their government’s agenda of “warmongering and imperialism” under penalty of ten years prison if they dared to dissent from it.²⁷ Much to the dismay of several Western delegates who had been hopeful that the Congress might provide a neutral basis for dialogue in a world marked by dissension, various lectures that followed Fadeyev’s diatribe espoused the same formula of

²⁵ Hook, *Out of Step*, 385; speech delivered at the AIF counter-rally, March 26, 1949, Hook Papers, 112-6.

²⁶ Wroclaw/Breslau was the largest city within the former German territories east of the Oder-Neisse line (the *Ostgebiete*) that, in accordance with the Allied agreements made at the Teheran and Yalta conferences, had been assigned to the Soviet zone of influence on the condition that democratic elections, involving representatives of the Polish government in British exile, would be held in Poland. Although displeased when Stalin failed to live up to these conditions, the Western allies consented at the Potsdam Conference to keep the *Ostgebiete* under Polish administration in exchange for concessions on the part of the Soviets and on the understanding that the intricate negotiations about the German-Polish border—and, consequently, Stalin’s intention to expel the remaining Germans living in the *Ostgebiete*—would be finalized at a conclusive peace conference. When the wartime alliance shaded into the Cold War and a final peace settlement failed to materialize, Warsaw and Moscow unilaterally proclaimed the Oder-Neisse line as the western border of Poland, which was confirmed by East Germany in 1950, accepted by West Germany in 1970, and recognized by the newly reunified Germany and the Western allies in 1990. “Proposal by the United States Delegation [to the Potsdam Conference],” July 29, 1945, in *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS), 1945: Diplomatic Papers—the Conference of Berlin (the Potsdam Conference)*, vol. 2, 1150. On the distressing consequences of this decision for Germans living in the *Ostgebiete*, see Gregor Thum, *Uprooted: How Breslau Became Wroclaw during the Century of Expulsions* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).

²⁷ Fadeyev, “Science and Culture in the Struggle for Peace, Progress and Democracy,” *Soviet Literature* (November 1948): 142–52. For a detailed discussion of the Wroclaw Congress, see Hartmann and Eggeling, *Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR*, 63–79.

extolling the Soviet Union while insulting all things Western. In its final resolution, only slightly softened to conciliate the worst criticism, the Congress proclaimed that the world's future was being under threat by "a handful of self-interested men in America and Europe" prompted by the desire for profits and guided by "the ideas of racial superiority and denial of progress inherited from Nazism."²⁸

Clearly, the stated objective of easing international tensions for which the roughly five hundred delegates from forty-six countries—including many of Europe's (former) colonies—had been convoked was wasted on the Soviet delegation, their superiors, and, as it soon appeared, also on the hawkish faction of the Polish Workers' Party. (In fact, the latter soon put the Congress's initiator and secretary-general, Jerzy Borejsza, into disgrace for having advocated a "gentle revolution" in the field of the arts, i.e., a revolution independent from Zhdanov's line and by no means foreclosing dialogue with the West.²⁹) From their perspective, the world had no use for neither the inane declarations cast in "abstract pacifist phraseology" nor the "channels of colorless cosmopolitanism" (i.e., "compulsory imported US books, magazines, newspapers, films and so on [which] in no way can be called 'culture'") through which "the ruling imperialist clique [tried to] camouflage its fantastic schemes for world domination." Instead, it needed to be made known who the enemies were, and who the friends of peace, culture, and national sovereignty. In the Stalinist reading of events, it had been the actions of the capitalist bloc that had compelled the Soviet Union and its allies to resume their fight against their prewar demons. Living up to Stalin's saying that "culture, too, is a weapon, the effectiveness of which depends on who holds it and against whom it is directed," the Cominform triumphantly reported, "the world's outstanding cultural figures declared at Wrocław that they wished to place this weapon in the hands of the people and at the service of the people" in their struggle for political and cultural independence from the "Wall Street war instigators and their lackeys and

²⁸ "Manifesto of the Congress," *Soviet Literature* 11 (November 1948): 140–1. One of the Western delegates who refused to sign this manifesto and left the Congress before it had ended was Julian Huxley, the UNESCO secretary-general who on invitation of the organizing committee participated in the Congress's presidium (as a private person). Julian Huxley, *Memories II* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1973), 62–5.

²⁹ Marci Shore, *Caviar and Ashes: A Warsaw Generation's Life and Death in Marxism, 1918–1968* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2006), 267–73. For an account of the Congress from the perspective of Borejsza's colleague and co-organizer Jakub Berman, see Teresa Toranska, *Oni: Stalin's Polish Puppets*, trans. Agnieszka Kolakowska (London: Collins, 1987), 289–91. In the early 1980s, one anti-Stalinist attendant of the Congress ran into Borejsza's son, who told him that "the conference, as an 'opening to the West', had been thoroughly prepared—but how was his father to know that the Iron Curtain would suddenly descend on his show, [i.e.,] that the line would be changed yet again?" François Bondy, "European Diary: Remembering Wrocław," *Encounter* 63/6 (1984): 49.

accomplices in Europe, Africa and Asia.”³⁰

What was to be a demonstration of Polish prestige turned out to be hijacked for what in circles suspicious of Communism came to be referred to as the Kremlin’s “peace offensive,” a comprehensive campaign aimed at mobilizing support from non-Communist leftist factions in the world by presenting the Soviet Union as the paragon of peace and freedom.³¹ A tactic familiar from earlier defensive phases in Soviet policy, Kremlin officials re-employed it occasionally after the surrender of the Nazis in order to incite protest against what they saw as offensive moves by their former allies. By mid-1948, when the prospect of further territorial gains in Europe had faded, the United States still monopolized atomic power, Zhdanov’s militant calls upon European Communist Parties to usurp their governments had failed, and Western governments were about to organize themselves into a defense alliance (the North Atlantic Treaty Organization), the Soviet Politburo raised the tactic to the level of official policy. Stirring up discord over the issue of peace was the only option left for Stalin’s regime to debilitate the position of its adversaries and advance to a state of global preponderance.

In practice, this meant that the Kremlin readdressed leftist but non-Communist contingents of capitalist societies that had been neglected by Zhdanov (who had died, incidentally, on the last day of August 1948 under suspicious circumstances). Since these contingents were already united in their protest against the US monopoly on atomic power, the arms race, racial segregation, colonialism, and red-baiting, Soviet strategists only needed to make this pool of civil discontent work for their own propaganda offensive against the “ruling cliques” in London, Paris, and Washington. In the United States the protest was carried by the Progressive Party (also known as the Third Party), an amalgamation of leftist associations which during the 1948 presidential elections campaigned for Henry A. Wallace, Truman’s former Secretary of Commerce who got dismissed after publicly pleading for a collaborative relationship with the Soviet Union.³² When Wallace launched his campaign with an open letter to Stalin proposing concrete terms for

³⁰ Emilio Sereni, “Congress in Wroclaw: Battle for Peace and Culture,” *For a Lasting Peace, For a People’s Democracy!* [Cominform bulletin], September 15, 1948, 2.

³¹ Edward S. Crocker, Chargé in Poland, to the Secretary of State, August 31, 1948, in *FRUS, 1948*, vol. 4, 912–5; Gustav Hilger, CIA consultant on Soviet foreign policy, memorandum “Observations on the Communist ‘Peace Offensive,’” January 21, 1949, in *CIA Cold War Records: The CIA under Harry Truman*, ed. Michael Warner (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 1994), 243–5; Draft paper prepared by the Department of State, “The Soviet ‘Peace’ Offensive,” December 9, 1949, in *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 5, 839–49.

³² For an analysis of postwar pacifism in the United States, including Communist, Socialist, and non-aligned pacifist groups, see Robbie Lieberman, *The Strangest Dream: Communism, Anticommunism, and the U.S. Peace Movement, 1945–1963* (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2000).

ending the Cold War, including the acknowledgement of both Washington's and Moscow's equal complicity in waging it, the Soviet leader confirmed his willingness to cooperate, even though the neutralist nature of these terms must have been unacceptable to him.³³ By thus posing as the reasonable and truly bona fide partner of those who strived for a détente, and suggesting that the responsibility for peace rested with the governments of capitalist countries alone, the Soviet regime calculated to regain the moral leverage it had lost as a result of, for instance, the Berlin Blockade. In the months ahead, the Communist propaganda machinery would run overtime to ensure that not a single soul on the planet would fail to see the Kremlin's dedication to peace in a world supposedly brought to the brink of a third global war by the NATO alliance.³⁴ In addition, Communist Parties managed to maneuver themselves into a majority position in many (but not all) existing peace movements as a first stage in a process meant to lead towards the formation of a Soviet-controlled international mass movement, the Partisans of Peace. The strategy paid off: as its greatest feat, the Kremlin managed to collect via this movement millions of signatures in protest of atomic warfare from individuals in non-Communist countries (the 1950 Stockholm Peace Petition).

No wonder, then, that those distrustful of the conciliatory overtures to and from the Soviet Union apprehended that the Waldorf Conference would turn out to be “an equally subversive anti-American hoax [as the Wrocław Congress,] crudely designed to use culture and science as a cover-up shield for poisonous psychological-bacteriological warfare against [the United States],” or, in another inventive wording, the umpteenth “let's-all-love-Russia clambake” certain to turn into an “orgy of scolding in the interest of world Communism.”³⁵ Piles of so-called “fact-finding” reports on the perceived “red” infiltration of America's political infrastructure “exposed” the National Council of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions (NCASP)—the organization under whose auspices the peace assembly was to be convened—as a Communist front organization, and its representatives Harlow Shapley, Jo Davidson, Howard Fast, and Albert E. Kahn as

³³ “Text of Wallace Letter to Stalin Calling for Peace Program,” *New York Times*, May 12, 1948, 14; “Text of Stalin's Reply,” *New York Times*, May 18, 1948, 4.

³⁴ For a thorough analysis of the Soviet peace offensive, see Marshall D. Shulman, *Stalin's Foreign Policy Reappraised* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 51–103.

³⁵ [Karl Baarslag], National Americanism Commission, American Legion, “Report on the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace,” May 1949, 3–4, Records of the *National Republic*, 268–3, or FBI file NCASP, sec. 9; Lyle C. Wilson, “Jo Davidson, Dr. Shapley Still Doing a Job for Uncle Joe,” *The Pittsburgh Press*, March 17, 1949, 10; “U.S. Cominform to Huddle in Luxury,” *Eugene Register-Guard* [Eugene, Oregon], March 15, 1949, 10.

members of the US delegation to the Wroclaw Congress.³⁶ Particularly incriminating was the HUAC testimony of Louis Budenz, a CPUSA defector who made it his life's mission to divulge Communist front tactics to US governmental agencies, traced the origins of the NCASP back to the Independent Voters' Committee of the Arts and Sciences for Roosevelt, a front created at the time of the 1944 presidential election by the cultural division of the *Daily Worker*, the CPUSA organ of which Budenz was managing editor.³⁷ After the elections the Committee, chaired by the sculptor Jo Davidson and managed by Hannah Dorner, a New York theatrical agent, went on as the Independent Citizens' Committee of the Arts, Sciences, and Professions (ICCASP), which by 1946 had acquired a nation-wide constituency of celebrities including Frank Sinatra, Paul Robeson, Rudolph Ganz, Bette Davis, Gene Kelly, Leonard Bernstein, Arthur Rubinstein, Duke Ellington and Artie Shaw. Although for anti-Stalinists there was no doubt that "[t]he Commies are boring in [the ICCASP] like weevils in a biscuit," Davidson was convinced that the Committee's CPUSA members "have no more to do with its course than fleas do with a dog's."³⁸ Late 1946, the ICCASP merged with another influential leftist organization, the National Citizens Political Action Committee, into the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA) with a view to creating a more influential platform for those who did not wish to adhere to either the Democratic or Republican Party. When in the run-up to the 1948 presidential election most chapters of the PCA merged into the Progressive Party in order to sponsor the campaign of Henry Wallace, the PCA's Arts, Sciences, and Professions division continued as an independent cultural-political organization, the NCASP.

Given the deep involvement of Shapley, Davidson, Fast, and Kahn in the aforementioned associations, and given the manifesto they subscribed to at

³⁶ "Many Communists Are Leaders in New Congress of Intellectuals," *Counterattack: Facts to Combat Communism*, March 18, 1949. See also the FBI reports on the Progressive Party, January 18, 1949 (Field Office New York) and the NCASP, March 22, 1949 (Field Office Boston), FBI file NCASP, sec. 2 and 5 respectively.

³⁷ HUAC, "Investigation of Un-American Propaganda Activities in the United States: Louis F. Budenz," Hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities, House of Representatives, Seventy-Ninth Congress, Second Session, November 22, 1946 (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1946), esp. 3, 10, 38-9, 46-7; Budenz, *Men Without Faces: The Communist Conspiracy in the U.S.A.* (New York: Harper, 1950), 219-22 and *The Techniques of Communism* (Chicago: Regnery, 1954), 33-5.

³⁸ "Is the ICCASP a Communist Front?," *The New Leader* (January 26, 1946): 5. The *New Leader* based its suspicion on evidence from "a person" (probably Budenz) who had witnessed how at the New York State convention of the CPUSA, August 1945, the Cultural Commission of the *Daily Worker* had been praised for setting the ICCASP on the "right path" and turning it in "a great political weapon." Davidson reply to the insinuation is cited in "Political Notes: Glamor Pusses," *Time*, September 9, 1946, 23-5.

the close of the Wroclaw meeting—a manifesto that in barely concealed terms endorsed the Soviet position and called for the establishment of an International Liaison Committee of Intellectuals for Peace, a permanent body headquartered in Paris mandated to call meetings after the model of the Wroclaw Congress—it seemed all too obvious that a peace assembly under NCASP auspices would turn out as a rerun of the Polish affair.³⁹ Indeed, to my knowledge, not a single commentator seemed at the time to have questioned the Waldorf Conference’s presumed affiliation to the Soviet-dominated peace movement. Yet, upon closer reflection, the inference that this Liaison Committee masterminded the Waldorf convocation was unwarranted, if only because it would have been unthinkable that Yugoslavia, after having been expelled from the Cominform in June 1948 for refusing to sacrifice national interests in favor of Soviet hegemony in the Balkans, could share a stage with Soviet representatives had the Kremlin truly a hand in staging the New York meeting. (In Wroclaw, two months after the expulsion, the Yugoslavian delegation had been given an icy treatment by the Cominform members.) Also, had the Conference been an official part of the Soviet peace offensive, why then would the Politburo resolution from January 1949 about peace conferences have suggested primarily Paris, and secondarily Geneva, but not Manhattan, as the location of a world peace conference to be held in February-March 1949?⁴⁰ This event would develop into the World Congress of the Partisans for Peace, held in Paris, April 20–25, which was, in contrast to the Waldorf Conference, indeed plotted and largely funded by the Kremlin—via the aforementioned Liaison Committee—as part of a strategy to cement a united peace front involving “all honest people of the most varied social strata [resolved to] frustrate the criminal designs of the imperialists who are again dreaming of waxing rich on war and of destroying the Soviet Union and the People’s Democracies.”⁴¹ It was this manifestation alongside the Wroclaw Congress that Mikhail Suslov, head of the Central Committee’s Agitation and Propaganda Department, praised in his evaluation of the feats of the “partisans of peace” delivered at the third

³⁹ “Four From U.S. Named to Pro-Red Peace Group,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 30, 1948, 5; House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC), *Review of the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1949) and *The Communist “Peace” Offensive: A Campaign to Disarm and Defeat the United States* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1951), 12–5.

⁴⁰ Resolution Politburo, Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolshevik), “On the World Peace Conference” [O Vsemirnomy kongresse storonnikov mira], January 6, 1949, 154–5, Russian State Archive of Socio-Political History (RGASPI), fond 17, 162-39, cited by Adibekov, *Das Kominform und Stalins Neuordnung Europas*, 200–3.

⁴¹ Editorial, *For a Lasting Peace, For a People’s Democracy!* [Cominform bulletin], April 15, 1949, 3.

Cominform meeting in Hungary's Mátra Mountains in November 1949.⁴² The New York conference was left unmentioned, simply because Moscow had nothing whatsoever to do with its organization.⁴³

Thus, despite those who suspected (and still suspect) the NCASP to have acted, directly or indirectly, upon Soviet orders, there seems to be no reason not to take the initiator of the Waldorf Conference, Harlow Shapley, on his word when he denied any link between his conference and those that had been held, or were being planned, elsewhere.⁴⁴ Indeed, it seems more plausible to assume that the Harvard astronomer, unintentionally, provided the Kremlin with an extra stage for its peace campaign for which it did not have to pay any effort except for sending out a delegation. Reversely, Shapley—naively—did not expect that the Soviet Union would send over such a high-profile delegation, which catapulted the Conference into the global limelight. In an attempt to convince one of his British colleagues to reconsider his declining of the invitation to come to New York, he expressed his belief that Fadeyev would not “mess things up the way he did

⁴² Suslov, “The Defense of Peace and the Struggle against the Warmongers,” report delivered at the Third Conference of the Cominform, November 16, 1949, in *The Cominform: Minutes of Three Conferences*, 676–708, esp. 696–7.

⁴³ If not explicitly, then probably implicitly relying on the dominant account by the New York Intellectuals, most references to the Conference still assume that the Kremlin or the Cominform had somehow been involved in its organization. For instance: S. A. Longstaff, “The New York Intellectuals and the Cultural Cold War: 1945–1950,” *New Politics* 2/2 (1989): 159; Peter Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy: The Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Struggle for the Mind of Postwar Europe* (New York: The Free Press, 1989), 5; Pierre Grémion, *Intelligence de l'anticommunisme: Le Congrès pour la liberté de la culture à Paris, 1950–1975* (Paris: Fayard, 1995), 19–20; Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive? Der Kongress für kulturelle Freiheit und die Deutschen* (Munich: Oldenbourg, 1998), 212; Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War: The CIA and the World of Arts and Letters* (New York: The New Press, 2000), 47; Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 70. To my knowledge, the only exceptions are John P. Rossi, “Farewell to Fellow Traveling: The Waldorf Peace Conference of March 1949,” *Continuity: A Journal of History* 10 (Spring 1985): 2–4; Robbie Lieberman, “Communism, Peace Activism, and Civil Liberties: From the Waldorf Conference to the Peekskill Riot,” *Journal of American Culture* 18/3 (1995): 60; Scott Lucas, *Freedom's War: The U.S. Crusade against the Soviet Union, 1945–1956* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1999), 94–6; and Terry Klefstad, “Shostakovich and the Peace Conference,” *Music & Politics* 6/2 (2012): 3–6. Not wishing to delve into the disagreement over the Conference's political provenance, Phillip Deery deems it sufficient “to say the weight of evidence leans towards Cominform sponsorship over domestic origins.” I have not come across a single piece of evidence that confirms Kremlin or Cominform sponsorship, and therefore emphatically draw the opposite conclusion from Deery. Deery, “Shostakovich, the Waldorf Conference and the Cold War,” *American Communist History* 11/2 (2012): 163n7.

⁴⁴ Shapley to Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, February 5, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10c.-Important Letters on Peace Conference. In fact, Howard Fast, CPUSA member and one of the American delegates in the International Liaison Committee, confirmed that the New York Conference was “not an outgrowth of Wrocław,” although “it stands to reason that the Polish conference of intellectuals could not have failed to impress artists and professionals with the role they themselves might play in the cause of peace.” Fast, “Cultural Forces Rally against the Warmakers,” *Political Affairs* [CPUSA magazine] (May 1949): 34.

in Poland.” To those who would look on the Conference as [a] “peace ‘offensive’, or some political trick,” he had one message: “[T]he hell with them!”⁴⁵

Nonetheless, at a time when the Cold War rivalry intensified, suspicion won over facts, even with academicians. Hook, for instance, knew that Shapley—in contrast to what was reported in the press at home—had turned down the invitation to serve on the Wrocław Congress’s Liaison Committee.⁴⁶ In fact, Shapley had not even attended the Congress due to another commitment, and was nominated for a post at the Liaison Committee *in absentia*. As much disturbed by the reports of the strident anti-Americanism and the paucity of dissenting views presented in Wrocław as most of the Western delegates, the Harvard astronomer was determined—as he stated to an FBI informant—“not to let the rabid Communists run off” with his Conference. At an early stage, Shapley considered to name the meeting the “Cultural and Scientific World Conference on Peace *and War*,” reasoning that “[n]othing would help so much as to get some pompous bozo to speak in favor of war.” In addition, he suggested the Planning Committee to give serious consideration to the possibility of “hearing the other side” in the panels. In a similar vein, he stressed in his application for participants from the Soviet and Eastern European countries the importance of “not hav[ing] them all of the same political complexion.” Neither did he wish his Conference to be overrun by vocal anti-Communists. “Let us be very careful...not to take part in some operation that can blackly smear us...with being pro-communist,” he advised the Executive Director of the NCASP. “I am tremendously anxious that we do a useful peace conference; one that by right-thinking people can be taken as non-partisan.”⁴⁷

Not accepting the extremes of Sovietophilia or Sovietophobia, Shapley sought to find a balance that would close the ranks of American liberalism that had become so bitterly divided over the issue of communism. His was to be “a *peace* and not a war conference, a bid for understanding and

⁴⁵ Shapley to Patrick M. S. Blackett, Professor of Physics at the Victoria University of Manchester, February 18, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10c-Important Letters on Peace Conference.

⁴⁶ Shapley to Dorothy Canfield Fisher, March 15, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10c-Important Letters on Peace Conference; Hook to Thomas Mann, March 14, 1949, Hook Papers, 112-5. In a telegram to Shapley written in defense of his “noble and humane enterprise [against] the machinations aimed at discrediting if not disturbing [it],” Thomas Mann confirmed that Shapley and his associates had been planning the Conference “for at least two years and that it has nothing whatever to do with Wrocław.” Remarkably, this passage from a press release issued by the NCASP on March 18, 1949 (Records of the *National Republic*, 175-6) did not appear in print; see “Mann Defends Conference,” *New York Times*, March 19, 1949, 7.

⁴⁷ Shapley as cited in a report dated March 22, 1949 (Field Office Boston), FBI file NCASP, sec. 5; Shapley to Hannah Dörner, Executive Director NCASP, December 19, 1948; Shapley to Maxine Wood, Director of the CSCWP, January 6, 1949; Alice Borrows, Secretary NCASP, to Shapley, February 2, 1949; Shapley to Dörner, February 11, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10b-nf.

cooperation and survival and not a further incitation to hate.”⁴⁸ To this purpose, he tried to keep as much prominent Communist Party members as possible outside the walls of the Waldorf. Regretting that the Soviet delegation would come again be headed by Fadeyev, he advised against inviting Picasso, who since 1944 had been a member of the French Communist Party, and collaborated with the State Department to find excuses to deny Party members from Hungary, Romania, Poland, France, and Italy a visa for attending the Conference.⁴⁹ Reversely, surmising—with good reason—that an address by the anti-Marxist critic would not rise above the level of “hate-mongering,” he exerted his authority to deny Hook a speaking slot on a technicality.⁵⁰ “I just cannot believe that building up a cabal against Russia, or against Communism *in* Russia, is going to get us anywhere,” he wrote to Norman Cousins, editor of the *Saturday Review of Literature*, who, although a passionate advocate of nuclear disarmament and a world federacy including the Soviet Union, had declined the invitation to speak at the Conference given the complete lack of criticism of Soviet foreign policy on the part of certain people involved in the organization.⁵¹ Nonetheless, aware that the overall pro-Soviet tone of the program in progress needed a counterweight to avoid the criticism voiced by Cousins, Shapley did encourage the inclusion of papers moderately critical of the Soviet Union in defiance of one of the Conference sponsors who, in contrast to Shapley, was a member of the CPUSA and US representative at the Liaison Committee that was preparing the aforementioned peace congress in Paris.⁵² Thus, when Cousins, concerned not to let Communists

⁴⁸ Shapley to Emil Lengyel, NYU Professor of Social Sciences, March 12, 1949. Shapley’s emphasis, Shapley Papers, 10c-Important Letters on Peace Conference. Lengyel passed this letter along to Hook, as a copy of it is located in Hook’s papers, 112-5.

⁴⁹ Special Agent in Charge, Boston Field Office, to Director FBI, December 15, 1948, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1; idem, March 11, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 3; Director FBI to the Attorney General, memorandum, March 18, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

⁵⁰ Hook was informed by Shapley’s secretary that his paper proposal had been one of several that came in after the program had been finalized. The dispute reached a theatrical climax when Hook, a few hours before the opening of the Conference, burst into Shapley’s hotel room to confront him with letters from Program Committee members asking Shapley that Hook be given a place on the program. Shapley suggested continuing the discussion on the hallway, but as soon as Hook passed the threshold, the NCASP chair ducked back into his room, locking the door behind him. Shapley to Hook, March 18, 1949; Hook to Shapley, March 21 and 23, 1949, Hook Papers, 112-5; “Hook Demands That Shapley Give Apology,” *The Washington Post*, March 26, 1949, 5; Hook, *Out of Step*, 391–2.

⁵¹ Shapley to Norman Cousins, January 8, 1949, Cousins Papers, 23-7.

⁵² Albert E. Kahn to Shapley, March 1, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10c-Important Letters on Peace Conference. Applying a double standard that worked to the anti-communist critic as a red rag to a bull, Kahn plainly argued that whereas negative comments on the United States, or the West in general, were more than desirable, it was unnecessary to criticize the Soviet Union, because the Soviet leaders were “constantly indulging in all sorts of criticism about themselves.” According to an FBI informant, Kahn had been bitter about the fact that he, as an active member of the

exploit the vocal call in American society for reducing tensions with the Soviet Union, changed his mind about Shapley's invitation and asked whether it might be re-issued, he was assigned a high-profile time slot at the opening banquet, even though—as Cousins remembered—“considerable pressure was brought on him [Shapley] to rescind his invitation.”⁵³

On the nature of the pressure he was hinting at, Cousins made a statement to a certain D. M. Davis, an agent of the State Department's intelligence apparatus charged with monitoring the Conference. Two days before he was to speak at the Conference's opening banquet, Hannah Dorner, the NCASP executive director and high-ranking member of the CPUSA, repeatedly called Cousins to ferret out the substance of his speech. He managed to keep the content to himself until Shapley and Dorner came to him and asked to see his speech about twenty minutes before he was to climb on the stage. The face of the Conference's host dropped as he poured over Cousins's text, which urged the foreign delegates to inform their fellow countrymen that the thought and actions of Americans, except for the few who were running the Conference, were not being manipulated by any single group, and that the critical attitude of many Americans towards communism did not imply that they favored war. Dorner was “obviously furious.” This was evidently a damaging message, yet Shapley, realizing that preventing it from being delivered would do more harm than good to the Conference, returned the text to Cousins and introduced him as an outstanding American whom he greatly respected. Thus Cousins, against his own expectations, came to present his point of view, which was received by a chorus of boos and hisses from banqueters who clearly had no use of a dissenter in their midst.⁵⁴

For all his attempts to reassure the world of his innocent intentions, Shapley could not convince Truman's security apparatus of his political innocence.⁵⁵ In fact, as soon as Shapley left his pre-Conference meeting with him, George V. Allen, the Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, recommended denying visas to all delegates from the Soviet bloc. The US

NCASP's New York chapter, had never been consulted about the Conference program. In addition, he was dismayed at Shapley's refusal to lend his cooperation for the Paris peace conference. FBI file “Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace,” sec. 5, report on NCASP, March 22, 1949 (Field Office Boston).

⁵³ Cousins to Shapley, March 22, 1949, Cousins Papers, 23-7; Cousins, “Comments re. Waldorf Speech,” undated, Cousins Papers, 98-2; *World Citizen: Norman Cousins Interviewed by Andrew D. Basiago*, Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles (1992), vol. 2, 325-7, 364-6.

⁵⁴ D. M. Davis, “Interview with Norman Cousins,” report on the Waldorf Conference, 21-23.

⁵⁵ Indicative of the official suspicion towards the NCASP was the fact that the FBI wiretapped phones in NCASP offices, including Shapley's, and infiltrated NCASP meetings and even NCASP boards with informants. Memorandum to the Attorney General, September 16, 1948, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

Attorney General, Tom C. Clark, too, wished to keep the Communists out, especially the Russians, since “they could carry back information to Russia as couriers.”⁵⁶ It was probably pointed out to Allen and Clark that, since the Soviet and Eastern European delegations would come as official representatives of their governments, and not as private individuals, a complete ban would result in a diplomatic war. A few days before the Conference, the State Department announced that it would admit delegates sent by their government as official representatives to attend the Conference while barring delegates who intended to come on personal title and of whom communist affiliations were known or suspected. To prevent (unsuccessfully) any confusion, it explained this two-pronged visa policy as a riposte to the plentiful occasions on which the Soviet Union had ignored American requests for cultural exchange or denied visas to US citizens and officials. Whereas Stalin’s regime precluded all conditions for an open debate, Secretary of State Dean Acheson explained, the Truman administration demonstrated its “unswerving devotion to freedom of information and free speech on any issue,” even though the Conference had all signs of being a “sounding board for Communist propaganda.”⁵⁷

This cunning compromise on the issuance of visas was not the only strategy through which the State Department tried to accrue positive propaganda for the United States. In addition to a public relations offensive to question the purposes of the Conference and conflating it (despite the lack of evidence) with the Wroclaw Congress, Acheson’s advisers proposed to bring the Conference speakers “discreetly in touch with reliable non-Communist participants...to urge them to do what they can to assure objective debate and to expose Communist efforts at controlling the

⁵⁶ George V. Allen, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, to James E. Webb, member of the Psychological Strategy Board, March 8, 1949, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, International Information Activities, 1938–1953, A1 1559, 27-Shapley Meeting; D. M. Ladd to J. Edgar Hoover, March 14, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

⁵⁷ Dean Acheson, Secretary of State, to President Truman, March 14, 1949, in *FRUS, 1949*, vol. 5, 807–8; Bertram D. Hulen, “U.S. to Admit Red Delegates; Scores Aims of Parley Here,” *New York Times*, March 17, 1949, 1; “Department Explains: Unofficial Delegates Excluded Simply as Communists,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1949, 16; “Soviet Rebuffs on Cultural Ties Reviewed,” *The Washington Post*, March 25, 1949, 1, 6. Official (but not diplomatic) visas were issued to seven delegates from the Soviet Union, five from Czechoslovakia, five from Yugoslavia, four from Poland, and two from Romania (later revoked, because the Romanians insisted on coming as individuals, not as representatives of their governments). Visas for five Hungarian representatives were refused in retaliation for the Hungarian government’s decision to break off diplomatic relationships with the United States after the latter had criticized the controversial trial and conviction for treason of Cardinal Mindszenty. Of the private delegates from England, Norway, France, Italy, Mexico, Brazil, Venezuela and India, none received a visitor visa, except for the British philosopher and science fiction writer William Olaf Stapledon. The Attorney General authorized the FBI to subject all foreign delegates, especially the Russians, to close surveillance during all of their stay. D. M. Ladd to J. Edgar Hoover, March 14, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

Conference.”⁵⁸ In the following days, State Department officials enlisted the services of persons who had been asked by the NCASP to help in the organization and encouraged *Review of Literature* editor, Norman Cousins, to reconsider his declining of Shapley’s invitation for the sake of having someone at the Conference espousing “the democratic and anti-totalitarian point of view.”⁵⁹ The precise involvement of the State Department in the AIF operation is not clear (some suspected the AIF to be a creation of the Department on the base of Nabokov’s involvement⁶⁰), but—in defiance of its “unswerving devotion to...free speech on any issue”—it was certainly part of the Department’s strategy to publicly support the AIF at the expense of the Conference.⁶¹

The consequences of the AIF’s smear campaign and the State Department’s visa policy for the Conference’s final roster of speakers turned the accusations against Shapley’s initiative into a self-fulfilling prophesy. For despite Shapley’s keynote address which censured both the Soviet Union and the United States for being so obsessed with each other’s shortcomings that they, deliberately or not, ignored those of their own, most presenters undeniably echoed the Communist Party line, and when flaws of the Soviet system were mentioned at all, they were immediately neutralized by counterexamples suggesting similar flaws in the US system. The least polemical contributions attributed some share of the blame for world unrest on Russia, while leaving the most detailed criticism for America’s failures at home and abroad.⁶² In addition, based on the applause with which pro-

⁵⁸ Jesse M. MacKnight, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, to Allen, March 18, 1949, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, International Information Activities, 1938–1953, A1 1559, 27-Shapley Meeting.

⁵⁹ Telegram of George Allen to Cousins, cited in Richard H. Parke, “Our Way Defended to 2,000 Opening ‘Culture’ Meeting,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1949, 1. In a letter to John P. Rossi, dated March 9, 1982, Cousins denied any involvement with the State Department and insisted that the decision to speak was his alone. Rossi, “Farewell to Fellow Traveling,” 19n59. There is no doubt that he spoke on behalf of himself only, but had it not been for Allen’s aforementioned telegram, he might not have thought of reconsidering his rejection of the NCASP’s invitation in the first place. A few days after the Conference, Allen wrote Cousins to commend him for having “helped to set the Conference in it is proper light.” Allen to Cousins, April 6, 1949, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, International Information Activities, 1938–1953, A1 1559, 27-Shapley Meeting.

⁶⁰ Edwin A. Lahey, *Chicago Daily News*, cited in *Speaking of Peace*, ed. Daniel S. Gillmor (New York: Manville Broadland, 1949), 3.

⁶¹ George Allen and Carlisle Humelsine to Dean Acheson, memorandum on Waldorf Conference, March 14, 1949, Acheson Papers, 64-sf.

⁶² Papers delivered at the Conference were published in *Speaking of Peace: The Widely-Discussed Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace*, ed. Daniel S. Gillmor (New York: Manville Broadland, 1949). One significant exception to the general line of thinking presented at the Conference was, apart from Cousins, provided by the author Norman Mailer, who took everyone by surprise by arguing that the Soviet Union was just as much moving towards state capitalism as the United States, and that as such, the prospect of a “decent, equitable socialism” would be unthinkable. “Panel

Russian and anti-American statements were greeted while criticism of the Soviet Union met with icy silence, FBI informants estimated that the bulk of attendants were either Communists or fellow travelers.⁶³ Nabokov, too, thought that the audience was almost entirely composed of fellow travelers who were “hostile to any attack on Russia and very hostile to himself as an outsider.”⁶⁴ Questions were taken from the floor, including those from AIF members, but a two-minute limit for each question and no option for counter-rebuttals precluded the possibility of critical debate. When Macdonald interrogated Fadeyev at the Writing and Publishing Panel about the fate of writers who had faced Zhdanov’s criticism in 1946 (Boris Pasternak, Isaac Babel, Ivan Katayev, Anna Akhmatova, Mikhail Zoshchenko, and Boris Pilnyak) and the revisions Fadeyev himself had been stipulated to make to his novel *The Young Guard*, the Soviet official was unbearably prolix, defensive, and evasive in his reply. As such, for all of Shapley’s efforts to disprove the allegation, the Conference had indeed the appearance of what Dwight Macdonald upbraided as “strictly a Stalinoid affair.”⁶⁵

The Third Voice: Olin Downes, Postwar Progressivism and Anti-Stalinism

Notwithstanding the undeniable parallels in political positions, to conflate the NCASP with the Communist Party would be to ignore the voice of a large segment of US society that begged to differ with the Truman administration without being branded as “subversives.” Indeed, contrary to the analysis on which the anticommunist consensus rested at the time, many Americans did not need to be mobilized by either Moscow or the CPUSA to campaign against their government’s domestic and foreign policies. Take Olin Downes, for instance, the music critic of the *New York Times*. A convinced believer of the need for “a middle rank of [independent] voters who are neither of the Labor Party, nor of the high finance security party, nor yet of the wild-eyed Communist variety,” Downes gladly spent his spare hours on giving the Republicans “the licking they deserved,” critiquing the Allied support for Franco or Chiang Kai-shek, lambasting the Truman Doctrine, lobbying for the maintenance of price ceilings and rent controls to restrain inflation, raising funds for Henry Wallace’s 1948 presidential

Discussions of the Cultural Conference Delegates Cover a Wide Range of Subjects,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1949, 44.

⁶³ Special Agent in Charge, Boston Field Office, to Director, March 28, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 9.

⁶⁴ D. M. Davis, “Interview with Nicolas Nabokoff,” in the State Department report on the Waldorf Conference, 55.

⁶⁵ Gillmor, *Speaking of Peace*, 85–6; Macdonald, “The Waldorf Conference,” *Politics* (Winter 1949): 32A.

campaign, and urging welfare legislation, the protection of labor rights and artistic community projects. Additionally, he spoke out strongly against the ever more obtrusive instances of “political witch-hunting” as manifested by the House Committee on Un-American Activities, the President’s Loyalty Order, the FBI’s surveillance of leftist citizens, the Attorney General’s designation of selected organizations as subversive, and Representative Karl Mundt’s bill calling for outlawing the Communist Party (which eventually did not pass the Senate).⁶⁶ As a man of music with a capital M, Downes also took part in various committees and organizations that strove to improve the exposure of “the people” to music not affected by either elitism or commercialism, and advocated a better understanding with Russia through—as one of his colleagues put it at a meeting staged under the auspices of the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship—the “force which leaps the barriers of language and goes directly to the hearts and minds of the people.”⁶⁷

In pleading for a postwar order predicated on the legacy of President Roosevelt’s New Deal policy and cooperative attitude towards the Soviet Union, Downes voiced the tenets typical of the postwar progressive left, which, despite all differences, in principle did not see any problem in combining forces with Communists for the pursuance of common goals. “Whatever may be our views in regard to the social, political, and economic policies of the Soviet Union,” Shapley explained, “we agree that it is necessary to reestablish American-Soviet understanding and cooperation, which alone can make peace possible.”⁶⁸ Indeed, when one musician indicated he wished to be assured that no Communists were involved in a benefit concert for the victims of Franco’s Spain in which Downes had invited him to participate, Downes replied that he could not care less, because “under our Constitution, I have no right to concern myself with [someone else’s] beliefs.”⁶⁹ Wary of any move that might drag the United States in a new costly war and critical of Washington’s fixation with

⁶⁶ Downes to Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York, April 25, 1946; Downes to Jo Davidson, November 28, 1944, April 18, 1945, November 6, 1946; Downes to Harlow Shapley, October 2, 1947; Downes to Abe Zeitz, January 6, 1948, Downes Papers, 2-46-16+21. United States Executive Order 9835, known as Truman’s Loyalty Order, required compulsory screenings of federal government employees for affiliations with organizations deemed subversive by the Attorney General.

⁶⁷ Charles J. Child, Consultant on Art and Music, Division of Cultural Cooperation, State Department, cited from a speech delivered at a meeting of representatives from the US cultural field organized by the National Council of American-Soviet Friendship, “Ties of Art Urged For U.S., Russia,” *New York Times*, November 19, 1945, 3.

⁶⁸ NCASP, Policy and Program, 1948, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

⁶⁹ Downes, speech delivered at the Theater and Music Panel (“Counteracting Freedom’s Curb”) of the NSCAP Conference on Cultural Freedom and Civil Liberties, New York City, October 25–26, 1947, Downes Papers, 1-38-15.

geopolitics at the expense of domestic problems (such as unemployment, deficient housing, health care, and public arts programs, and racial segregation), progressive liberals protested the Truman administration for declaring anticommunism as the cornerstone of US foreign and domestic policy, pressuring the Soviet Union to accept a program for supranational control of atomic energy on American terms, declining negotiations with the Soviet Union on the stabilization of postwar Europe, expending multi-figure sums on backing reactionary governments in Greece, Turkey, China, the Middle East, and Latin America, and abandoning the United Nations humanitarian aid program for unilateral investments in the reconstruction of Western Europe. In particular, they were repelled by measures that, in the name of national security, imposed “censorship and self-censorship” on teachers, academics, writers, the motion picture industry, theater, and radio for their (presumed) political affiliations, thereby violating “the inalienable right of the American people to listen to all shades of opinion, discuss them, and judge for themselves.”⁷⁰ It is for these citizens who feared that, when unopposed, the great power rivalry would escalate into a Third World War and the US government would ever more trespass upon their rights that the NCASP aimed to provide a platform, an independent platform of “progressive citizens” where one could be—in the words of Shapley—“aggressive about peace.”⁷¹

The Waldorf Conference was the last in a series of activities designed to constitute this platform. In early June 1948 (i.e., more than two months before the Wrocław Congress), Shapley, through the mediation of none less than Albert Einstein, convoked two off-the-record meetings of leading intellectuals in New York and Hollywood to discuss “how the Cold War is boomeranging on us,” what the physical, economic and social consequences of “a new world war” could be, and what steps should be taken “to avert a catastrophe to civilization.”⁷² A couple of days later, on June 17, 1948, the NCASP sponsored a meeting at Carnegie Hall aimed at mobilizing Americans for the protection of world peace and civil liberties at home, followed by several small-scale rallies in defense of academic freedom, the revocation of the President’s Loyalty Order, and the abolition of the House

⁷⁰ NCASP, Program of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace, 1949; “Statement of Principles on a Fine Arts Program,” February 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-1+2.

⁷¹ Shapley quoted in the Minutes of the NCASP National Board Meeting, December 17, 1948, and the Conference call, February 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-1+3.

⁷² “Conference on the ‘Pattern for Survival’, 5 to 7 June 1948,” Shapley Papers, 10e-sf. According to an FBI informant, Shapley and Dorner had formulated a letter asking Einstein for his opinion on a meeting of the “best minds in the country” to discuss the international situation, and “so worded his [enthusiastic] reply that it would appear to the uninitiated that he had suggested the conference.” Special Agent in Charge, Boston Field Office, to the Director, memorandum on the NCASP’s “Survival Conferences,” May 5, 1948, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

Committee on Un-American Activities. These off-the-record conventions set the agenda for what Shapley came to call the “Waldorf Operation,” an anything but off-the-record convention for which it was deemed necessary to attract a range of “glamour people,” including Albert Schweitzer, Louis Aragon, Benjamin Britten, Pablo Casals, and “a Soviet music guest”—Shostakovich or Prokofiev.⁷³

To Hook and his cohorts, on the other hand, those who supported the NCASP and the Waldorf Conference failed to see that the vocabulary of peace and civil rights had once again been co-opted by the Kremlin for the furtherance of its own interests. “We are all in favor of cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union,” Hook tried to convince sponsors of the Conference to reconsider their support, and “we [the AIF] are not opposed to a free and fair discussion with Communists or with anyone else.” But should it not be admitted that the Conference had been set up “as to make free and fair discussion impossible?” Would an “honest conference [based on] the conditions of free and fair cultural interchange [not have invited] Mr. Stravinsky to appear on the same program in which Mr. Shostakovich denounced him?” And most importantly, “would you have lent your name to the German-American Bund in 1940 when they were propagandizing for peace?”⁷⁴

There is indeed no reason to question testimonies about the strategies through which Communists tried to control the left-wing spectrum, and they surely did their best to play first fiddle at the Conference as they had in the Progressive Party. However, by the time of the Conference, the CPUSA and its fellow travelers had been pushed so much on the defensive—the Wallace campaign managed to muster no more than two per cent of the votes cast—that the NCASP could hardly be considered as the solid Communist-controlled Popular Front organization that its adversaries imagined it to be. Indeed, with its members being expelled from various unions and liberal organizations, its top leaders on trial, and—what many failed to notice at the time—its loss of Stalin’s trust, the CPUSA was factually reduced to a shadow of what it had been in the 1930s and early 1940s. What is truly remarkable, though, is that Hook, despite his resentment of dogmatism and dedication to fact-based rather than speculative reasoning, for his part failed to see that by rubberstamping the Conference organizers as “either captive of Communist fellow travelers or their willing tool,” he resorted as much to

⁷³ Shapley, *Through Rugged Ways to the Stars* (New York: Scribner’s Sons, 1969), 155; NCASP, Minutes of the National Board Meeting, December 17, 1948, Downes Papers, 1-39-1.

⁷⁴ Hook to Rabbi Louis I. Newman, March 14, 1949; Hook to Guy E. Shipler, March 16, 1949; Hook to Rudolf Carnap, March 20 and April 4, 1949; Hook to Curtis P. Nettels, March 28 and April 4, 1949. All published in *Letters of Sidney Hook: Democracy, Communism, and the Cold War*, ed. Edward S. Shapiro (New York: Sharpe, 1995), 121–36.

the dubious and self-vindicating principle of guilt by association through which a bigoted agency like HUAC stigmatized anyone who held a position that coincided with the Communist Party line as a dupe of “shrewd Communistic persuasiveness.”⁷⁵ In fact, the FBI top was more level-headed in its conclusions, admitting that for all the striking resemblances and intermediate links, facts lacked to substantiate HUAC’s claim that the Waldorf Conference was a follow-up of the Wroclaw Congress.⁷⁶ Even less dignified were AIF’s sabotage tactics of intercepting mail addressed to the Conference organizers, disseminating unfavorable press reports, and intimidating sponsors into withdrawing their support if they wished not to be unmasked as “un-American” or “agents” of foreign governments.⁷⁷ Passions had apparently risen so high, that it had become impossible for Hook to imagine that NCASP’s efforts to question the anticommunist slant of the Truman administration’s policies did not necessarily require to be stipulated and financed by any other body than the NCASP itself.⁷⁸

Indeed, the support for the NCASP and the Waldorf Conference by those who were not avowed communists did not so much articulate approval of Soviet policy as a protest against the Truman government which had only been recently reinstalled for another term, against the hopes and expectations of many who preferred a leadership that would finish the social reforms begun under President Roosevelt. They might have disagreed with a self-professed believer “in the good and justice of the Soviet system” like the novelist and CPUSA member Howard Fast, for whom the “tired saws of the slave camps, starving people, artists in uniform, etc.” had been mere

⁷⁵ Hook, AIF press release, March 20, 1949, Hook Papers, 50-8. In a letter to a critic of the AIF’s strategy of exposure, Hook explained that he “never charged Shapley with being a Communist but only with being a dupe of the Communists.” In Hook’s interpretation of Shapley’s role in the organization of the Waldorf Conference, the Harvard astronomer had not been in active charge of the Conference, but functioned as “a figure-head behind whose back the party-fraction made all important decisions.” Hook to William E. Hocking, September 12, 1949, Hook Papers, 112-5.

⁷⁶ D. Milton Ladd, Assistant Director, to the Director, memorandum on HUAC’s *Review of the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace* (April 19, 1949), April 21, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 8. The State Department, too, concluded that, although it was “certainly clear the Waldorf [Conference] was inspired (and directed) by the Wroclaw and Paris groups,” it had not been possible to “*prove* this although the Hook group purported to have done so.” D. M. Davis, report on the Waldorf Conference, 10.

⁷⁷ This pressure campaign backfired when five of eight persons whose names AIF forwarded to the *New York Times* as the names of those who had withdrawn their support denied to have done so. Charles Grutzner, “Police Lift All Restrictions on Culture Meeting Pickets,” *New York Times*, March 25, 1949, 18.

⁷⁸ Documents in the NCASP archives indicate that the Waldorf Conference was paid for by private subsidies raised through fundraising events and collections, and closed with a debt of \$25,000. Minutes of the NCASP National Board Meeting, December 17, 1948, Shapley Papers, 10c-NCASP; Clark Foreman (Shapley’s successor as the NCASP Director) to Shapley, September 14, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10b-nf.

“canards.” Yet they shared his bewilderment at why intellectuals who had broken with the progressive movement out of disillusionment with the “achievements” of Soviet-style socialism failed to express disillusionment with “our native anti-Semitism, our bestial Jim Crow system, our growing ranks of the unemployed and our callous and cynical shedding of civil liberties.”⁷⁹ Ironically, Hook raised the same kind of argument in his polemic with a self-declared “non-Communist ‘fellow traveler’” who suggested that, instead of focusing on the “sins of Russia,” it would be more necessary to remove “the beam from our own eyes.” “Why is it,” Hook retorted, “that you and your fellows refuse to condemn Soviet terror while you did not hesitate to protest against the sins of Franco, Hitler, Mussolini, Chiang Kai-shek, the Greek government, etc.?” If military conflict is to be avoided at all times, why then would not the United States “have capitulated to Hitler who never would have dared to embark on war had he not been emboldened by English pacifism and American isolationism?”⁸⁰

Thus both factions of what once had been a movement of engaged citizens united by their empathy for the underprivileged reproached each other for upholding double standards of morality in their reading of postwar Soviet and US policy. At the core of the dispute lay divergent expectations of the course the Kremlin would follow in its foreign policy, different assessments of Stalin’s integrity, and irreconcilable visions about the imperatives of the time. For Downes, for instance, Stalin’s expansionist moves were inspired by his responsibility to provide economic security for his country, and as such, “the nitwits and rascals that are now at the head of our government” better looked for a stable working basis with Soviet Russia rather than “bluffing so much about the possibility of mak[ing] a war upon [her],” if only because an economically strong Soviet Union would be in the interest of the United States. Moreover, once the land of socialism was stabilized, Downes surmised, the Kremlin would of its own accord let down the political bars which now prevented international traffic, trade, and communication.⁸¹ Obviously, critics of the Soviet Union were anything but convinced about the benign intentions of Stalin’s meddling in the domestic affairs of Eastern European states and did not believe that the United States could end the Cold War by a change of its own policy. For them, the excommunication of Yugoslavia from the Cominform after Tito’s declaration of independence from Moscow proved once more the Soviet leader’s intolerance toward dissenting views. “If Stalin so categorically distrusted another Communist country,” Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., wondered,

⁷⁹ Fast, “Cultural Forces Rally Against the Warmakers,” 31–33; and *Intellectuals in the Fight for Peace* (New York: Masses & Mainstream, 1949), 3–4, 7, 12, 20.

⁸⁰ Talbot F. Hamlin to Hook, April 25, 1949; Hook to Hamlin, May 27, 1949, Hook Papers, 50–12.

⁸¹ Downes to Alice P. Barrows, Director NCASP, June 4, 1948, Downes Papers, 2–46–22.

“why in the world would he ever bring himself to trust the United States[,] the stronghold of world capitalism and therefore by Leninist definition the mortal enemy of communism?”⁸² For Downes, however, the Yugoslavia affair merely induced him to advise the NCASP to postpone the planned submission of a peace pledge to the President to a moment “when the present [anti-Russian hysteria] has subsided somewhat.”⁸³

Members of the NCASP defined themselves by their refusal to capitulate to any political orthodoxy as well as their advocacy for any minority group whose constitutional rights were in their view offended by “a thoughtless majority.” They resented those who explained Stalin’s purges away as a necessity of a society in transformation as much as anti-Stalinists did, but, given the ubiquitous instances of political, racial, religious, ethnic, and other forms of discrimination that many American citizens experienced on a daily basis, refused to be bullied into arguing that there was something unique in Soviet dealings with civil liberties. Neither did they agree with the Soviet regime’s idea that a progressive culture could/should be imposed from above. To Downes, for instance, who “heartily” agreed with Zhdanov that the music brought forth by the Western world during the interbellum was “very largely of moral as well as artistic decadence” due to a lack of simplicity and emotional directness, the Central Committee’s 1948 resolution on music appeared as much “ill-judged and ridiculous” as “arbitrary and inconsistent.” Did the Soviet leadership really think that deficiencies in contemporary composition could be solved by a set of orders? And had it not been Shostakovich’s Seventh Symphony that six years earlier was exported throughout the world as the ultimate expression of Soviet culture? The work of a composer, that is, whose music was least consistent with the Russian school of nationalist composers that the resolution upheld as a model for “good” music? Why cast Shostakovich away together with Myaskovsky, Khachaturian and Prokofiev, a trio that composed according to the very principles which the Party resolution recommended? Observing a parallel with the pillorying to which Hollywood actors and writers were being subjected at the time on account of their suspected political affiliations, Downes saw Zhdanov’s decree as a symptom of his day, “when great nations, including our own, pay lip-service to democracy, while clearly showing that they do not believe in democracy at all.”⁸⁴

⁸² Schlesinger, Jr., *A Life in the Twentieth Century*, 504.

⁸³ Downes to Jean Berkeley, NCASP, June 30, 1948, Downes Papers, 2-46-22.

⁸⁴ Downes, “Composing by Fiat: Soviet Writers Face Dilemma in Wake of Party Demands for Creation,” *New York Times*, February 22, 1948, X7. At a time when Schoenberg and Stravinsky swayed the scepter in the domain of contemporary music, Downes zealously championed Jean Sibelius—the composer whose symphonies Nabokov disparaged as “antediluvian monstrosities”—as the custodian of qualities he considered commendable in music: “[Sibelius]

This tendency to excuse the shortcomings of the Soviet Union by those of the United States worked on the nerves of anti-Stalinists (including the New York Intellectuals). With respect to the Conference, they equally despised the anticommunist opposition of the paranoiac type as practiced by HUAC and the right-wing pickets (that is the reason why they called themselves anti-Stalinists rather than anticommunists) and agreed that the State Department's handling of the visa issue did not merit high marks for diplomatic tact. Yet, Dwight Macdonald argued, the "American government *did* let in the Russians, it *did* permit the Conference to be held, and the local police *did* protect the delegates." Whether a "similar gathering of 3,000 pro-USA Russian citizens (especially released from the labor camps to attend)" could be held in Moscow, not to mention be addressed by "a seven-man American delegation chosen by Dean Acheson," remained to be seen.⁸⁵ That non-Communist supporters of the Conference could scream blue murder about their government's violations of civil liberties while glossing over the total lack of those liberties in the Soviet domain was what the anti-Stalinist critic considered to be the most typical and gravest fallacy in the fellow travelers' minds. For as long as liberal intellectuals failed to recognize that Stalin, for all his posing and posturing, was the opposite of the world's peace-loving, democratic, anti-imperialistic, and progressive savior, and his Soviet Union anything but the model for mending the ills of American life, culture, and politics, conservatives would have a stick in hand to discredit any proposal towards reform.⁸⁶

By 1948/1949, the anti-Stalinist consensus had acquired such authority that a nuanced position between the proponents and opponents of communism was virtually impossible to hold.⁸⁷ Downes experienced this

has been passed over in a period which exalts technique above expression, style and artificiality over feeling, for a hundred lesser men who have not, as artists, the right to latch his shoes." Downes, "The Sixtieth Year of Jean Sibelius: His Contribution to Modern Music," *New York Times*, December 6, 1925, X10. See also Glenda D. Goss, *Jean Sibelius and Olin Downes: Music, Friendship, Criticism* (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1994). For the quote of Nabokov, see *Old Friends and New Music*, 229.

⁸⁵ Macdonald, "The Waldorf Conference," 32D; see also William Barrett, "Culture Conference at the Waldorf: The Artful Dove," *Commentary* 7 (May 1949): 489–90.

⁸⁶ Hook's address at the AIF rally, March 26, 1949, cited by William R. Conklin, "Soviet Is Attacked at Counter Rally," *New York Times*, March 27, 1949, 1, 46; Hook, "The Fellow-Traveler: A Study in Psychology," *The New York Times Magazine*, April 17, 1949, 9; Macdonald, "USA v. USSR," *Politics* (Spring 1948): 75–7.

⁸⁷ Commentators who observed this development included M. R. Werner, "Cold War in the Waldorf-Astoria," *New York Herald Tribune* [European Edition], March 30, 1949, 4; Freda Kirchwey, "The Battle of the Waldorf," *The Nation*, April 2, 1949, 377; "Peace: Everybody Wars Over It," *Newsweek*, April 4, 1949, 19–22; Joseph Lash, "Weekend at the Waldorf," *New Republic* (April 18, 1949): 10–14; Margaret Marshall, "Notes by the Way," *The Nation* (April 9, 1949): 419–20. For substantial critiques on the biased nature in the general press coverage about the Conference, see Tom O'Connor, "News Tailored to Fit," *The Nation* (April 16, 1949): 438–40;

personally when, at the advent of the 1948 presidential elections, he suddenly found himself defending his private political choices to a random *New York Times* reader who questioned him about his involvement in the Progressive Citizens of America (PCA), an organization “generally spoken of as being under Communist domination or influence.” Convinced that his organization was free of Communist interference and disavowing any personal affinity with communism, Downes replied that he conceived of the PCA as “the one liberal and progressive political organization” in the United States that, under the leadership of Henry Wallace, provided an alternative in a time when both the Republican and Democratic Parties had become “hopelessly reactionary and suppressive of liberalism in our national policy.” Thereupon, the spontaneous letter writer, full of hearsay information on Communist stakes in the PCA, confided in Downes his method of separating the wheat from the chaff. To determine whether an organization is Communist-dominated or not, one merely had to wonder whether it, in its general principles and pronouncements, followed the general thought of the CPUSA and whether it ever engaged in a critique of Russian policies. Ostensibly annoyed by this unasked for advice that attested to a “pre-conceived attitude on any rumor of communism bobbing up about a person or an organization,” Downes ensured his questioner politely (but with tongue in cheek) that he would never share his property with anyone and that he was very well aware of the fact that, were he to write for a Russian newspaper, he would be not be allowed to write “as freely and sincerely without any thought of influence” as he was at the *New York Times*.⁸⁸

The correspondence breaks off here, but it is unlikely that Downes’s defense changed the mind of his challenger. For many Americans, especially those in power, the political climate at the time had become too polarized to see the many shades between the extremes of anti-Soviet/pro-American and anti-American/pro-Soviet positions. To them, Downes’s denial of Communist involvement in progressive movements did not mean anything. In their analysis, it was precisely the nature of Communist front organizations to attract “innocent” civilians on particular interests that were, on the surface, not exclusively the interests of the Communist Party. As one of many “fact-finding” reports explained it:

Henry A. Singer, “An Analysis of the New York Press Treatment of the Peace Conference at the Waldorf-Astoria,” *Journal of Educational Sociology* 23/5 (1950): 258–70.

⁸⁸ Private correspondence between Olin Downes and Joseph Kaye, July 31, 1947, August 11, 1947, August 14, 1947, August 15, 1947, August 21, 1947, August 22, 1947, Downes Papers, 2-46-19. To clear himself from any suspicion about his own position towards the Communist Party, Downes advanced that at the time the Nazi-Soviet Pact was sealed (August 23, 1939), he had refused to join the American Newspaper Guild, as he surmised that the American Labor Organization was whispered in the ear by Moscow to obstruct Roosevelt’s efforts at mobilizing for war against Germany.

When the front is attacked as Communist, the unwary non-Communist members, reacting to normal impulses, defend the organization and act as a shield for the Communist members, or, having discovered the true purposes of the group, they are held captive and silent because of uniting cooperation with the Communists.”⁸⁹

As such, the position Downes represented—however naïve it may have been in its belief in Stalin’s willingness to collaborate with the US government if certain “understandable” conditions would be met—was officially construed as a symptom of a delusional mental condition which prevented the afflicted person from giving up a certain position. These incompatible views on the question which of the two powers dominating postwar global politics truly represented the interest of world peace came to a clash at the Waldorf Conference.⁹⁰

Discord under the Starlight Roof: (De)Politicizing Music at the Fine Arts Panel

Hardly a fortnight before the start of the Conference, Downes was summoned for an emergency meeting of the NCASP Executive Committee.⁹¹ Shapley’s fears had come true: resistance to the Waldorf assembly had mounted to such an extent that various anticommunist groups were lobbying at the State Department against the issuance of visas to Shostakovich and other delegates from Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe. “When their party comes headed by Alex Fadeyev,” the argument went, “it is evident that the Russians are coming here to support an obviously subversive group,” viz., the NCASP whose chairman had been tainted by “more than ten affiliations with Communist front organizations.” Others contended that the delegates from the “Iron Curtain countries” were being sent by the Cominform in order to “shock-absorb by psychological warfare the impact of the North Atlantic Security Pact” which was about to be

⁸⁹ California Legislature, *Fourth Report of the Senate Fact-Finding Committee on Un-American Activities: Communist Front Organizations* ([Sacramento]: Senate of the State of California, 1948), 310.

⁹⁰ For detailed analyses of the often interecine disputes among American liberals over the Cold War, see, among others, David Caute, *The Fellow-Travelers: A Postscript to the Enlightenment* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1973); John P. Diggins, *Up from Communism: Conservative Odysseys in American Intellectual History* (New York: Harper & Row, 1975); Mary S. McAuliffe, *Crisis on the Left: Cold War Politics and American Liberals, 1947–1954* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1978); William L. O’Neill, *A Better World—The Great Schism: Stalinism and the American Intellectuals* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1982); Richard H. Pells, *The Liberal Mind in a Conservative Age: American Intellectuals in the 1940s and 1950s*, second edition (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 1989).

⁹¹ Hannah Dorner to Downes, March 14, 1949, Downes Papers, 2-46-23.

ratified a week after the Conference (April 4, 1949).⁹² To make matters worse, several sponsors who had lent their names to the Conference began to withdraw their support, apologizing for not having realized that the event was designed to promote “the Communist point of view or one closely resembling it.” Such about-faces played into the hands of critics who claimed to have seen through the “booby trap” that the Waldorf spectacle posed to unsuspecting souls.⁹³

The State Department’s eventual decision to grant governmental delegates official visas while denying them to private participants further stirred the controversy, to say the least. Many recognized that little, if anything, would be accomplished in favor of world peace by not admitting “these self-winding marionettes,” but “much would be lost by barring them.”⁹⁴ Stravinsky pleased himself with the thought that the Truman administration derived a certain benefit from “this entire outrage” (*vse èto bezobraznye*)⁹⁵ while novelist John Dos Passos took pride in “the courage and tolerance of the American people in allowing their deadly enemies to set up this new sounding board for propaganda in their midst,” although that same pride was overshadowed by “our shame that so many of our fellow citizens ha[d] allowed themselves through ignorance or delusion to become dupes and tools of the masters of the Kremlin.”⁹⁶ Rather than succumbing to a fear of subversion, one columnist recommended, Americans should confide in the logic of democracy which will “prevent them from being subverted by the remarks of Messrs. Fadeyev, Shostakovitch, et al.” In fact, “the very sight of this free country...may instill an atom—an electron—of doubt in *their* minds.” Given “the blessed air of freedom here and in Western Europe,” why would not Shostakovich apply upon his arrival for permanent

⁹² Perry Brown, National Commander of the American Legion, to Dean Acheson, Secretary of State; Rabbi Benjamin Schultz to Attorney General Tom C. Clark. Both cited in “Legion Urges U.S. Deny Reds Entry,” *New York Times*, March 16, 1949, 17.

⁹³ “Some Professors and a Booby Trap,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 10, 1949, 18.

⁹⁴ George Fielding Eliot, “Let Shosty In, Say 46 Out of 53 Letter-Writers,” *New York Post Home News*, March 15, 1949, 24; “Those Communist Visitors,” *New York Times*, March 18, 1949, 24; “The Uses of Propaganda,” *Wall Street Journal*, March 18, 1949, 6; “The Open Door,” *The Washington Post*, 19 March 1949, 6; “Visitors from Moscow,” *New York Times*, March 23, 1949, 26; “Waldorf War,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1949, E1.

⁹⁵ Stravinsky to Nabokov (in Russian), April 4, 1949, Nabokov Papers, 1-2. I am indebted to Richard Taruskin and Olga Panteleeva for transcribing Stravinsky’s handwriting. Stravinsky, incidentally, was identified by Solomon Volkov as the one who prodded Nabokov to embarrass Shostakovich with the question about his position regarding the Party’s denunciation of Western modernist composers. To my knowledge, there is no reason to assume that Nabokov acted on anything other than his own initiative. Volkov cited in *Shostakovich Reconsidered*, ed. Allan B. Ho and Dmitry Feofanov (London: Toccata, 1998), 339, 394–5.

⁹⁶ John Dos Passos cited in a press release from the Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF), “Leading Philosophers Denounce Communist-Front Meeting,” March 23, 1949, ACCF, 14-18.

residence so as to ensure himself that “his genius would flower as never before and his only fear would be the toothless bite of a few music critics?,” the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), for whom the fact that Shostakovich had been chosen to represent the Soviet Union by the very same government which had pilloried him for “the most sinister political meanings it...had managed to read into a concatenation of musical notes and symbols [emphasized] the utter debasement of artistic freedom in the Soviet Union,” suggested.⁹⁷

Shostakovich’s entrance might have been secured, but the fact that his visit had been made “such a football of snide politics and jingoism” was sufficient for Downes not to moderate the Fine Arts Panel for which he had been scheduled, hoping therewith to be “entirely free as a writer to comment on Shostakovich, his art, and his special position as a composer...on strictly non-political lines.”⁹⁸ However much Downes hoped not to be dragged publicly into the political turbulence which had arisen around the Waldorf Conference, eventually he, too, found himself on the defensive, when the AIF charged American literary and music critics, unnamed, with having applied pressure on other writers and musicians, unnamed, to lend their support to the Conference.⁹⁹ The accusation had probably rolled from the hands of Arnold Beichman, press agent for the AFM’s Local 802, and Merlyn S. Pitzele, labor and civil rights consultant of New York governor Thomas E. Dewey, both of whom had joined Hook’s shoestrapping operation in the Waldorf’s bridal suite as its executive secretaries. From the improvised press center set up in the suite’s bathroom, the AIF barraged the press on a daily basis with releases that caused the NCASP the aforementioned worries. Intended to corroborate the ubiquitous charge that the Waldorf Conference was a Communist plot to heap praise on the Soviet Union at the expense of the United States, these releases reported about the sponsors who were allegedly resigning “in droves” (actually only fourteen out of a total of 566 sponsors did) on the unsubstantiated speculations that the Conference was financed by the Cominform and that the Soviet delegation’s interpreter (Ivan Rozhansky) was in reality an MVD agent assigned to keep an eye on

⁹⁷ Richard McCann, President of the American Federation of Musicians, to NCASP, quoted in “Musicians Union to Shun Cultural Parley, Urges Shostakovich Seek to Live in U.S.,” *New York Times*, March 17, 1949, 4.

⁹⁸ Downes to Shapley, March 17, 1949, Downes Papers, 2-46-23.

⁹⁹ Ralph Chapman, “Magazine [*Partisan Review*] Sees Intellectuals Forced to Sponsor Red Rally,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 25, 1949, 2. Although the AIF press release on which he based his article did not mention any names, Chapman insinuated Downes’s complicity when he informed the reader that the *New York Times* music critic had not been available for comment. In reality, he had only tried once to reach Downes. Downes to Helen Rogers Reid, President of the *Herald Tribune*, March 26, 1949, Downes Papers, 2-46-23.

Shostakovich and shield him from “anti-Soviet contacts.”¹⁰⁰ In addition, the AIF called upon the NCASP to demonstrate their unconditional commitment to democracy and freedom by inquiring the Soviet delegation about the fate of Soviet artists and writers who seemed to have vanished from the face of the earth. Further, to prove its rectitude, the anti-Stalinist organization condemned picketing where it interfered with orderly discussion, reprimanded the State Department for “blur[ring] the contrast between our way of life and theirs [the Communists]” by being selective in the issuance of visas to the foreign delegates of the Conference, and invited Shapley to attend the AIF counter-rally to present his view on the Soviet Union, cultural freedom, and civil liberties—an invitation he declined, not surprisingly given the short notice and the hostility with which he had been met.¹⁰¹

Indignant about the AIF’s insinuations that questioned his integrity, Downes decided not to allow himself nor “the art of music” to be defiled by earthly twists. “I am neither fascist nor communist, nor politician,” he declared at his opening address to the audience attending the Fine Arts Panel on Sunday morning, March 27, at the Waldorf’s overly “bourgeois” Starlight Roof ballroom.¹⁰² “[I am] an American citizen born and bred, whose principles and faith are those of free speech, opinion and action under the law, and who detests iron curtains, whenever, wherever or by

¹⁰⁰ AIF press release, “Joint Statement on the Cultural and Scientific Conference for World Peace,” undated. ACCF, 14-18; Charles Grutzner, “‘Cultural’ Visas Denied To British,” *New York Times*, March 22, 1949, 16. Several days before the opening of the Waldorf Conference, the AIF challenged the NCASP to make public a list of financial contributors to the organization, adding that “the only individuals who have seen the audit or who have any real idea of where the money for this pro-Stalinist front comes from are the leaders of the Cominform and its satellite parties throughout the United States.” The NCASP disclaimed this accusation and declared that the Conference should pay for itself by covering the estimated cost of \$75,000 through membership dues, registration fees, and voluntary contributions. This procedure has been confirmed by the FBI final report on the Conference. “Sponsors of Parley Deny Budget Charge,” *New York Times*, March 25, 1949, 19; Minutes of the National Executive Meeting of the NCASP, March 2, 1949 and April 6, 1949, Shapley Papers, 10c-NCASP; FBI file NCASP, sec. 9, report dated April 22, 1949 (New York Field Office), 98-100.

¹⁰¹ Charles Grutzner, “New Protest Sent to Acheson on Ban of Cultural Delegates,” *New York Times*, March 23, 1949, 18. For more on the AIF operation, see Jumonville, *Critical Crossings*, 28–35.

¹⁰² Information on the attendance of the Fine Arts Panel is contradictory. According to Arthur Miller, who chaired the panel, the audience was “surprisingly sparse, testimony to the fear in the air.” No more than twenty or thirty people would have shown up, including Nabokov, Mary McCarthy, and “a number of others from the intellectual anti-Communist and Trotskyite camps.” The *New York Times*, however, spoke of a crowd of “800 cheering persons” that “packed the Starlight Roof to overflowing.” Miller, *Timebends*, 235; “Shostakovich Bids All Artists Lead War on New ‘Fascists,’” *New York Times*, March 28, 1949, 1. That Shostakovich, or whoever wrote “his” report, spoke of “a veritable sea of human beings” of about 8,000 persons is not surprising. “Travel Journal,” 18.

whomsoever lowered.”¹⁰³ If it were up to him, no iron curtain would be able to prevent art, invariably of the period, environment, or heritage from which it sprouted, from “crossing every boundary of race, creed, or nationality.” Among the composers whose work had proven their universal quality Downes counted Beethoven, Verdi, Dvořák, and Vaughan Williams as well as the Russians Tchaikovsky, Borodin, Mussorgsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, Rachmaninoff, Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Myaskovsky, Shebalin, and Kabalevsky. Finally, Downes played his trump card, clearly devised to prove his ability to judge the composer left out in the foregoing enumeration, Shostakovich, on his artistic merits only, and, by extension, to show himself uncorrupted by partisan politics. Recalling “the enormous anticipation and excitement” with which Shostakovich’s Seventh and Eighth Symphony had been hailed in the United States as expressions of “the struggle and the victory of our two nations as allies against the Nazi foe,” Downes reminded his audience of the fact that he had faulted both works for being too long and derivative (of Mahler, for instance), a critique for which he was attacked in the Soviet press as “a bourgeois foe,” just as American commentators had accused him of being “so gullible as to have become a musical tool of Moscow” when he wrote favorably of certain new Russian works.¹⁰⁴

Aaron Copland, too, felt obliged to start his contribution (which followed after two doctrinaire Marxist speeches from a Czech and Yugoslav delegate¹⁰⁵) with declaring his independence, and that his views had to be taken as those of “a democratic American artist, with no political affiliations

¹⁰³ Downes, typescript of speech delivered at the opening of the Fine Arts Panel of the Waldorf Conference, March 27, 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-2+3. A slightly abridged version can be found in the Conference proceedings, *Speaking of Peace*, 88–9. After delivering his introductory speech to the panel, of which he was advertised as moderator, Downes handed over his chair to Arthur Miller and withdrew into the audience.

¹⁰⁴ With respect to Downes’s insistence on his independence, it is relevant to point out that he decided not to join Albert Einstein and Thomas Mann in signing a protest against the deportation of Hanns Eisler, because “in a time when every one of us must stand very firm on the facts on opposing such outrages as the Thomas Committee [HUAC] and others in this country [who] are endeavoring to perpetrate [sic] in the name of liberty, democracy and the rest of it,” people who are clearly Communists or sympathetic to the purposes of the CPUSA should not respond to their persecution by denying their political affiliation, but by standing up for it. Besides Eisler’s denial of his political color, another reason for Downes’s declining was his disagreement over the petition’s reference to Eisler as “a great composer,” which he, as a music critic who had never heard a single work of the composer, could not endorse. Bette Odets to Downes, November 5, 1947; Downes to Bette Odets, November 14, 1947, Downes Papers, 2-46-20.

¹⁰⁵ Ladislav Stoll, Dean of the Academy of Political and Social Science in Prague, dutifully expounded the Marxist-Leninist view on art’s function in a socialist society and urged artists to join people of all nations and races in the struggle of socialism against capitalism, while the Yugoslav composer and conductor Kreshimir Baranovich briefly spoke in praise of the musical advances made in his homeland. *Speaking of Peace*, 93–4. Upon hearing Stoll’s speech, Downes reportedly “looked relieved that he was no more than an unobtrusive member of the audience, and sternly refrained from applauding at the close. “Shostakovich Visits America for Turbulent Peace Meeting,” *Musical America* (April 1, 1949): 3–4.

of any kind, not at all interested in doctrinaire communism, but very much interested in the United States.”¹⁰⁶ Concerned about the possible consequences of American policies for the future prospects of peace, he expressed his dismay at the “concerted effort” on the part of his government and the media to persuade him and his fellow countrymen into believing that “nothing remains for us to do but to make a choice between two diametrically opposed systems of thought.” As he saw it, the mentality by which “we are being taught to think in neat little categories—in terms of blacks and white, East and West, Communism and the Profit System,” and, concerning artistic poetics, “the mass-appeal music of a Shostakovich and the musical radicalism of a Schoenberg”—had turned the very word “peace” into a “dirty word” and, if not broken in the short term, would “lead us inevitably into a third World War.”

Regarding the state of the arts, Copland agreed with Downes that the “mood of suspicion, ill-will and dread that typifies the Cold War attitude” could not be diagnosed otherwise than as deadly for a “life-giving force” such as artistic creation. The Truman administration could have decided to employ art’s potential to give “all humanity a sense of togetherness,” but chose to thwart any attempt at developing closer bonds between the United States and the Soviet Union instead. To support this claim (while admitting to be unable to verify the State Department’s claim that the Russians were to be held responsible for the failure of US initiatives at cooperation and exchange), he reminded his audience of an incident which cast some doubt on the impeccable attitude that the State Department seemed to claim for itself. A few years earlier, the State Department had invited Copland to sit, together with Downes and other musicians, on a committee organized for the purpose of bringing about closer cultural ties with the Soviet Union.¹⁰⁷ When after arduous diplomacy on the part of the American-Soviet Music Society it had been arranged for two members of the Kiev State Opera House to tour the United States, the Justice Department suddenly broke the goodwill of the Ukrainian authorities by requiring, without previous warning,

¹⁰⁶ Aaron Copland, “Effect of the Cold War on the Artists in the U.S.,” typescript of speech delivered at the Fine Arts Panel of the Waldorf Conference, March 27, 1949, Copland Collection, 211-23, published in *Speaking of Peace*, 90-1 and *Aaron Copland: A Reader*, 128-31.

¹⁰⁷ Copland refers here to the Subcommittee on Musical Interchange with the USSR, a body formed in June 1943 within the State Department’s Music Advisory Committee. Apart from Downes (Chairman) and Copland, its membership consisted of Carl Engel, Howard Hanson, Sergey Koussevitzky, John Martin, Harold Spivacke, Vladimir Horowitz, Allen Wardwell, and Efreim Zimbalist. The Subcommittee recommended collaboration with the Soviet Union in the field of copyright issues, the translation of books in music history, theory and biography, and the exchange of artists, students, and teachers as well as of scores and records. Report by Donald Goodchild, Secretary of the Subcommittee, May 11, 1944, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Division of International Exchange of Persons, Subject Files: Music, UD 57, 5-Music: Russia.

the two vocalists to register as agents of a foreign power.¹⁰⁸ Would that not explain why the Soviet government was currently so hostile to the West, and by extension, to the modernist art it promoted?

Although Copland did not leave much doubt as to whom he regarded primarily responsible for the Cold War, he admitted that the Truman administration was not the sole one to blame for the dampened relationship with America's former wartime ally. Even if the "determinedly unfriendly attitude of the Western Powers" might have prompted the Soviet Union to denounce modernism, Copland argued, it should be recognized that "all cultural interchange becomes difficult, if not impossible, when all foreign music from the West is condemned in advance." Why not create a state of understanding which sees "a brilliant new composing talent from Tajikistan" just as relevant to Westerners as "a bright new composing star out of the Kentucky Mountain area" to Russians? Such an open-minded attitude, Copland might have added to balance his argument, would also have enabled Shostakovich to accept, rather than to decline, the invitation Koussevitzky extended to him in October 1945 to appear with the Boston Symphony Orchestra.¹⁰⁹ Despite his efforts to appear impartial, Copland's rather lopsided assessment of Truman's and Stalin's dedication to work out their differences made his solution of breaking the vicious circle of distrust

¹⁰⁸ The two singers concerned, Ivan Patorzhynsky and Zoya Hayday, had been sent as members of a delegation of five Ukrainians and six Russians to attend the third meeting of the American Slav Congress in New York City, September 20 to 22, 1946. As a CPUSA front, the congress condemned Truman's foreign policy as anti-Slav while praising Henry Wallace and Stalin in the same breath. The Truman administration reacted by reinstating the Foreign Agents Registration Act, a law—cancelled during the wartime alliance—which required foreign visitors to register as agents of their government. Thereupon the Soviet consul instructed the delegates not to comply with the registration order and made arrangements for their return home. The American-Soviet Music Society (1946-1947), with Koussevitzky as chairman and Copland, Bernstein, and Elie Siegmeister as vice-chairmen, joined in the press conference staged by the Soviet Embassy to protest Truman's decision. "11 Slav Delegates Are Ordered Home," *New York Times*, October 11, 1946, 4; Downes, "Cultural Exchange," *New York Times*, October 20, 1946, X7; HUAC, *Report on the American Slav Congress and Associated Organizations* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1950), 22–6.

¹⁰⁹ Shostakovich had to decline the invitation as his latest work, the Ninth Symphony (1945), had once again been declared out of tune with the Party line. The Ninth Symphony was criticized by the Soviet music press for not being the work that had to celebrate the 1945 victory of the Red Army. Instead, as a critic complained in the wake of the 1948 "historic decree" on music, Shostakovich had created "the image of a carefree Yankee whistling a frivolous tune as if he did not care a rap for anything." Marian Koval, "Of the Works of Shostakovich and the Errors of the Critics," *Soviet Art [Sovetskoye Iskusstvo]*, February 28, 1948. A translation by Alexander Bakshy can be found in the Nabokov Papers, 45-1. Oblivious to Stalin's disciplinary methods, Koussevitzky interpreted the declining of his invitation as a result of anticommunist sentiments in the United States: "It may be that the [Soviet] authorities feel that [Shostakovich and Prokofiev] might not be well received here, [as] the propaganda in the papers here against Russia has been terrific. All those who seek for peace and friendship must want good relations with Russia." "Koussevitzky Hails Shostakovich's Symphony," *New York Times*, October 5, 1946, 14.

by setting “friendly relations” in the sphere of culture as an example for the sphere of politics sound rather naïve.

Indeed, for the time being, there was little to be sensed of “friendly relations” in the cultural sphere, and certainly not at the Conference’s Fine Arts Panel. As mild and (tentatively) balanced Copland and Downes might have phrased their criticism of the “Cold War attitude,” as harsh and intransigent it reared its head in the lectures of the other panel members. Visual artist Philip Evergood exhorted artists to unite to purify the air of “the stench of putrefaction” rising from the “worm-rotted shells” of those who “renounce ideals for expediency when the champagne bills begin to come in.”¹¹⁰ Playwright Clifford Odets, in what Arthur Miller, chair of the panel, remembered as an “amazingly theatrical speech,” decried in similar miasmatic terminology “the air of conspiracy and crime” created around the Conference by his government, which, incited by the “apocalyptic beast [whose] name is money,” committed the American people in terms of billions of dollars to “reaction and fascism everywhere in the world.” Drawing cheers when denouncing the “state of holy terror” that kept the nation from coast to coast in its stranglehold, Odets called upon the artist to “spew out the moral imbecile who talks guns and ethics,” indeed, to “mark off, one by one, the enemies of man in any manifestation.”¹¹¹

Compared to Odets’s vitriolic phraseology, the final speech in the panel must almost have appeared anticlimactic, pale, and spineless. After a brief acknowledgment for the invitation, Dmitry Shostakovich, “small, frail, and myopic,” sat down, “watching the reaction of the crowd intently from behind his horn-rimmed glasses” while the “sonorous voice” of his interpreter recited a long anticipated declaration in his name.¹¹² Over twice in length to the addresses of the other panel members, the speech was as verbose as predictable.¹¹³ It opened with a call to arms against “the

¹¹⁰ Philip Evergood, “The Artist as Interpreter of His Age,” typescript of speech delivered at the Fine Arts Panel of the Waldorf Conference, March 27, 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-3. A revised version is published in *Speaking of Peace*, 89–90.

¹¹¹ Clifford Odets, “The Challenge to the Artist Today,” typescript of speech delivered at the Fine Arts Panel of the Waldorf Conference, March 27, 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-3, published in *Speaking of Peace*, 91–3.

¹¹² Miller, *Timebends*, 235; “Shostakovich Bids All Artists Lead War on New ‘Fascists,’” *New York Times*, March 28, 1949, 1.

¹¹³ [Shostakovich?], untitled typescript of speech delivered at the Fine Arts Panel of the Waldorf Conference, March 27, 1949, Downes Papers, 1-39-3, published in *Speaking of Peace*, 95–9. The speech was obviously written by Soviet officials and, given the correspondences in vocabulary and formulations, seemingly concocted from passages from, among others, Marian Koval’s attack of formalism (and Shostakovich) the year before. In his memoirs, Nabokov mentioned that one of the Soviet participants told him years after the Conference how Shostakovich had been “ordered” to be a member of the Soviet delegation and how he had to read a paper “prepared” for him by his KGB supervisors. Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 235–6.

instigators of a new war,” and continued with a revelation of the “truth” about the tremendous achievements of Russia’s musical culture ever since it had entered Lenin’s path of socialist construction, a “truth” smeared by the “lies” which “enemies of democracy” had spread about “the land of socialism.” How unwarranted, for instance, were the derogatory qualifications that Western commentators had bestowed upon the Soviet republics, whose peoples, “doomed to extinction under Czarism,” had managed to develop—under Soviet Russian guidance—a “tremendous growth of creative power.” Singling out one British parliamentarian who had typified two of those peoples, the Uzbeks and Tajiks, as “despicable Asiatic tribes,” Shostakovich alias Stalin spent a quarter of his speaking time on defending “the valuable ancient traditions” of the peoples of Soviet Central Asia against modern-day “theoreticians and practitioners of racism” and expressing his sympathy for the independence struggle of (semi-)colonial countries in the confidence that the ensuing emancipation of the “creative forces of all peoples” would contribute to the enrichment of world culture, and, therefore, to the cause of world peace.

That is, a skeptic might have thought, as long as those “creative forces” resulted in the “progressive art” as imagined by the Soviet apparatchiks, i.e., an art predicated on a “harmonious truthful and optimistic concept of the world” derived from, and intended for, “the people.” Artists living up to these standards—the speech continued rehearsing the familiar mantra of socialist realism—could pride themselves of being uncorrupted by the “reactionary-nihilistic ideology of formalism,” which, “bred by a pathologically dislocated and pessimistic concept of life,” merely produced a “pseudo-culture,” a culture which, stained by the “disgusting features of cosmopolitanism,” attested to a “deep indifference to the destiny of its people and all mankind,” and which would ultimately lead to “the degeneration and death of music as an aesthetic form.” To prove his case, the speechwriter quoted the example of Stravinsky: how promising had been his beginnings, but what a “grim and devastating verdict” he had pronounced upon himself and upon all “decadent art” when he, after having “betrayed his native land” and having joined “the camp of reactionary modernistic musicians,” proclaimed his disbelief in the power of music to express anything besides itself. The defector-composer had better follow the example of Prokofiev, whose work showed “valuable tendencies” as soon as he had returned to his native land. True, his later symphonies and his opera *The Story of a Real Man* were marked by “relapses into formalism,” but this only demonstrated “how difficult and complex is the path of the artist who strives...to become a herald of the principles of realism and peoples’ art.”¹¹⁴

¹¹⁴ Shostakovich’s speech refers here to an opera Prokofiev was writing at the time of the 1948 purge of “musical formalism.” Drawing on the grisly experiences of the pilot Aleksey Maresyev, who

No one else could have agreed more with that than Shostakovich himself, who by way of this ghostly speech, frankly admitted his past failures to appeal to “the broad masses of listeners” and recognized the Party’s wisdom in matters of music.

Sympathy with the Underdog: The Victimization of Shostakovich

This spectacle was grist to the mill of the Conference’s adversaries, and Nabokov was the one who pre-ground it the day before the Fine Arts Panel at an overcrowded Freedom House, when the AIF, under the blessing of Maurice J. Tobin, US Secretary of Labor, John Dewey, Governor of New York, Alexander Kerensky, Head of the former Russian Provisional Government, and Oksana Kasenkina, a school teacher who the previous summer had escaped “Stalin’s paradise” by jumping out of the third-floor window of the Soviet consulate in Manhattan, held a counter-rally of intellectuals “whose minds [were] not twisted into the straightjacket of the Communist Party line.”¹¹⁵ As far as Nabokov was concerned, Shostakovich’s visit to the United States was clearly not inspired by his own choice.¹¹⁶ For nearly a year since Zhdanov’s resolution on music, the Russian composer had been treated “like dirty laundry, thrown in a clothes hamper,” and now, all of sudden, they “picked him up, washed him, ironed him out, and sent him to America with five other colleagues in blue serge suits (with overly long sleeves, *à la Stalin*) to meet Dr. Harlow Shapley and a motley crew of Iron Curtain parrots, each with an olive branch in his mouth, in the Parrot Room of the Waldorf Astoria.” Who could remain unmoved, Nabokov asked rhetorically, by the pitiful sight of Shostakovich’s “pale, sensitive face twitching, his fingers nervously crushing the butt of a Russian cigarette”? Who could help but feel “an overpowering wish to take [him] by the arm and lead him out of the clatter, the parody of that noisy conference, into a

persisted in his loyalty for his country despite having his legs amputated after a Nazi-caused plane crash, Prokofiev thought that *The Story of a Real Man* would return him to favor. Nothing was less true: the run-through of the opera before the Committee on Artistic Affairs was disastrous, and the work was denounced for the same “sins” for which he had been discredited by the 1948 resolution. Morrison, *The People’s Artist*, 315–22, 328–33.

¹¹⁵ AIF cited in “200 Sponsors Join Culture Unit Foes,” *New York Times*, March 25, 1949, 18; “Anti-Red Session Is Hailed by Tobin,” *New York Times*, March 26, 1949, 3; “Counter-Rally Cheers Attacks On Russia for ‘Intellectual Purge,’” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 27, 1949, 1, 42.

¹¹⁶ Nabokov, “Music and Peace,” speech delivered at the AIF counter-rally, Freedom House, March 26, 1949, Nabokov Papers, 1-3 and Arnold Beichman Papers, 111-nf. In a cover letter to his speech, Nabokov expressed to Beichman, secretary of the American Federation of Musicians (AFM), his wish to become a member of the AFM, were it not that his financial condition was “brutally bum.” Perhaps Beichman could “devise a way whereby I could earn money[?]...What about m[e] giving a free talk to your Musicians Union local 802 on the music, art, lit[erature], and critics[?] purge in Stalin’s *Heimatland*? We could have a discussion thereafter and perhaps get somewhere with a few simple truths.”

quiet place, far and safe from the realities of the political world, far and safe from Stalin and his henchmen?"

As sympathetic as Nabokov was to a composer who is "not free to choose freedom," as unsympathetic he was to "those intellectuals in this country" who do not wish to believe the "cold and tragic facts" of murder, deportation, and exile of their colleagues in Russia; who continue to talk about finding a "*modus vivendi* and *operandi* with a government which has enslaved its own people [and] persecuted free thought, art, and science"; who still treat the Soviet government as if it were "another type of democratic government somewhere on the left, just a little further left than Mr. Wallace"; who believe that they can persuade this government by "gentle words and sweet song to change its ways." How long would it take for the deaf to hear that "Stalin's peace is silence: silence of a whole people; silence of the million of slave laborers and exiles; silence of the concentration camps; silence of death"?

Nabokov's both effective and affective speech chimed in with an image of Shostakovich which had been consistently cultivated in the Western press ever since *Pravda* defamed *Lady Macbeth* as the embodiment of anti-Sovietism: the gifted and modest artist defenseless in the face of the whims and expediencies of the totalitarian state. When Shapley announced Shostakovich's visit, hardly any newspaper failed to miss the opportunity to mention the several occasions on which the composer had been castigated by his government, and how, as a result thereof, he had been denied to accept earlier invitations to visit the United States.¹¹⁷ Especially the Stalinist ritual of public self-criticism could not stop to capture the imagination of the press: the *New York Herald Tribune* published an open letter by Juri Jelagin, Assistant Concertmaster of the Houston Symphony Orchestra, in which the émigré violinist heartened Shostakovich in the hope that the composer would find the way to tear himself loose from "the satanic clutches in which your great gift will soon be strangled," and when reporters rang the doorbell of Stravinsky to ask him if he would be willing to enter into a debate with his colleague from his former fatherland, they got the answer they wanted to hear: "How can you talk with people who are not free?"¹¹⁸ Even the House

¹¹⁷ Kenneth Campbell, "Shostakovich in Soviet Delegation To Attend Arts Conference Here," *New York Times*, February 21, 1949, 1, 6; "Chastised Russian Composer Coming to Conference in U.S.," *The Washington Post*, February 21, 1949, 1, 6; "Soviet Composer To Visit New York," *Los Angeles Times*, February 21, 1949, 14; "Dmitri Shostakovich To Visit N.Y. Parley Seeking World Peace," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 21, 1949, 24.

¹¹⁸ Jelagin, "Plea to Shostakovitch," *New York Herald Tribune*, March 27, 1949, 7. Stravinsky had refused to join the rank of US musical representatives, including Bernstein, Copland, Koussevitzky, Eugene Ormandy, Bruno Walter, Fritz Busch, Vladimir Horowitz, Gian-Carlo Menotti, Samuel Barber, Roy Harris, and Lukas Foss, in signing a telegram of welcome to Shostakovich that had been prepared by Downes, since all his "ethic and esthetic convictions oppose[d] such a gesture." "Stravinsky Snubs Composer," *New York Times*, March 18, 1949, 15.

Committee on Un-American Activities considered the “talented young composer” as a victim of “men in the Soviet Politburo who do not know the difference between a G clef and a hammer and sickle,” and who forced the “talented young composer” to bow to their decree to “produce music to which workers can beat time and hum as they try to accelerate production.”¹¹⁹

Well aware of the public appeal of seeing someone struggling with embarrassment (according to Nabokov “the only legitimate way to expose the internal mores of Russian communism”), the AIF participants exploited the tactics of confrontation to the full: more than once they questioned Shostakovich about the state of artistic freedom in the Soviet Union and the Party’s critique on the work of his and his colleagues, and time and again the composer apologized for his periodic lapses into “bourgeois formalism.”¹²⁰ “Tragic,” “heart-rending,” “painful” are some of the qualifications used in descriptions of Shostakovich’s appearance, “a symbol of the harshness of the police state, [who] spoke like a Communist politician and acted as though he were impelled by hidden clock-work rather than the mind which had composed resounding music.” “Thin, diffident, hands tremble, seems to wish he were anywhere but here—an obscenity to have this composer endorse his tormenters,” cultural critic Irving Howe jotted down in his notebook upon observing Shostakovich during ‘his’ lecture. “The Waldorf stage is really a KGB interrogation center and Sh[ostakovich] is answering questions under a blinding light.” Arthur Miller wondered with hindsight whether Shostakovich’s “rote statement and silence [were] additional payments of dues to avoid worse punishment.” Indeed, “this whole peace-making mission,” Nabokov ensured his audience, “was part of a ritual redemption [Shostakovich] had to go through before he could be pardoned again.” Thus, from the picketer milling about the Waldorf with a banner advising the Soviet composer to “jump thru the window” after the example of Oksana Kasenkina to the AIF which appealed to him to “seek sanctuary

The next day, the Soviet paper *Red Star* [*Krasnaya Zvezda*] condemned the composer as a “traitor and enemy of our fatherland.” *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 1, 358–9. Thereupon, Stravinsky agreed to be listed on the international committee of sponsors of the AIF, alongside George Balanchine, Benedetto Croce, Vernon Duke, T.S. Eliot, Clement Greenberg, Karl Jaspers, André Malraux, Jacques Maritain, George Orwell, Bertrand Russell, and Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. Shostakovich, incidentally, also replied “no” to the question whether he would be willing to meet Stravinsky. “Shosty Snubs Stravinsky,” *New York Journal American*, March 23, 1949, 2.

¹¹⁹ HUAC, *Review of the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace* (April 19, 1949): 13.

¹²⁰ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 237; “Shostakovich and Two Colleagues Defend Soviet Control of Arts,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 27, 1949, 1, 38. The poet Robert Lowell asked Shostakovich at the Writing and Publishing panel to “answer, in detail, the effect of [official] criticism on the integrity of the artist.” He received one line from the composer via Fadeyev: “Our musical criticism, reflecting the life and movement of our music, brings me much good, since it helps me to move my music forward.” *Speaking of Peace*, 87.

in a land that has so often opened its doors to the persecuted of the earth” and expose “the threat to civilization contained in the Soviet system of mind control,” few seemed to have held it possible that the Soviet composer actually subscribed to the words he spoke or were spoken in his name.¹²¹ Thus, too, Shostakovich, who had been sent to be embraced and propagandized as the icon of the progressive left, was effectively turned into an icon of what was wrong in Stalin’s conception of democracy.

Amidst all these speculations about Shostakovich’s predicament, the questions raised by the music-related lectures delivered at the Fine Arts Panel seemed to have passed unnoticed. Should music provide the listener with a refuge for thoughts and feelings nobler than those inspired by everyday ignoble desires? Should it make the listener conscious of the ways society disciplines him? Or, a step further, should it incite the listener to revolution? Is music a private matter, or should it be an active force in shaping collective consciousness? Should it merely appeal to the imagination, or should it also persuade the listener to translate his imagination into reality? Should the artist keep himself at a critical distance to society, or should he—to cite Shostakovich’s speechwriter—“plunge into the very midst of life to influence its course”?¹²² For someone like Copland, the attractiveness of Shostakovich, despite his weaknesses, resided precisely in his (professed) endeavors to write music that “communicates” with, rather than speaks over the heads of, unprivileged listeners.¹²³ Mirroring the relentless political polarization that marked the late 1940s, the views presented by representatives from the field of music during the Waldorf Conference may be read as responses to these questions—responses which either unambiguously politicized music (Shostakovich alias Stalin and Nabokov) or, rather helplessly, tried to safeguard her from being dragged into profane dispute (Downes and Copland).

Simple Truths: Progressivism in Decline, Anti-Stalinism on the Rise

The Waldorf Conference closed with a mass rally in Madison Square Garden, a grand finale culminating in Shostakovich playing a piano transcription of the Scherzo of his Fifth Symphony—the work which after the 1936 denunciations had been sealed by Stalin’s arbiters of musical

¹²¹ “Tumult at the Waldorf,” *Time*, April 4, 1949, 21–3; “Shostakovitch,” *The Washington Post*, April 3, 1949, B4; Macdonald, “The Waldorf Conference,” 32B; Howe, *A Margin of Hope: An Intellectual Autobiography* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982), 157–8; Miller, *Timebends*, 239; Nabokov, *Old Friends and New Music*, 205; George S. Counts, speech delivered at the AIF counter-rally, “The Soviet Ideological Assault on the West,” March 26, 1949, Hook Papers, 112–6.

¹²² Quoted from Shostakovich’s statement delivered at the Waldorf Conference’s opening banquet, March 25, 1949. *Speaking of Peace*, 125–6.

¹²³ Copland, *Our New Music: Leading Composers in Europe and America* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1941), 22.

soundness as “a Soviet artist’s creative reply to just criticism.” After the about 18,000 lucky ticket holders had wriggled their way through a picket of 2,000 protesters reported to be “far more boisterous and pugnacious than at any time” since the start of the Conference, they were treated one last time with speeches that confirmed critics in their disbelief on the Conference’s proclaimed neutrality. Striking a remarkably less vituperative tone than in Wrocław, Fadeyev denounced the North Atlantic Pact and proclaimed that the fate of world peace lay in the hands of America’s leaders only. This was Fadeyev’s “simple truth” to which he—as it appeared earlier that day during the plenary meeting at which the concluding resolutions were formulated—did not tolerate contradiction. For when at that meeting the political scientist Frederick L. Schuman suggested that the Soviet Union and the United States were equally to blame for the deterioration of international relations and the increasing war danger, the Soviet spokesman flatly retorted to general applause that not a single soul in his country desired another violent confrontation. Schuman subsequently vitiated his statement, conceding that only the United States harbored a small but influential war-seeking pressure group, although to his view this group was not very influential in Washington—a view that, predictably, drew a chorus of boos.¹²⁴ Shapley made a feeble attempt to restore the damage wrought by this embarrassing moment by refusing to concede to those delegates who called for militant resolutions that explicitly backed the Soviet foreign policy and attacked the North Atlantic Pact.¹²⁵ The resulting innocuous phrasing of the resolutions—urging for a strengthened United Nations, international cooperation between peace movements throughout the world, and the defense of the Bill of Rights in a climate of “warmongering,” “thought control,” and discrimination against minority citizen groups—did not prevent the Cominform and Soviet press from claiming a victory, though. In their analysis, the New York meeting had, despite “the atmosphere of

¹²⁴ Richard H. Parke, “Global Unity Call, Cheered by 18,000, Ends Peace Rally” and “2,000 Pickets Jeer Session At Garden,” *New York Times*, March 28, 1949, 1, 4; Charles Grutzner, “‘Action’ United Set Up For Parley Goals,” *New York Times*, March 28, 1949, 3; “Russians at ‘Peace’ Rally Assail U.S., Atlantic Pact, Say Moscow Is Anti-War,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 28, 1949, 1–2; D. M. Davis, report on the Waldorf Conference, 69-79.

¹²⁵ According to the State Department report about the Conference, only the proceedings of this plenary session about the resolutions gave substantial rise to suspect behind-the-screen directions. When voices from the floor called for a strengthening of the resolutions to the effect that they would criticize the United Nations for not being a true “world government” and explicitly profess a commitment to the upcoming Paris peace rally, “Shapley became rather nettled and did not seem able by himself to bring an end to the discussion.” He then recognized first Howard Fast and then Albert Kahn (both CPUSA members) from the floor, who strongly spoke for refraining from amendments. “They carried their point and the discussion was ended. It seemed obvious that at this point the inner clique [of the CPUSA] was charging in to steer things in the direction in which they were intended to go.” D. M. Davis, report on the Waldorf Conference, 3-4, 80-84.

unbridled reactionary hysteria” in which it took place, successfully mobilized “progressive American forces” in the world-wide peace movement.¹²⁶

This impression of “reactionary hysteria” was only reinforced when the State Department scotched NCASP’s planned two-week coast-to-coast “peace” tour of the foreign delegates by notifying them that their visa had only been granted for the purpose of attending the Waldorf meeting, and that with its conclusion they were expected to leave the country. Friend and foe agreed that this move only added to the media hype at the expense of the United States, reminding as it did—as the British ambassador to the United States reported to his government—of “the hysterical fear which any form of Communist activity is liable to inspire amongst all sections of American society, in spite of the negligible danger to the country’s security that this is likely to involve.”¹²⁷ Indeed, considering the numerous editorials and letters to the editor concerning the Conference, the Truman administration’s treatment of this matter, although consistent with existing visa regulations, seemed only to have played into the hands of the Soviet delegation. It was, after all, an anything but flattering spectacle for Washington to see Shostakovich mounting the stairs of a Stockholm-bound American Overseas Airlines plane, cartons of cigarettes tucked under one arm and excess hand luggage stuffed with phonograph records in the other, leaving behind a vacant piano bench where he had been scheduled to perform.¹²⁸ Moreover, in the near absence of delegates from Western Europe, Fadeyev and his team did not have to share the limelight with

¹²⁶ “Na kongresse deyateley nauki i kul’turi SShA v zashchitu mira” [At the Lively Congress on Science and Culture for the Defence of Peace in the United States], *Pravda*, March 28, 1949, 4; Joseph Newman, “*Pravda* Calls U.S. Divided by ‘Peace’ Rally,” *New York Herald Tribune*, March 29, 1949, 8; Harrison E. Salisbury, “Cultural Session Hailed in Moscow,” *New York Times*, March 30, 1949, 14; “U.S.A. Cultural and Scientific Congress for World Peace,” *For a Lasting Peace, For a People’s Democracy!* [Cominform bulletin], April 1, 1949, 6.

¹²⁷ Kalman Seigel, “‘Culture’ Visitors Told By U.S. To End Tour and Go Home,” *New York Times*, March 30, 1949, 1, 14; “Faintheartedness,” *The Washington Post*, March 31, 1949, 10; Oliver Franks, Ambassador to the United States, to Ernest Bevin, Foreign Secretary, April 13, 1949; J. M. Walsh, Deputy Consul General at New York, report about the Waldorf Conference, March 29, 1949, Records of the Foreign Office (TNA), FO 371/74175. All opponents to the Conference interviewed by the State Department analyst agreed that the ambiguous visa policy had played into the hands of the Conference organizers, who “continually and effectively used it in a variety of ways, dramatizing it and draining the last drop of value out of it.” Davis, report on the Waldorf Conference, 10.

¹²⁸ Marc Blitzstein, one of the American composers who had accompanied Shostakovich from conference functions to concerts and private gatherings, described this scene as “a windfall of propaganda-opportunity for the ‘enemies of democracy.’” Cited by Mark Gordon, *Mark the Music*, 327; Richard H. Parke, “7 Cultural Rally Russians Depart Carrying Big Supply of Cigarettes,” *New York Times*, April 4, 1949, 1, 7. Shapley had arranged for Shostakovich to appear, among others places, with Koussevitzky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra in Philadelphia and Washington, DC, in concerts that would have—in the words of the Soviet ambassador Alexander A. Panyushkin—“a definite propaganda value.” J. Edgar Hoover, Director FBI, to the Attorney General, March 7, 1949, FBI file NCASP, sec. 1.

possibly less ardent proponents of the Soviet line. As such, the Kremlin had indeed been given carte blanche to extend its message without having to deal with any more opposition than it had received in Wrocław.

Nevertheless, in the numerous pages that covered the Conference in its aftermath, the controversy would be definitely settled in favor of its opponents.¹²⁹ A week after the affair, *Life* magazine, dedicated to enlighten its readership to Communist tactics, published fifty mug shots of “innocent dupes,” including Jo Davidson, Arthur Miller, Albert Einstein, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein, Norman Mailer, Charles Chaplin, Olin Downes, Thomas Mann, and Harlow Shapley, who, “wittingly or not,” had allowed themselves to be induced to lend their names to Communist front organizations.¹³⁰ Whereas the State Department investigated the speakers’ past participations in its information and exchange programs (including Shapley and Copland), HUAC compiled a congressional report that denounced the Conference as “a supermobilization of the inveterate wheelhorses and supporters of the Communist Party and its auxiliary organizations,” and cited the names of those who had “time and again been used by the Communists as decoys for the entrapment of innocents.”¹³¹ A year later, many of these “dupes” found themselves blacklisted in *Red Channels*, the notorious report on Communist influence in the media.¹³² Amongst them was Aaron Copland, who eventually, in 1953, would be subpoenaed by Senator Joseph McCarthy’s Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations about his past political associations, all of which the composer denied, had forgotten, or trivialized by stating that he lent his name to particular causes as a socially engaged musician, not as a spokesman for any political line whatsoever.¹³³ Despite this attempt to detach politics from

¹²⁹ For an analysis of the dispute about the Conference that continued to be fought by various opinion magazines after the event, see Jumonville, *Critical Crossings*, 40–8.

¹³⁰ “Red Visitors Cause Rumpus,” *Life* (April 4, 1949): 39–43.

¹³¹ Lawrence S. Morris, Chief Division of Libraries and Institutes, to Jesse M. MacKnight, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, May 9, 1949, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Educational Exchange, Division of Libraries and Institutes, P 236, 4-CSCWP; HUAC, *Review of the Scientific and Cultural Conference for World Peace* (April 1949): 1.

¹³² *Red Channels: The Report of Communist Influence in Radio and Television*, published by Counterattack, American Business Consultants, June 22, 1950.

¹³³ “Testimony of Aaron Copland,” May 26, 1953, in *Executive Sessions of the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations of the Committee on Government Operations, Eighty-Third Congress, First Session, 1953* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 2003), vol. 2, 1267–89; “I have never been and am not now a member of the Communist Party. As a composer believing strongly in freedom I have always opposed and I still oppose the restrictions imposed by the Soviet Union and other dictatorship states upon all of the basic freedom including the freedom of an artist or composer to write the kind of music he wishes....As a composer I did and do devote virtually all of my time and energies to writing music and books about music, but I am also a human being sensitive to certain human problems such as the maintenance or development of the conditions under which artists as free men can do their best creative work. I am not, however, a political

music, the damage—albeit temporarily—had been done: earlier that year his *Lincoln Portrait* had been dropped from President Eisenhower’s inaugural concert as Republicans felt that they would be the butt of ridicule “had Copland’s music been played at the inaugural of a President elected to fight communism.”¹³⁴

Upon his return to the “bulwark of peace,” Shostakovich would continue his hazardous *pas de deux* with the Soviet regime, inscrutable to many until Solomon Volkov’s controversial publication of the composer’s memoirs thirty years later, in which he recalled “with horror” his New York trip:

People sometimes say that it must have been an interesting trip, look at the way I’m smiling in the photographs. That was the smile of a condemned man. I felt like a dead man. I answered all the idiotic questions in a daze, and thought, when I get back it’s over for me. Stalin liked leading Americans by the nose that way. He would show them a man—here he is, alive, and well—and then kill him. Well, why say lead by the nose? That’s too strongly put. He only fooled those who wanted to be fooled. The Americans don’t give a damn about us and in order to live and sleep soundly, they’ll believe anything.¹³⁵

Nabokov was not far from the truth in suggesting that Shostakovich’s second rehabilitation was contingent upon his participation in the Soviet delegation. Upon his return, he was bestowed the honor to partake in the organizing committee for Stalin’s seventieth birthday and a commission to glorify in music Stalin’s impractical plan to “restore” by reforestation the Central Asian steppes to an imagined pre-historical state. The dashed off oratorio, *The Song of the Forests*, won him the Stalin Prize and a restoration of certain privileges, including the “privilege” to represent the Soviet Union at

expert.” As to his performance at the Waldorf Conference’s Fine Arts Panel, Copland testified that “my chief purpose in attending the Conference was to test out the idea whether it was possible in the cultural field for Americans and persons from Communist countries to find some basis for agreement.” Although he got convinced after the meeting that the event “was being used by Communists for their own ends,” Copland assured that he had not accepted the invitation to speak in order to support the Communists, and pointed out that he criticized the Soviet Union for making “all cultural interchange...difficult, if not impossible, when all foreign music from the West is condemned in advance.” Copland to Joseph McCarthy, June 5, 1953, Copland Collection, 243-7.

¹³⁴ Statement by an Illinois Republican representative cited in “Copland Music Dropped from Inauguration: Composer’s Ties with Red Fronts Hit,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 17, 1953, 3.

¹³⁵ *Testimony: The Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich*, as related to and edited by Solomon Volkov [1979] (London: Faber and Faber, 1981), 111–12, 152. It should be mentioned that the authenticity of this source has been questioned ever since Laurel Fay found out that parts of the book appeared in previously published Russian-language publications signed by Shostakovich, thereby undermining Volkov’s claim that *Testimony* was exclusively compiled from first-hand conversations with the composer towards the end of his life. Fay, “Shostakovich Versus Volkov: Whose ‘Testimony?’,” *Russian Review* 39/4 (1980): 484–93. For an overview of this debate, see Malcolm H. Brown, ed., *A Shostakovich Case Book* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2004).

various Partisans for Peace conferences that followed upon the Paris congress in April 1949. At the same time, he saw one after the other of his Jewish friends and colleagues fall victim to Stalin's pogrom against "rootless cosmopolitanism." In their honor, he wrote the intimate Fourth String Quartet in D Major, which received its premiere nine months after their executioner's death.

Sidney Hook and Arnold Beichman lived to read Volkov's publication and felt confirmed in their belief that they had been right in construing Shostakovich as a victim, rather than an exponent, of the dictatorship he lived in. Their colleague William Barrett was less convinced at the time. In contrast to all who had observed in "[Shostakovich's] face the unhappy soul of a musical genius suffering under the heavy burden of Russian censorship," Barrett could not help but see in the Soviet composer "an artist with a very pliant backbone" rather than "a soul in torment." Indeed, his colleague Irving Howe consented, as there was no way of knowing whether Shostakovich wrote his speech himself or delivered it under pressure, one had to wonder whether he was indeed the "pathetic little man, obviously ill at ease and wishing to be away from these painful discussions" that so many Americans made of him. "Was he a victim, as we liked to think, or had he too become calloused by the alternate privileges and rebukes of the Stalin regime?" Norman Cousins, who strongly distanced himself from the obsessive anticommunism as represented by the AIF, had not a single doubt that Shostakovich believed every word of what he said and that "[h]e was entirely in place" at the occasion.¹³⁶

The nature of Shostakovich's relation to Stalin—varying from willful accomplice or self-serving opportunist to involuntary puppet or silent dissident—continues to feed into contemplations about his legacy to this very day. In fact, until ten to fifteen years ago, it was the dominant, not to say sole, leitmotiv of the musicological debate about the Cold War era.¹³⁷ Far

¹³⁶ Hook, *Out of Step*, 385; Beichman, "On the Razor's Edge," *Winnipeg Free Press*, November 17, 1979, 6; Barrett, "Culture Conference at the Waldorf," 489; Irving Howe, "The Culture Conference," *Partisan Review* 16 (1949), 511; *World Citizen: Norman Cousins Interviewed by Andrew D. Basiago*, Oral History Program, University of California, Los Angeles (1992), vol. 2, 368. The conductor Thomas Sanderling explained Shostakovich's ideological statements at Composers' Congresses or Peace Conferences as a calculated choice on his own part: it allowed him to build up enough credit with officials to use his authority for personal interventions on behalf of people facing ostracism. Wilson, *Shostakovich*, 265–6. Although Laurel Fay pointed out that Shostakovich was fluent in officialese, most of his official statements and writings did not flow from his own pen, if only because he could not be trusted to strike the right chord, ideologically speaking. Nevertheless, the fact that much of his statements were ghosted by others does not say anything about whether or not he shared the opinions published over his signature. Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 173–4.

¹³⁷ The positions in this debate vary between the extremes of those who insist on portraying Shostakovich as a lifelong dissident, and his works as latent indictments of Stalin's regime (Volkov/MacDonald), to those who resist any attempt at casting the composer in a preconceived

more pertinent than fathoming the mind of someone who, for whatever reason, ostensibly did not wish to be read as an open book, the major lesson to draw from the Waldorf Conference is to see where a sphere of distrust and intimidation can lead to. In a period of two or three years after World War II, a climate enveloped major parts of the globe which allowed hardly, if any, public figure to be ambiguous in his or her stance vis-à-vis the two powers that had come to dominate global politics. Failure to endorse the same line as the one espoused by those in power in your country at a given point of time could lead you to court and ruin your career, and in Stalin's utopia, bring you in a labor camp or before a firing squad as well.

This rang particularly true for the issue of peace: for insofar the Conference did get anything across about peace at all, it was that those who after the promulgation of Truman's and Zhdanov's doctrines continued to advocate a peace predicated on coexistence called trouble upon themselves. As far as Washington and Moscow were concerned, peace depended on the necessary amount of military strength to deter the other side from implementing its perceived malicious schemes. In this trial of strength, the greatest asset to the United States, the monopoly on the "A-bomb," was at the same time its greatest liability—not only because their ideological enemy *could* exploit it but also knew *how* to exploit it. The Waldorf Conference had once more put the finger on America's sore spot, William Barrett concluded, being its lack of an "organization adequate in resources, energy, or direction to fighting Stalinist propaganda on a satisfactory intellectual level."¹³⁸ This lacuna would be filled sooner than he might have expected.

role (that of political dissident, alienated modernist, etc.) and reducing his instrumental music to a single interpretation (Taruskin). Solomon Volkov, *Shostakovich and Stalin: The Extraordinary Relationship between the Great Composer and the Brutal Dictator* (New York: Knopf, 2004); Ian MacDonald, *The New Shostakovich* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990); Richard Taruskin, "Shostakovich and Us," in idem, *Defining Russia Musically: Historical and Hermeneutical Essays* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 468–97.

¹³⁸ Barrett, "Culture Conference at the Waldorf," 493.

Five to Twelve

Mobilizing the “Free Intelligentsia” for the Cultural Cold War

I warn you with all my heart: come, if you can...I might sound like a horrified alarmist, but I do not think I am wrong on this.¹

Nicolas Nabokov (1950)

What a strange time we are living in, what a curious time, of mirage and wishful thinking, believing that things might straighten themselves, even without our giving a single knock at the door. What a strange time, when masses of people in Germany believed until the last moment that Hitlerism was a good thing. The Jews in Berlin were saying that Hitler was a good man in 1932. Why am I speaking this way? It is simply because I believe that in our time everybody is surrounded by dangers. The dangers spring not only from the totalitarian way of life of the totalitarian power. The dangers flow from a fear to study a question to the bottom and look things into their face as they are and not as they seem to be. How many people do not want to see things as they are and try to see things as they would like them to be?²

Nicolas Nabokov (1955)

Apocalyptic was the mood in which Nabokov wrote to his old friend Nadia Boulanger, the influential French music educator and apologist for Stravinsky’s neoclassicism, in late 1950. Having just returned from a frenzied tour through Western Europe during which he had missed out on her, he sat down in his New York apartment to confide to her his appraisal of world events. In his estimation, a violent confrontation between the two superpowers that arose from the debris of World War II was both imminent and “*inevitable*.” The Soviets would declare war within a year, if not sooner—a tragic turn of events that the United States might be able to stymie through “a preventive war, i.e., an atomic bombardment of the Soviet Union,” were it not that “the Americans would *never* decide to do so.” With the outbreak of another “horrible total war” on the horizon, Nabokov implored his “dear, dear, dear Nadia,” as “a friend and as someone who knows a little more about what is going on than the man on the street,” to accept Sergey

¹ Nabokov to Nadia Boulanger (in French), December 8, 1950, Boulanger Papers, NLA-90, fols. 208-9.

² Nabokov, “Our Dedication,” inaugural speech delivered at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in Bombay, December 17-18, 1955, in *Freedom First* [ICCF] (February 1956): 4-5.

Koussevitzky's offer for a lectureship at Tanglewood, which would get her out of a Europe that he predicted to become immediately and completely occupied by the Soviets once the trumpets of war would start resounding from the Kremlin fortress.³ To Edmund Wilson, Nabokov expressed his disbelief at the sense of acquiescence that in his experience seemed to prevail in Europe. The major questions that seemed to preoccupy Europeans, Nabokov reported facetiously, were "whether Morocco is safe enough, or whether the Belgian Congo is safer," and "how well one will be able to run a profitable black market under Soviet occupation." The only spots where the Red Army might meet resistance were at "the approaches to the Mont-Blanc (which the Swiss Army has mined and is using as a natural 'deep freeze' for its supplies of Nestlé milk, watches and chocolate...) or (maybe?) Yugoslavia...otherwise everything will work smoothly and clockwise."⁴

Nabokov was anything but alone in anticipating a new Armageddon soon to be fought on European soil. "The Easterners are just farting around...with twaddle and double-talk," Sidney Hook's NYU colleague James Burnham remarked as he prophesied World War III. Already in August 1946, Burnham, who before his disillusion with Marxism had played a crucial role in the American Trotskyist movement, had been convinced that, unless the United States take the leadership in "the destruction of communism and the organization of some kind of workable world political system,...either Western Civilization is going to be—quite quickly—literally destroyed, or communism will conquer the world (which would also mean, in a somewhat different sense, the destruction of Western Civilization)."⁵ In the months prior to Nabokov's letter to Boulanger, Burnham's bleak prophecy seemed to come eerily close to its fulfillment: over the summer of 1949, the political divide in Germany consolidated in two separate states, Mao Zedong's Red Army assumed control over all of mainland China, and, most unexpectedly, the Soviet Union detonated its first atomic device in the steppes of Kazakhstan. In January 1950, the Soviet representative at the UN Security Council declared a boycott when his demand that the Nationalist Chinese delegation be replaced by one from the People's Republic of China (PRC) was rejected—a move that, ironically, enabled the Security Council a few months later to adopt a resolution to intervene on behalf of South Korea when it faced a PRC-supported invasion by North Korea. In sum, by the end of 1950, the possibility of an escalation in Europe, nuclear or not, in

³ Ibid., original emphasis.

⁴ Nabokov to Edmund Wilson, December 10, 1950, Wilson Papers, 50-1343.

⁵ Burnham to Hook, January 11, 1949 and August 19, 1946, Hook Papers, 8-5. Burnham discussed these scenarios in detail in his *The Struggle for the World* (New York: Day, 1947), which called for the United States government to launch a worldwide crusade against communism.

Europe emerged as a very real possibility, and many took it for granted that it was not the question if, but when, the Third World War would erupt.

What was at least as disconcerting to anti-Stalinist commentators was that all this time the Truman administration failed to effectively oppose Moscow's propaganda machinery that worked incessantly, and successfully, to pin—as journalist and former Soviet sympathizer Louis Fischer put it—“the stigma of belligerence...on America instead of on Stalin's breast where it belongs.”⁶ Indeed, in his address at the 1947 inaugural meeting of the Cominform, Andrey Zhdanov had rubbed the nose of the “imperialist and anti-democratic camp” in the fact that the Communist parties of Europe had achieved considerable successes in conducting work among the intelligentsia.⁷ This success would continue its pace and reach its apex at the first World Congress of the Partisans for Peace in Paris on April 20–25, 1949 (and simultaneously in Prague, for those delegates of Communist countries who had been denied a visa to France). Organized by the Wrocław Congress's Liaison Committee, this assembly of two thousand delegates from more than fifty countries set in motion a world-wide (and Kremlin-coordinated) movement of pro-Soviet peace manifestations calling for a ban on nuclear weapons, rejecting the non-aligned peace movement, and declaring the sovereignty of people living under the yoke of imperialism. “A tiny-weeny-eezy-neppish Munich,” yet a “victory of their peace campaign,” Nabokov assessed the Peace Congress for his good friend Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Harvard historian and future counselor to President John F. Kennedy. “That ominous and insidious odor of a fake *détente politique* is now going to petrify the anti-Stalinist Cold War efforts,” Nabokov feared, certainly since the Truman administration had accepted the vague promises and conditions on which the Kremlin lifted the Berlin blockade. “Instead of achieving a clear *modus separandi*, we have obtained a confused and ill-defined [and] limited *modus vivendi*.”⁸ How could Americans ever come to recognize the necessity of their country's participation in the Cold War if their government faltered time and again in its stance towards the Kremlin? How could they be made to see the need for a wide-ranging network of sympathizers from all rank and file that could challenge the enemy on the same scale and level at which the enemy was challenging the United States? “Unless we Americans are bent on suicide,” Edward W. Barrett, then Assistant Secretary of State for International Information who ardently

⁶ Fischer, “America Can Win the Peace,” *Saturday Review of Literature* (July 1, 1950): 7, 37.

⁷ Zhdanov, “The International Situation,” in *The Cominform: Minutes of Three Conferences*, 225–31.

⁸ Nabokov to Schlesinger, Jr., June 24, 1949, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf. Nabokov refers here to the 1938 great-power agreement permitting Nazi Germany's annexation of Czechoslovakia's Sudetenland.

lobbied Congress for a “cultural counteroffensive,” “we have no wise choice but to master the techniques of international persuasion.”⁹

True, steps had been taken towards addressing Washington’s weaknesses in the field of propaganda with the passing of the Smith-Mundt Act, which gave the State Department a mandate for spreading America’s conception of peace. Yet, this hardly sufficed to obviate the stereotype of the United States, so persistently cultivated by the Nazi and Soviet propaganda apparatuses, of a materialistic and culturally retarded nation, proclaiming superiority in democracy abroad while repressing non-White communities at home. Moreover, by 1949, the Voice of America was striking such a stridently anticommunist tone, Fischer explained, that it provided communists with a golden opportunity to prove to millions of deprived souls that the United States was intent on donning the mantle of “fascist imperialism” from Europe’s prewar colonial powers. Nicola Chiaromonte, too, warned the American reader that containing Soviet aggrandizement by military means only helped “Stalin’s game.” The Stalinist peace movement had already lost much of its prestige since the Hungarian and Czechoslovakian coups, the defeat of the Italian Communist Party in the 1948 elections, the purges in the field of the arts and sciences, the ousting of Yugoslavia from the brotherhood of socialist states, and the blockade of Berlin. It would be far more effective to ensure non-communist intellectuals in Europe that the United States would do everything in its power to prevent an all-devastating war and address what concerned them most: the rehabilitation of their country’s sovereignty.¹⁰

And this was precisely the point where the Truman administration fell short, Chiaromonte observed. His analysis was shared by the British poet Stephen Spender, who toured both Western and Eastern Europe in the spring of 1948. The announcement of the Marshall Plan had done much to swing the political choice away from Moscow, Spender noted, but his interviewees doubted whether the preservation of their culture was better safeguarded under American than under Soviet influence. Even though they realized that, for the time being, they depended on economic assistance from one of the superpowers, European intellectuals did not like to be pawns in the struggle for power between Moscow and Washington, and looked with anxiety at each step towards rearmament and remilitarization. What they truly desired was to have their fate in their own hands and to express themselves freely, as they had not been able to do under years of Nazi rule. With the Soviet Union having declared individual thinking anathema, Spender and Chiaromonte suggested, there was literally a world to

⁹ Barrett, *Truth Is Our Weapon*, 6.

¹⁰ Chiaromonte, “European Letter,” *Politics* (Summer 1948): 159–61.

be won for the United States if it would show itself committed to the plight of those who found themselves once again being silenced. The Western dedication to individual freedom would surely prove the best means to tear down Churchill's "Iron Curtain."¹¹ In fact, since the day the American monopoly on the atomic secret was broken, it had become their only weapon, unless they were willing to wage a war that would eclipse all previous wars in scale of destruction. What neither Spender nor Chiaromonte knew at the time was that various cogwheels in the Truman government had been set in motion to devise a master plan very much along their suggestions.

The Necessary Lie: Convergence of State-Private Interests

One such place was the successor to the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), America's wartime intelligence and covert action agency. As early as August 1945, just days after Hiroshima and Nagasaki had felt the annihilative power of the newest asset in military weaponry, anthropologist Gregory Bateson predicted to his superior, OSS chief Major General William J. Donovan, that with the invention of the atomic bomb, "we must expect a very marked increase in the importance of 'peaceful methods' of wielding international pressure." Without naming the Soviet Union, Bateson surmised that "our enemies will be even freer than [ever] to propagandize, subvert, sabotage and exert...pressures upon us," as a result of which "we ourselves—in our eagerness to avoid at all costs the tragedy of open war—shall be more willing to bear these affronts and to indulge in such methods."¹² Two years later, Bateson's prediction had become reality. For the time being, however, hardly anyone in Washington saw the point of maintaining a capacity for psychological and political warfare in peacetime but the OSS chief himself.

Long before the war came to an end, Donovan had lobbied Presidents Roosevelt and Truman to exempt his agency from postwar demobilization, and to expand it into a full-fledged branch of the government, answerable to the President only and authorized to coordinate both overt and covert intelligence activities as well as "subversive operations abroad."¹³ His

¹¹ Spender, "We Can Win the Battle for the Mind of Europe," *New York Times Magazine*, April 25, 1948, 15. Winston Churchill famously introduced the "Iron Curtain" phrase in his "Sinews of Peace" speech delivered in the presence of President Truman on March 5, 1946 at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri. *Churchill Speaks, 1897–1963*, ed. Robert Rhodes James (New York: Barnes and Noble, 1980), 877–84.

¹² Bateson, Research & Analysis, Office of Strategic Services, to Donovan, memorandum "Influence of Atomic Bomb on Indirect Methods of Warfare," August 18, 1945, Records of the Central Intelligence Agency (NARA), History Source Collection of the DCI Staff (1945–1960), CIA Historical Review Program (HRP 89-2/00022R), 15, 2-35.

¹³ Donovan to President Roosevelt, memorandum, November 18, 1944, reprinted in William M. Leary, ed., *The Central Intelligence Agency: History and Documents* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of

proposal met with fierce disapproval from other governmental agencies with intelligence functions (the Army, Navy, State Department, and the FBI), who were anything but intent on ceding their control to a “superspy agency” led by Donovan. Aware that most Congress members regarded OSS (as well as OWI) as a temporary wartime agency that would have to be disbanded after victory, Donovan’s detractors helped to spread the innuendo that the OSS chief endeavored to install an “all powerful intelligence service to spy on the postwar world and to pry into the lives of citizens at home”—an unfair assertion (Donovan never proposed to operate on the domestic scene) that successfully evoked denunciations from those fearing the prospect of a “Gestapo or OGPU [Soviet secret police from 1923–1934]” on American soil.¹⁴ President Truman agreed that Washington needed a permanent intelligence structure, the very lack of which four years earlier had enabled the Japanese to take the United States by surprise. Yet, he equally distrusted the power that might be wielded by a centralized secret organization run by the boisterous Ivy League fraternity of Wall Street lawyers, bankers, businessmen, and trustees that had operated the wartime agency. Several of the agency’s functions were transferred to the State and War Departments, but the expertise it had developed in conducting clandestine operations on the battle ground was abandoned.¹⁵

Within months, though, as the relationship with the Soviet Union grew grimmer by the day and plans for a new intelligence structure stranded in bureaucratic infighting, President Truman took the lead and ordered the creation of a Central Intelligence Group (CIG), which was mandated to coordinate and collate the work of existing intelligence units and report directly to the President and senior policymakers.¹⁶ Without the authority to collect intelligence by clandestine means and an independent pool of financial and personnel resources, the CIG was but a shadow of the wartime OSS. It would not take long for this to change. Within a year after the CIG’s creation, the Truman administration had come to embrace those who argued for a new defense structure that would shield the United States and its allies from the Communist advances in Eastern Europe. An important contributor to the blueprint of this new structure was George F. Kennan, the former diplomat at the US Embassy in Moscow, whose warning about

Alabama Press, 1984), 123–5; Donovan to President Truman, memorandum, September 13, 1945, repr. in *CLA Cold War Records: The CIA under Harry Truman*, ed. Michael Warner (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 1994), doc. 1.

¹⁴ Walter Trohan, “New Deal Plans Super Spy System,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, February 9, 1945, 1.

¹⁵ Executive Order 9621, “Termination of the Office of Strategic Services and Disposition of Its Functions,” September 20, 1945, repr. in *CLA Cold War Records*, doc. 3.

¹⁶ President Truman to the Secretary of State, the Secretary of War, and the Secretary of the Navy, January 22, 1946, repr. in Leary, *The Central Intelligence Agency*, 126–7.

the inherently Machiavellian disposition of Stalin's regime had earned him the position of prime consultant of Secretary of State George Marshall.¹⁷ His belief that the United States could best enter the competition by removing the factors on which the Soviet Union capitalized—economic dislocation, political discontent, and the success of local Communist parties—provided the rationale of the European Recovery Plan. Kennan had been quick to add, though, that “well-meant economic assistance” alone would not suffice to shift the balance of power in favor of the United States. The Communists had gained their strong position in Europe through an “unabashed and skillful use of lies”: propaganda, subterfuge, espionage, infiltration, bribery, and political intervention. If the United States really wanted to stand a chance in winning the Cold War, it was to employ the same methods of covert warfare and avail itself of the same “necessary lie.”¹⁸ Donovan agreed that military strength alone would not suffice to oppose “a resourceful and determined opponent who knows what it wants and is single-minded in its purpose.” The defense of the Western world was as much, if not more, dependent on “our moral leadership” and ability to “uphold the remaining free institutions of Western Europe” by the same means the enemy had perfected: intelligence, agitation, propaganda, reprisal, and economic sabotage.¹⁹

Kennan's and Donovan's advice touched on what was America's greatest lack and liability. After the trouble it had cost to convince Congress of the need for an overt information program in peacetime, it seemed simply out of the question to persuade it into supporting psychological and political warfare operations along the lines of those employed by the ideological enemy. Consequently, the only way to counter the Soviets at face level was to resort to secrecy. As incredible as it may sound, congressional approval for such a move was easily obtained. At this time, the threat of an upcoming confrontation with the Soviet Union loomed so large that virtually all measures that were said to preclude a second Pearl Harbor found acceptance. Within months after Kennan's appointment at the State Department, Congress passed the National Security Act, which significantly enhanced the legal position of President Truman's CIG, now rechristened as the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).²⁰

¹⁷ Kennan, “The Sources of Soviet Conduct,” *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 25/1 (July 1947): 566–82.

¹⁸ Kennan, *Measures Short of War: The George F. Kennan Lectures at the National War College 1946-47*, eds. Giles D. Harlow and George C. Maerz (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1991), 211–2, 302–3.

¹⁹ Donovan, “Stop Russia's Subversive War,” *The Atlantic Monthly* 181/5 (1948): 27–30.

²⁰ “National Security Act of 1947,” Public Law 253, Eightieth Congress, First Session, July 26, 1947, repr. in excerpt in *CIA Cold War Records*, doc. 30.

The limits of the CIA's authority and capabilities remained famously shrouded in obscurity. In the few sentences dedicated to the CIA, the National Security Act seems to confine the Agency's tasks to the collection, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence, were it not for the ambiguous addition "and other services of common concern." Already by December, the National Security Council (NSC)—one of the creations of the new legislation designed to advise the President—used this maneuvering space to instruct the CIA to initiate and conduct "covert psychological operations" aimed at counteracting "the vicious psychological efforts of the USSR, its satellite countries and Communist groups to discredit and defeat the aims and activities of the United States in its endeavors to promote world peace and security."²¹ Spurred by the alarming events of Europe's harsh and famine-stricken winter of 1947-1948—massive Communist-run strikes in France and Italy, the coup d'état in Czechoslovakia, and rising tensions between the Allied authorities in Berlin—the meaning of "psychological operations" was stretched beyond propaganda. In what became its first covert operation, the CIA prevented a Communist victory in the Italian elections of April 1948 by funneling an estimated \$10-30 million from private and corporate sources as well as opaque entries on the US budget to the Catholic opposition—an operation that would never have gained the approval of Congress had it overtly been proposed.

For the architects of Washington's new defense apparatus, the imperatives of the time justified bypassing the intricacies of democratic decision-making. The success of the secret intervention in the Italian elections—the Christian Democrats defeated the Communist-Socialist coalition with 48 per cent against 34 per cent of the vote—prompted Kennan not only to recommend the National Security Council design more clandestine political actions in addition to psychological operations, but also develop them into the CIA's specialty.²² Apprehensive of an imminent escalation of tensions in Berlin, the Council once again seconded Kennan's suggestion, and sanctioned the CIA to subvert "hostile forces" with the very tools the Russians had perfected, including, apart from propaganda and economic warfare, "sabotage, demolition and evacuation measures, assistance to underground resistance movements, guerrillas and refugee liberation groups, and support of indigenous anti-Communist elements in threatened countries of the free world." Importantly, the CIA was instructed to plan and execute its covert operations in such a manner that if they ever

²¹ National Security Council, Directive 4-A, December 17, 1947, repr. in *FRUS, 1945-1950: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, doc. 257.

²² Kennan, Policy Planning Staff, Department of State, "The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare," May 4, 1948, repr. in *FRUS, 1945-1950: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, doc. 269.

surfaced publicly, the US government could “plausibly disclaim any responsibility for them.”²³ The funding for such activities—a well-kept secret until well after the Cold War ended—was siphoned off from the Marshall Plan subsidies: participating countries were expected to match the aid they received by an equivalent sum in their own currency, five per cent (roughly \$200 million a year) of which was then, as legal property of the US government, distributed by the program’s overseas offices to European anticommunist groups that the CIA had chosen to support.²⁴ Finally, the United States had made a start with developing an apparatus for psychological and political warfare to challenge Communists at their own game.

In the years to come, plans for the CIA’s covert operations would be concocted and implemented by a unit that went by the deliberately inconspicuous name of the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). For reasons of “security and flexibility,” the OPC was not completely cut off from the overt world: it was to report to the State and Defense Departments, not to the CIA director.²⁵ Its existence only known by a few, the OPC was led by Frank G. Wisner, a flamboyant OSS spymaster who had been stationed in Romania, where he, like Nabokov, had been aghast at the sight of refugees, ethnic Germans, and prisoners of war being herded onto trains bound for Stalin’s gulags. Under Wisner, the OPC soon brimmed with a panoply of ideas for all kind of actions that could be imagined to fall under the vague phrase “covert operations,” ranging from propaganda, economic sabotage, political dislocation, blackmail, bribery, and infiltration to reckless paramilitary actions and war planning.²⁶ That the CIA lacked a legal mandate and budget to execute secret operations on a global scale turned out to be a minor obstacle: on May 27, 1949, Congress adopted the Central Intelligence Agency Act, which gave the agency *carte blanche* and a concomitant financial arrangement (authorizing the CIA to disburse funds without having to account for it to Congress) to do whatever it deemed necessary to prevent

²³ National Security Council, Directive 10/2, June 18, 1948, repr. in *FRUS, 1945–1950: Emergence of the Intelligence Establishment*, doc. 292.

²⁴ Finance Division to OPC Executive, “CIA Responsibility and Accountability for ECA [Economic Cooperation Administration] Counterpart Funds Expended by OPC [Office of Policy Coordination],” October 17, 1949, repr. in *CLA Cold War Records*, doc. 57.

²⁵ [Gerald Miller], “Office of Policy Coordination, 1948–1952” (February 1973), declassified in March 1997, FOIA section of the CIA website [<http://www.foia.cia.gov>].

²⁶ Studies about the formation of the CIA and its early operations are numerous. See, for instance, Bradley F. Smith, *The Shadow Warriors: OSS and the Origins of the CIA* (New York: Basic Books, 1983); Burton Hersh, *The Old Boys: The American Elite and the Origins of the CIA* (New York: Scribner’s, 1992); Evan Thomas, *The Very Best Men—Four Who Dared: The Early Years of the CIA* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995).

war.²⁷ The National Security Council, convinced that the very “survival of the free world” hinged on showing that the United States was determined and able to “frustrate the Kremlin design of a world dominated by its will,” immediately used this Act to expand the OPC’s budget dramatically.²⁸ Thus, within the shortest period of time, the OPC was running operations from outposts all over the world, helped by émigrés, exiles, refugees, defectors, and dissidents, as well as a myriad of US citizens who heartily lent their support to their government’s self-imposed mission to free the world from—in Nabokov’s words—“the closest thing to true evil that man has ever known.”²⁹

In order to lure Communist parties and regimes away from the Kremlin, Wisner and Kennan were particularly resolved to build a covert network of front organizations—student groups, publishing houses, labor unions, study groups, and other seemingly innocuous civic organizations—after the model of the Communist International (Comintern). They could not have wished for a better consultant than the Hungarian-born novelist Arthur Koestler, who in March 1948, while touring the United States to urge progressive liberals to face their responsibility to safeguard their European brethren from the Communist menace, called on William Donovan’s Wall Street law firm to discuss strategies aimed at countering Soviet propaganda.³⁰ Enrolled into the Communist Party in the early 1930s, Koestler had worked under Willi Münzenberg, the driving force behind the Comintern’s propaganda apparatus and network of front organizations until Stalin’s repressive and capricious politics opened his eyes to the dangers entailed in utopian ideologies. His faith broken, Koestler was the prototype of the ex-

²⁷ “Central Intelligence Agency Act of 1949,” Public Law 81-110, Eighty-First Congress, First Session, repr. in *CIA Cold War Records*, doc. 53.

²⁸ National Security Council, Report 68, April 7, 1950, reprinted in *FRUS, 1950*, vol. 1, 235–92, at 238 and 291–2. On the implications of NSC 68, see Leffler, *A Preponderance of Power*, 355–60. It should be added here that at this time, a CIA top secret review of world communism set up in late 1949 (“Project Jigsaw”) had concluded that, even though it did manipulate the Communist parties of other nations (the French and Italian in particular), there was no reason to assume that the Kremlin was acting on a master plan for global domination. Needless to say, this conclusion was stifled under the hysteria generated by the news of the Soviet bomb test. Trevor Barnes, “The Secret Cold War: The CIA and American Foreign Policy in Europe, 1946–1956,” *The Historical Journal* 25/3 (1982): 651.

²⁹ Nabokov to Kennan, December 27, 1951, Kennan Papers, 32–13.

³⁰ Koestler, “The Seven Deadly Fallacies” (1948), published in Koestler, *Bricks to Babel: A Selection from Fifty Years of His Writings* (New York: Random House, 1980), 240–4; “Koestler Puts Fate of World Up to U.S.,” *New York Times*, March 27, 1948, 3. Koestler visited the United States at the invitation of the International Relief and Rescue Committee (IRRC), which had been formed in 1933 by American liberals, leftists, and trade unionists to come to the aid of the victims of Nazism. For an account of his visit, see David Cesarani, *Arthur Koestler: The Homeless Mind* (London: Heinemann, 1998), 304–12, or Michael Scammell, *Arthur Koestler: The Literary and Political Odyssey of a Twentieth-Century Skeptic* (New York: Random House, 2009), 313–24.

communist whose disillusionment motivated him all the more to assist the free world's crusade against communism.³¹ Already a consultant for OPC's British counterpart (the Foreign Office's Information Research Department), he could enlighten Wisner on the ins and outs of artful persuasion. He could show how to produce propaganda without giving the propagandized the feeling that they are being propagandized; in other words, how to marry the ideal of apolitical culture, cherished by so many Americans, to realpolitik.

Two of the most well-known front organizations that emanated from Wisner's office in the wake of Koestler's visit were the National Committee for a Free Europe and the American Committee for Liberation for the Peoples of the USSR. From the outside, these committees appeared just like any of the countless voluntary, nonprofit interest groups that were thriving in American society. In reality, they served as fundraising covers for OPC's Crusade for Freedom, a large-scale psychological and political warfare program targeted at Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, respectively. Apart from ill-fated attempts to align the extremely contentious Russian émigré communities in the United States and Western Europe (Czarists, Mensheviks, White veterans, and a wide array of nationalist minority groups) in a united front against the Kremlin, these CIA properties managed Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberation (renamed Radio Liberty in 1964), which distinguished themselves—at least initially—from their overt counterpart, the Voice of America, in the seditiousness of their tone. Designed to hearten silent dissenters within the Soviet realm in the hope they would defect, these front organizations and their media outlets constituted the foundation of what Wisner liked to call his “mighty Wurlitzer,” an organ with pipes soon installed across the whole world and capable of playing any propaganda tune that suited the occasion.³² It did not take long for Wisner to learn that his Wurlitzer at times had the tendency to play itself, though.

³¹ Charles Bohlen, at the time Counselor of the State Department, had to convince US security officials that Koestler had truly broken with communism and that his book *Darkness at Noon* (1940)—a disquieting portrait of a Bolshevik party member tried for treason against the government that owed its rise in power to him—had been “very effective in combating the spread of communism in France.” Subsequently, the State Department informed the skeptic Attorney General that it considered Koestler's entry into the US as “highly desirable in the national interest.” FBI file Koestler, Koestler Archive, MS2308/2. While in the United States, Koestler spent “a most interesting two hours” with Bohlen, about which the latter reported to the Policy Planning Staff. Bohlen to Robert P. Joyce, April 12, 1948, Bohlen Official Papers (NARA), 1075A, 1-nf.

³² Stuart H. Loory, “The CIA's Use of the Press: A ‘Mighty Wurlitzer’,” *Columbia Journalism Review* 13 (September/October 1974): 12. For comprehensive surveys of the CIA's clandestine operations targeted at the Soviet bloc, see Peter Grose, *Operation Rollback: America's Secret War behind the Iron Curtain* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000) and Hugh Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer: How the CIA Played America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).

One specific covert operation that Kennan wished to see realized was the creation of a research facility for refugee scholars, which would be valuable not only in terms of intelligence accrual, but also for holding out a prospect of security to those contemplating an escape to the West. It will be remembered that the Friends of Russian Freedom (FRF) advocated precisely this dual agenda of, on the one hand, a “political and educational campaign” to convince Americans that ordinary Soviet citizens were victims, not accomplices, of their government, and broadcasts of “our information” with the aim of “driving a wedge between the Kremlin and the Russian people” on the other.³³ Although a draft statement of purpose ensured that “our organization will be entirely independent of the United States government and its policy,”³⁴ there is evidence to suggest that the FRF was one of the OPC’s first strides in “fronting,” especially if one realizes that Nabokov—not Hook or Macdonald, as others have suggested—was “the prime mover” behind the FRF initiative.³⁵ Nabokov so often exchanged thoughts with Kennan, Bohlen, and the State Department’s Policy Planning Staff about how to address the hapless situation which émigrés got caught up in once they had deserted the Soviet orbit, that the idea for the FRF might well have been conceived as one of the attempts to enlist émigré intellectuals in the Truman administration’s Cold War effort.³⁶ The likelihood of this scenario is proven by a shortlist of people slated to be invited for the FRF’s founding meeting, which, apart from the usual suspects, included members of, or close affiliates to, Washington’s intelligence community, among whom Irving Brown, a zealous trade unionist instrumental in facilitating OPC’s operations in Western Europe, Allen W. Dulles, one of OPC’s founding

³³ “Friends of Russian Freedom: Preliminary Statement,” February 2, 1949, Bertram D. Wolfe Papers, 6-48.

³⁴ Several participants of the FRF founding meeting in early March 1949 had vigorously objected to the statement concerning the prospected organization’s independence, as it could “imply disagreement with the government and might be misinterpreted as a new guise for Communism.” In the program’s final version, which was widely circulated for signatures, the adjective “entirely” was omitted. “Program of the Friends of Russian Freedom,” 1949, and minutes of the first FRF meeting, March 4, 1949, Macdonald Papers, 17-428. Despite the disclaimer about the FRF’s autonomy, Chiaromonte feared—for good reasons—that the new organization would be exploited by the CIA as a tool to recruit exiles and refugees for paramilitary missions in the Soviet bloc countries. Chiaromonte to Macdonald, December 15, 1948, Macdonald Papers, 10-241.

³⁵ According to Hugh Wilford, the FRF was the brainchild of Hook and the *Partisan Review* editors, whereas Eric Thomas Chester names Macdonald as the driving spirit behind the organization. Wilford, *The New York Intellectuals: From Vanguard to Institution* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 196; Chester, *Covert Network: Progressives, the International Rescue Committee, and the CIA* (London: Sharpe, 1995), 77. Macdonald, however, identified Nabokov as “the prime mover” behind the project in a letter to Chiaromonte, December 10, 1948, Chiaromonte Papers, 2-53. Although not the initiator, Macdonald collaborated closely with Nabokov in planning the FRF’s founding meeting. Macdonald to Hook, December 20, 1948, Hook Papers, 20-13.

³⁶ Nabokov to Robert P. Joyce, Policy Planning Staff, State Department, October 10, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-6.

fathers and future CIA director, and General Dwight Eisenhower, future US president.³⁷

If the OPC had anything to do with the FRF, it was apparently not bothered by the founding meeting's straying off the original agenda in order to plot a campaign against the upcoming Waldorf Conference. This agenda would be realized by another organization, the International Rescue Committee, which—in close coordination with OPC—opened an exile research institute in Munich.³⁸ While Wisner seemed to have lost interest in such a center in the United States, Kennan continued to press for it, not least because of the Truman administration failed to attend adequately to the needs and concerns of defectors, thus missing out on valuable sources of intelligence on the Eastern bloc. In 1951 he saw a chance when the Ford Foundation, which worked in close association with the CIA and the State Department in handling the “émigré problem,” entrusted him with the directorship of the Free Russia Fund (later renamed into the East European Fund), a charity initiative that assisted exiles and refugees from Soviet Russia and Eastern Europe in establishing a life in the United States. Apart from financial relief, the Fund accommodated research on the Soviet system by exile scholars and established the Chekhov Publishing House for the publication of Russian-language literature, in particular titles banned or censored in Communist-controlled countries.³⁹

Kennan approached Nabokov to set up a Russian cultural center in New York City (the “Pushkin House”) for the purpose of enabling Soviet fugitives to revive the traditions they had been forced to renounce and promoting understanding of their culture with the American public. Delighted that the proposals of the Friends of Russian Freedom of two year earlier finally seemed to be translated into action, Nabokov immediately sent in his resignation from his teaching posts at the Peabody Conservatory and Sarah Lawrence College, only to learn that the Ford Foundation's Board of Trustees decided not to carry on with the Pushkin House idea. Needless to say, this was once again a bitter pill to swallow for Nabokov. His failure to get security clearance under the 1948 Smith-Mundt Act had already dashed all hopes for a career at the State Department or the CIA that he might have

³⁷ “Friends of Russian Freedom: People to Ask to First Meeting,” December 16, 1948, Macdonald Papers, 17-428.

³⁸ Charles T. O'Connell, “The Munich Institute for the Study of the USSR: Origin and Social Composition,” *The Carl Beck Papers*, No. 808 (1990), Center for Russian and East European Studies, University of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; Chester, *Covert Network*, 74–83.

³⁹ For more on the Ford Foundation's links with the CIA, see Chester, *Covert Network*, 43–53; and Volker R. Berghahn, *America and the Intellectual Cold Wars in Europe: Shepard Stone between Philanthropy, Academy, and Diplomacy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2001), 214–49.

entertained,⁴⁰ and now the indirect line—working for the government via a private organization like the Ford Foundation—was cut off as well.⁴¹ The future was about to turn out brighter for him, though.

Building a “Little Deminform”: CIA’s Transatlantic Front for Freedom

Whether he was aware of it or not, Nabokov was able to witness OPC’s methods of “fronting” performed right under his nose. At the time when the Americans for Intellectual Freedom (AIF) were plotting their campaign against the Waldorf Conference, they suddenly found support from an unexpected corner. Arnold Beichman, the AIF executive secretary, recalled how one of his union friends had “persuaded” the Waldorf management by gentle force to lodge Hook’s party in a three-room suite, while another union contact made sure that the suite got equipped with ten phone lines. Nabokov was sent out to see Beichman’s boss, David Dubinsky, President of the International Ladies Garment Workers Union, to receive a subsidy of \$1,500. Thus by the time the AIF infantry moved into the Waldorf premises to install its headquarters, it had everything at its disposal to operate—in Nabokov’s words—“as efficiently as any Communist governmental outfit.” That the costs of the operation continuously exceeded the AIF’s budget appeared not to be a problem: whenever Beichman clamored for more

⁴⁰ Eight years prior to the disclosure of the CIA-CCF link, six words in a telegram-style outline for his second book of memoirs (“Episodes with the OSS and OWI”) suggest that Nabokov had tried to get involved (or perhaps had been involved) in the operations of the Office of War Information and the Office of Strategic Services. “Tentative Outline of a Book Entitled *Ages of Lives*,” November 1958, Harper & Row Publishers Records, 32-nf. (This book would eventually be published in 1975 with another publisher under the title *Bagázh: Memoirs of a Russian Cosmopolitan* [New York: Atheneum, 1975].) Nabokov’s naturalization file shows two verification requests from the OSS (dated July 26 and August 24, 1944), but his name does not appear in either the OSS personnel files or in the list of applications of those who were not recruited or hired. This confirms what Nabokov told W. H. Auden in January 1945, namely, that he had been trying for over a year to go overseas in some capacity, but to no avail. For these files, see the FOIA section of the NARA website [www.nara.gov]. Nabokov’s naturalization file (Certificate File Series, No. 4640765) can be requested from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services [www.uscis.gov]. For the Nabokov-Auden conversation, see *Bagázh*, 218.

⁴¹ Nabokov’s then-wife, Patricia Blake, wrote a moving letter to Kennan, expressing her grief over “the enforced interruptions and great humiliations” imposed upon her husband. As in 1948, the situation was as embarrassing to Kennan as it was beyond his control. He did not spell out the reasons for the cancellation of the Pushkin House project to the Nabokovs, but from his correspondence with the Ford Foundation’s director it appears that the problem resided in the justifiability of supporting a particular group of immigrants with facilities that were not available to other groups. From the internal correspondence, though, it appears that some board members questioned the efficiency of Kennan’s proposal, whereas others felt uneasy at the thought of the Foundation acting as a cover for CIA operations. Kennan to Paul G. Hoffman, Director Ford Foundation, January 8, 1951, November 23 and 29, 1951, Kennan Papers, 13-18; George Fischer, Director Free Russia Fund, to Nabokov, August 7, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-5; Blake to Kennan, September 6, 1951; Kennan to Blake, September 26, 1951; Nabokov to Kennan, October 9, 1951; and Kennan to Nabokov, October 18, 1951, Kennan Papers, 32-13; Sallie Pisani, *The CIA and the Marshall Plan* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1991), 46–52.

money to meet the mounting expenses, he was waited on hand and foot. Dubinsky's union would not allow the AIF mission to fail. It seemed a "miracle," Nabokov wrote in his memoirs, that "the suggestion of the need for an agitprop apparatus of our own produced one."⁴²

It was less of a miracle than it seemed, though. At the time of the Waldorf Conference, Dubinsky, a union leader with a profound distaste for communism, collaborated with OPC in routing covert funds to anticommunist and pro-American trade unions in Europe. With respect to the AIF operation, it is not clear whether Dubinsky acted on his own initiative or on a cue by Wisner (which would have been a breach of the rule that the CIA should not operate on American soil), but it seems unlikely that his largesse towards the AIF rested solely on the annual union dues of the ladies garment workers. Be it as it may, what is sure is that the efforts of the AIF to disrupt the Waldorf Conference did not pass unnoticed by Wisner's office. At the end of the AIF counter-rally, Nabokov was approached by a familiar face who congratulated him warmly for "this splendid affair you and your friends have organized," adding that "we should have something like this in Berlin." This was Michael Josselson, Nabokov's former ICD colleague, who, although having been honorably discharged from the Army in 1946, had stayed on in Berlin as Information and Editorial Specialist with OMGUS and, after the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany, the US High Commission. What many did not know at the time is that Josselson, besides his official function as Cultural and Public Affairs officer, had recently been recruited to lead OPC's Berlin station for Covert Action in its mission of creating a transatlantic front organization for leftist but non-communist intellectuals.⁴³

⁴² Beichman cited by Michael Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1949–1950," *Studies in Intelligence* [CIA Center for the Study of Intelligence] 38/5 (1995): 90; Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 233–7. According to Hook, the AIF's expenses were being covered by private donors, including himself, and two injections from Dubinsky's union. Hook, *Out of Step*, 388. Another AIF member estimated the total amount of union gifts at \$5,000. William Phillips, *A Partisan View: Five Decades in the Politics of Literature* (New York: Stein & Day, 1983), 148.

⁴³ Nabokov, *Bagázh*, 237–8. It should be noted that Josselson, whom Nabokov did not mention by name in his autobiography, did not recognize himself in Nabokov's account of their meeting at the AIF counter-rally. His archive includes a letter from Nabokov saying that "I am pretty sure that *you were there*... My memory of you coming up to me with a big smile and saying how good it all was, cannot possibly be *that* wrong. I can still see you getting up in the crowded little hall and walking over to me after my short speech about Shostakovitch..." Nabokov to Josselson, July 31, 1973, original emphases, Josselson Papers, 23-1. It is hard to imagine that Josselson would not have attended the counter-rally had he been in New York at the time. I have not been able to determine his whereabouts in March 1949, but he filed a clearance request with the FBI (a standard procedure for anyone seeking governmental employment) on July 28, 1949—something which had to be done in person at an FBI desk. The request form suggests that Josselson was applying for a position at the Voice of America, but that might have been a cover for an application with the OPC, which at the time was subordinated to the State Department. Remarkably, FBI Director Hoover commissioned an investigation on Josselson five weeks earlier,

From this moment onwards events succeeded each other quickly. The day after the Waldorf Conference ended, Wisner's office inquired with the State Department what it intended to do about the Paris peace congress, which was due to take place within less than a month. The Department replied that it was planning to orchestrate a response, but Wisner thought the suggested steps too weak and took matters into his own hands, securing five million francs (roughly \$16,000) of Marshall counterpart funds to enable David Rousset—editor of the former Resistance daily *Franc-Tireur* which in four years' time had changed its profile from pro- to anticommunist—to organize a proper counterdemonstration similar to the one the AIF had staged in New York. Anticommunist intellectuals from Germany, Italy, and the United States, including Hook and novelist James T. Farrell, received invitations to participate in this rally (their expenses being fully covered), which was to take place in Paris on April 30, 1949, under the name of the International Day of Resistance to Dictatorship and War.⁴⁴

The Paris counter-rally would not live up to the expectations of the OPC, the State Department, and Hook. Its organizers, members of a group of Marxists orbiting around Jean-Paul Sartre (the *Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire*), had indeed disassociated themselves from the Communist Party, but they obviously had not come to embrace the US-oriented course of the Socialist Party. Instead, they advocated a neutralist position which held that France, and Europe as a whole, should as quickly as possible regain its economic and political independence lest its cultural identity evaporate under the Soviet-American duopoly.⁴⁵ Accordingly, Hook's speech, which defended the Marshall Plan and North Atlantic Pact as instruments to ensure that Western Europe could recuperate and stabilize

on June 21, 1949. One of his former colleagues at the Gimbel Brothers Department Store told the FBI that Josselson, when he stopped by at him in May, indicated he was "extremely busy on a highly secretive mission." FBI report dated July 7, 1949 (Philadelphia Field Office). All of the FBI informants could vouch for Josselson's loyalty and integrity. "Even during the period when many persons of liberal, flexible minds were inclined to be tolerant of Communism," Nabokov informed, "Josselson was firmly opposed to it and to the Russian Government." FBI report dated July 3, 1949 (New York Field Office). In late 1950, Josselson was released from his post at HICOG's Public Affairs Division "because of protracted illness." *Information Bulletin* [HICOG] (October 1950): 72. In reality, he had been working behind the screens for the OPC to get the CCF project off the ground. About Josselson's recruitment for the OPC, see his autobiographical note "The Prelude to My Joining the 'Outfit,'" summer 1969, Josselson Papers, 27-2; and *Battleground Berlin: CIA vs. KGB in the Cold War*, ed. David Murphy et al. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), 105-6.

⁴⁴ Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," 91. It should be noted here that Warner, as member of the CIA History Staff, used classified records unavailable to other scholars. Accordingly, his un-annotated account of the OPC's involvement in events that led up towards the formation of the CCF is not fully verifiable and, being subjected to the CIA's declassification regulations, incomplete and nonobjective.

⁴⁵ Sartre, "European Declaration of Independence," *Commentary* 9/5 (1950): 407-14. See also Grémion, *Intelligence de l'anticommunisme*, 83-5.

into a social democratic economy without having to fear a Soviet invasion, met with fierce resistance. As if that were not enough, the meeting was disrupted by anarchists and Trotskyists who at one moment seized the floor to denounce the organizers, delegates, and the whole occasion *tout court*. Clearly, OPC's mission of building what Wisner called a "little Deminform" could not be entrusted to those "goats and monkeys whose antics completely discredit[ed] the work and statements of the serious and responsible liberals," or in Hook's more subtle formulation, to those who failed to distinguish between the "totalitarian inferno" that keeps people in check through means of terror and the democratic heaven "short of paradise," which, with all its imperfections, at least provided the possibility for genuine criticism and reform.⁴⁶ In sum, if intellectuals were to compete with their counterparts in the Partisans for Peace movement effectively, then OPC would have to take a firm lead in creating a "Partisans for Freedom" equivalent.

There was no lack of ideas concerning the formation of such an organization. At the Paris counter-rally, Hook discussed the issue with the former editor of the anti-Stalinist fortnightly *The New Leader*, Melvin J. Lasky. Having stayed on in Berlin as a correspondent after his service as a combat historian with the US Army, Lasky carved a name for himself in the ideological contest as it unfolded on the German scene. It started with a stir he caused at the First German Writers Congress, early October 1947, an event initiated by SMAD's chief of cultural affairs Alexander Dymshitz and sponsored by the Kulturbund. Convened for the ostensible purpose of celebrating the reconciliation of Nazi exiles with inner émigrés, in reality the Congress prodded writers to take sides in the struggle against the "new fascists" threatening German unity. Thanks to a scheme contrived with the acting chairman of the "Literature and Political Power" panel, his friend Günther Birkenfeld, Lasky could take the floor to lecture about the imperfect but viable status of cultural freedom in the United States, concluding that a truly progressive society does not excommunicate as "poisonous scum" those who refuse to applaud every step of their rulers, like Eisenstein, Zoshchenko, or Akhmatova.⁴⁷ Needless to say, this snub towards the Soviet delegation exploded like a bombshell, splitting the congress between supporters and opponents of the sovietization of German

⁴⁶ Wisner cited by Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," 92; Hook, "Report on the International Day against Dictatorship and War," *Partisan Review* 16/7 (1949): 722–32. See also his memoirs of the event, *Out of Step*, 397–401. The full text of his speech has been published under the title of "Science, Freedom and Peace" in *The New Leader* 32/26 (1949): 6–7.

⁴⁷ For a transcription of Lasky's speech at the First German Writers Congress, see *Erster Deutscher Schriftstellerkongress, 4.-8. Oktober 1947: Protokoll und Dokumente*, ed. Ursula Reinhold, D. Schlenstedt, and H. Tannenberger (Berlin: Aufbau, 1997), 295–301.

life and earning Lasky the epithet, conferred by Dymshitz, of being one of the “most dangerous subjects of the present day.”⁴⁸ General Clay, too, was furious at Lasky for frustrating his attempts at de-escalating tensions between SMAD and OMGUS, and even considered expelling him from Berlin.⁴⁹ He was soon to change his mind, though.

Three weeks after the German Writers Congress, Clay decided no longer to heed Soviet interests, and followed the suggestion from his psychological warfare chief, Robert McClure, to launch Operation Talk Back, a campaign aimed at subverting SMAD’s propaganda and promoting America’s vision of a postwar Germany predicated on liberal/social democratic principles.⁵⁰ Subsequently, in an echo of Nabokov’s report to Charles Bohlen of a few months earlier, Lasky wrote Clay that America’s policy of merely presenting the facts and truth was not enough. Since SMAD’s propaganda machinery was reworking the same anti-American tropes on which recent generations of Europeans had been fed—i.e., tropes harping on America’s alleged economic selfishness, political conservatism, cultural waywardness, and moral hypocrisy—“our truth cannot afford to be an Olympian bystander.” To face this challenge, the United States needed to “enter the contest” with a truth “active” enough to win Germany’s cultural elite for the American cause. This time Clay was enthusiastic about Lasky, and appointed him to ICD’s Political Information Branch, where he was provided with all the facilities and counterpart funds needed to create a monthly magazine, *Der Monat*, which was to give voice to the anti-totalitarian intellectual, to create understanding for US foreign policy objectives, and to show skeptic Europeans that there was more that united than divided the Old and the

⁴⁸ Dymshitz, “Ein Provokateur ohne Maske,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], October 11, 1947, 1. For a discussion of the Congress, see Pike, *The Politics of Culture*, 375–84; and Anne Hartmann and Wolfram Eggeling, *Sowjetische Präsenz im kulturellen Leben der SBZ und frühen DDR, 1945–1953* (Berlin: Akademie, 1998), 35–62.

⁴⁹ Lasky to Macdonald, October 10, 1947, Macdonald Papers, 27-706.

⁵⁰ The direct occasion of this shift of policy was a speech Tulpanov held at an SED party meeting (January 25, 1949) in which he contended that American “monopoly capitalists” were bent on “driving the German people into the bloody massacre of another imperialistic war.” Tulpanov quoted in “U.S. Protests Slur by Berlin Russian,” *New York Times*, October 2, 1947, 10. When his counterpart at SMAD, Vasily Sokolovsky, rejected OMGUS’s protest, Clay launched—without waiting for Washington’s approval—an “aggressive campaign to convince the German people that communism can lead only to a police state with a sacrifice of their rights as individuals.” Clay to Draper, October 30, 1947 and Clay to Royall and Draper, November 1, 1947, *Clay Papers*, vol. 1, 459–60, 463–4. Those in charge of Operation Talk Back stressed that this program “should be positive and not merely negatively anticommunist,” meaning that while it should be emphasized “again and again that communism is not an irresistible force,” it should be made clear to the Germans that “we don’t want to transplant in Germany all the various aspects and idiosyncrasies of American life.” Alfred V. Boerner, ICD Deputy Chief for Policy, cited in the minutes of the Information Control Zonal Conference of the Press, Publications and Radio Branch, Wiesbaden, March 8–10, 1948, OMGUS/IfZ, 5/242-1/22.

New World.⁵¹ By the time of the counter-rally to the 1949 Paris peace congress, *Der Monat* was firmly on track, and Lasky was ready for a new venture: a major conference that for once and for all would expose the true nature of the ubiquitous outcry for peace.

Upon his return from Paris, Hook pitched the idea of a “World Intellectuals for Freedom” congress at the State Department. The idea was strongly endorsed, provided that the Department’s assistance would be of “a completely covert nature.”⁵² Neither the State Department nor the OPC took any initiative towards its realization, though. A few months later a similar proposal reached the OPC headquarters, this time hatched by Lasky and two ex-Communists, the Comintern historian Franz Borkenau and former KPD leader Ruth Fischer (whose testimony had been instrumental in the deportation of her brothers, Gerhart and Hanns Eisler, from the United States the year before). What this trio had in mind was nothing less than “a big Anti-Waldorf-Astoria Congress” that would declare its “sympathy for Tito and Yugoslavia and the silent opposition in Russia and the satellite states” and give “the Politburo hell right at the gate of their own hell.” West Berlin, which had just recently survived Stalin’s abortive blockade, was suggested to be the ideal spot for such a conclave.⁵³ Again, the proposal attracted the interest of OPC officials, but nonetheless remained in bureaucratic limbo for another few months, not least because there were second thoughts about sponsoring former Communists now that senator

⁵¹ Lasky, memoranda “On the Need for a New Overt Publication, Effectively American-Oriented, on the Cultural Front,” December 7, 1947, and “Towards a Prospectus for the ‘American Review’,” December 9, 1947, *Der Monat* Records, 73-7; Lasky, memorandum “Prospectus for *Der Monat*, New American-sponsored Magazine,” June 20, 1948, OMGUS/BAK, 5/267-1/25. For more about Lasky and *Der Monat*, see Michael Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive?*, 139–203; Giles Scott-Smith, “A Radical Democratic Political Offensive: Melvin J. Lasky, *Der Monat*, and the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 35/2 (2000): 263–80.

⁵² Howland H. Sargeant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, to Robert P. Joyce, member of the Policy Planning Staff, June 9, 1949, cited by Ninkovich, *The Diplomacy of Ideas*, 164.

⁵³ Ruth Fischer as cited by Warner, “Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” 92. The initiative for the meeting with Lasky and Borkenau was taken by Fischer, who subsequently sought to sell the idea of an anticommunist congress in Washington. Fischer to Lasky, July 23, 1949, August 24, 1949, and March 7, 1950, Fischer Papers, 1579. From correspondence with the journalist Rudolf Pechel it appears that she did not participate in the Berlin Congress out of fear of being abducted by the NKVD, and perhaps for this reason Lasky, Hook, and Josselson later downplayed her contribution to the CCF project. Fischer to Pechel, March 15, 1950, cited by Hochgeschwender, *Freiheit in der Offensive?*, 220n43. Koestler, who as early as 1946 had been thinking with Bertrand Russell and George Orwell about creating a new liberal and anti-totalitarian league, got involved in the CCF operation through Burnham, who expected his participation to prevent the Berlin Congress from turning out “as lousily as *Franc Tireur* [Rousset’s International Day of Resistance to Dictatorship and War] last year.” Burnham to Koestler, September 17, 1949, and Fischer to Koestler, October 4, 1949, Koestler Archive, MS2375/4; Koestler to Fischer, August 26, 1949, Fischer Papers, 452; Fischer to Koestler, October 4, 1949, Fischer Papers, 1543; Hook to Lasky, January 11, 1950, Hook Papers, 124-3; Burnham to Koestler, April 10 and May 26, 1950, Burnham Papers, 6-49.

Joseph McCarthy had begun to trumpet his allegations of Communist infiltration within the highest echelons of the US government.

Josselson, however, believed in the idea, and was determined to push it through. So was James Burnham, who in the meantime had been recruited as an expert consultant to the OPC's Psychological Warfare Workshop—a unit most famous for its animated film adaptation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* (with its ending twisted to flatten out all the ambiguities contained in the original story).⁵⁴ To strengthen the impression that it sprung from European minds, the idea for the Berlin Congress was officially put forward by Josselson's partner in the plot, David Rousset (who in the meantime had broken with the Rassemblement Démocratique Révolutionnaire) at the Conference on Culture of the European Movement in Lausanne, December 8–12, 1949. When the proposal found enthusiastic approval among the delegates (including former OSS chief William Donovan, now chairman of the OPC front American Committee on United Europe⁵⁵), Lasky volunteered to take on the organization.⁵⁶ He quickly obtained the full support of SPD Mayor Ernst Reuter to hold the congress in his part of Berlin, and proceeded with acquiring sponsors, including the aforementioned OPC front National Committee for a Free Europe (NCFE), and compiling a standing committee of prominent German academics and politicians in whose name invitations would be sent out. By April 1950, when Wisner finally green-lighted the project and approved \$50,000 of funds towards its realization, Lasky had obtained the blessing of an impressive selection of eminent names who agreed to act as honorary chairmen, including John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, Benedetto Croce, Karl Jaspers, and Jacques Maritain. On the American end, Hook, Burnham, and Beichman took care of the US contingent, which was to be flown into West Berlin at the expenses of Wisner's office and the State Department.⁵⁷ At long

⁵⁴ In his capacity as consultant on anticommunist warfare (November 1949–May 1952), Burnham delivered almost on a daily basis memoranda analyzing the political configuration in Europe and East Asia, interpreting the Soviet peace campaign, recommending which exiles, refugees, and émigrés to engage for “our mission,” advising how to manipulate elections or to capitalize on the Stalin-Tito rivalry, proposing themes for counterpropaganda, and so on. These memoranda are preserved in box 11 of the James Burnham Papers at the Hoover Institution, Stanford University.

⁵⁵ The ACUE, whose membership included prominent representatives of North America's intelligence, military, judicial, corporate, and banking elites, was set up in 1948 with a view to rally support for the Marshall Plan and the European federalist movement. Its funding came from the Ford and Rockefeller foundations as well as business groups with close ties to the US government. Richard J. Aldrich, “OSS, CIA and European Unity: The American Committee on United Europe, 1948–60,” *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 8/1 (1997): 184–227.

⁵⁶ Lasky to Hook, December 29, 1949, Hook Papers, 124-3.

⁵⁷ Burnham piggybacked twice a sum of 500 OPC/CIA dollars to Arnold Beichman to meet the expenses of the American delegation to the Berlin Congress. Receipts signed by Beichman, May 25 and June 9, 1950, Burnham Papers, 8-7. In Berlin, HICOG put a sum of DM 100.000 at the disposal of Lasky's team, which was to be deposited in a private account in order to “conceal the

last, Lasky proudly reported, the “intelligentsia of the civilized world” were about to break the “propagandistic monopoly” of the Soviet-controlled Partisans of Peace with a “radical democratic political offensive.”⁵⁸

Choose or Perish: Setting the Parameters for Intellectual Freedom

West Berlin, June 26, 1950, 3 p.m. The atmosphere in the auditorium of the Titania Palast was tense, and that was not only due to Beethoven’s tempestuous and symbolical *Egmont* overture with which the Berlin Philharmonic inaugurated the Congress for Cultural Freedom.⁵⁹ The previous day, North Korean troops had crossed the 38th parallel, and it was anything but sure whether Berlin’s western sectors were awaiting a similar fate. With the KPD having suffered a tremendous defeat at recent elections in West Germany’s largest federal state, North-Rhine Westphalia, and the SED’s youth movement (Freie Deutsche Jugend) having marched through Berlin in what many saw as an attempt at seizing full control over the city, an invasion of the Red Army seemed to be a realistic scenario. The possibility of the Congress being broken up and its participants arrested heightened the sense of drama at the opening ceremony, which started off with a minute of silence in memory of all who died or still suffered under tyranny. Welcoming the assembly to his “island of freedom,” Mayor Reuter expressed his hope that the spirit of the Berlin congress would flow throughout the world and stem the “tide of slavery” emanating from “the great empire of tyranny.”⁶⁰

In the following two days, the about 120 conference participants from mainly Western Europe and the United States⁶¹—many of whom knew the

provenance of these resources for the public eye.” When, halfway through the Congress, this amount turned out not to be sufficient, Josselson secured another DM 75,000. Hellmuth Jaesrich, Lasky’s colleague at *Der Monat*, to Mr. Blanchette and Mr. Barisch, HICOG Budget and Fiscal Division, External Audit Branch, February 8, 1951, *Der Monat* Records, 6-6.

⁵⁸ Lasky to Schlesinger, Jr., February 28, 1950, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-18-nf; Lasky, “The Congress for Cultural Freedom: Proceedings,” July 5, 1950, CCF, III-1-1.

⁵⁹ Initially, for the sake of giving the Congress “an emotional appeal” in addition to intellectual prestige, it had been proposed to ask a poet (Erich Weinert, Erich Kästner, W. H. Auden, T. S. Eliot or Louis MacNeice) and a composer (Stravinsky, Hindemith, Britten or Weill) to write a “Song of the Free World” for the closing ceremony. Koestler approached Britten and MacNeice, but nothing came of it. Burnham, Aron, and Koestler, memorandum “Kongress für Kulturelle Freiheit,” undated but probably winter 1949, Burnham Papers, 8-7; Koestler’s diary notes, entry June 24, 1950, Koestler Archive, MS2305.

⁶⁰ Ernst Reuter, opening speech delivered at the Congress for Cultural Freedom, June 26, 1950, published in the (incomplete) proceedings of the Congress, *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 342–3.

⁶¹ At one point Lasky proposed to Burnham to ensure the presence of a strong delegation of Soviet and East European refugee intellectuals—“[i]t would be an almost criminal waste of opportunities if there weren’t the strongest possible Iron-Curtain delegation there on the platform in Berlin”—but, although Burnham endorsed the suggestion, this apparently did not work out. OPC memorandum 02.179, “Information from Mr. Melvin Lasky concerning the Berlin Congress,” May 23, 1950, Burnham Papers, 11-2.

meaning of freedom from their experiences in the prisons and concentration camps of Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin—compared the state of cultural freedom in “free” and “totalitarian” societies, and discussed how best to reply to the Communist peace movement. The Congress wound up on Thursday, June 29, with an open public meeting in the Sommergarten at the Funkturm Sporthalle, which attracted an estimated crowd of fifteen thousand attendants who defied the sweltering heat to witness the adoption of the Congress’s manifesto and a declaration of solidarity with intellectuals and artists across the Iron Curtain. Mainly drafted by Koestler and addressed to “all men who are determined to regain those liberties which they have lost and to preserve and extend those which they enjoy,” the manifesto enshrined the principles of intellectual freedom and tolerance of diversity as the prerequisites of peace and democracy. Reading through the thirteen articles of which the document is composed, one finds little to remark on until one arrives at the penultimate article, which holds that “indifference or neutrality in the face of [totalitarianism] amounts to a betrayal of mankind and to the abdication of the free mind,” a statement strikingly at odds with the fifth article, which reminds us that “[f]reedom is based on the toleration of divergent opinions.” In other words, under the provisions of the CCF manifesto, freedom of opinion was guaranteed as long as one spoke out for or against those who deny it.⁶²

One could say that this provocative language was typical of Koestler, who, as Hook conceded, could “recite the truths of the multiplication table in a way to make some people indignant with him.”⁶³ In a short address at the opening ceremony three days earlier, the hot-tempered author had already given to understand that the time for abstract deliberations had passed when, in Beethoven’s words as cited by Koestler, “fate knocks at the gate of existence” and “the very survival of...civilization depends on decisive action.”⁶⁴ In a similar vein, he excoriated those who clung to the old battle cries of the left. The fault lines of the time, Koestler argued, were no longer to be construed as between “socialism versus capitalism” or “left versus right,” but between “relative freedom versus total tyranny.”⁶⁵ Yet Koestler’s intolerance for the “neutralist” position reverberated through many papers delivered at the conference. According to the French

⁶² See Appendix A2 for the full text of the CCF manifesto. For a more detailed discussion of the manifesto, see Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture*, 109–12.

⁶³ Hook, “The Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom,” *Partisan Review* 17 (1950): 719. This report of what Hook remembered to be “the most exciting conference I have ever attended” is largely reproduced in his memoirs, *Out of Step*, 432–40.

⁶⁴ Koestler, “Two Methods of Action,” opening speech delivered at the Congress for Cultural Freedom, June 26, 1950, published in Koestler, *Bricks to Babel*, 244–6.

⁶⁵ Koestler, “An Outgrown Dilemma,” speech delivered at the “Defense of Peace and Freedom” panel, June 28, 1950, published in Koestler, *Bricks to Babel*, 246–53.

philosopher and former *résistance* member Raymond Aron, the Second World War should have brought home the lesson what a policy of appeasement with a totalitarian regime bent on world conquest could lead to. As soon as one would accept that Stalinism, like Nazism, existed by grace of virulence and war, Aron lectured, one could no longer argue that, by taking sides, one compromised the chances of peace. Likewise, to think that the conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union did not, or should not, concern Europe—the position which had dominated the 1949 International Day of Resistance in Paris—was to be dismissed as a fallacy of the mind. Stalinists may have heeded the defenders of this position (in fact, the encouragement of neutralism, next to nationalism, the peace movement, and anti-colonial agitation was a crucial component of Soviet foreign policy), but in the end, Aron argued, “they will liquidate or enslave them.” Would “neutralists [be able to] protect European culture and civilization against the fate that befell Stalin’s ally states if the United States were to withdraw its power?” Burnham asked rhetorically, overstressing his point by admitting that he was for atomic warfare to defend the very “Western civilization” that was under threat by the atomic stockpiles in the Caucasus or Siberia.⁶⁶

Aron also had no patience with the cultural chauvinism that led many of his fellow countrymen to dismiss American and Soviet culture as two equal forms of materialism. To ally with the United States in the struggle against Stalinism, Aron argued, is not the same as condoning every inexcusable imperfection of American life. Indeed, Burnham seconded, for all the horror of Coca-Cola and American comics and radio programs, they were not in the same class with Kolyma (slave labor camps in northeastern Siberia) or the MVD (the Soviet secret police). In a similar fashion, Burnham made short work of those who continuously advanced the issue of racial inequality in the United States to question America’s legitimacy to critique the Soviet Union, claiming that, although “American Negroes rightly demand from Washington a far fuller measure of justice, they are not sent to slave camps for stating their demands.” Sartre and Merleau-Ponty—two main proponents of the neutralist position in France—must certainly have been “quite aware of French and American injustices to Negroes when they supported the Resistance to Hitler,” Hook added. And now they could not see justice in the Western defense against Communist aggression “because

⁶⁶ Aron could not make it to Berlin to present his paper at the “Defense of Peace and Freedom” panel June 28, 1950, but it was published under the title “Zwischen begrenztem und totalem Krieg” [Between Limited and Total War] in *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 456–63. The original typescript (CCF, III-1-7) was titled “Impostures de la neutralité” [The Neutrality Fraud], and as such it was published in *L’Esprit de liberté*, September 1950, 151–6. Burnham delivered his paper, titled “Rhetoric and Peace,” at the same panel, and subsequently published it in the *Partisan Review* 17/8 (1950): 861–71.

the Negroes have not yet won equality of treatment”? Probably to the surprise of many European attendees whose knowledge of US race relations was limited to decades-old stereotypes, Burnham’s and Hook’s argument was endorsed by two African-American members of the US contingent, George Schuyler and Max Yergan, who—in the latter’s words—as “Americans whose forebears were held in slavery” could attest to the “very substantial gains” that had been made in “Negro-White relations” under the Roosevelt and Truman administrations.⁶⁷ In sum, rather than “satisfy[ing] themselves with creating bad conscience,” Aron advised, neutralists had better realize that “men must choose in an imperfect world, and that to refuse to defend that world is to ease the way to worse.”

A similar tension between abstract academic meditations and high-spirited calls to action arose at the session about “Art, Artists, and Freedom,” which took place during or just after the death sentence was executed on the Czech theater and literary critic Závěš Kalandra, one of the many victims of Czechoslovakia’s Gottwald regime. It began with the unexpected arrival of Theodor Plievier, the author of *Stalingrad* (1945), a ghostly and nihilistic account of life at a battle front. Plievier, who had defected to West Germany after having worked for two years for the Kulturbund, had originally recorded his message to the Congress from his hiding place in Stuttgart. But on hearing the news of the outbreak of war on the Korean peninsula he decided to deliver it in person, defying the risk of arrest by the East German police. Moved by this act of bravery, the American screen actor and radio commentator Robert Montgomery, always surrounded by glamour and autograph chasers, opened the session with the dramatic statement that “no artist who has the right to bear that title can be neutral in the battles of our time.”⁶⁸ In an effort not to alienate those authors and artists whose work did not comment on contemporary politics, the chair of the session, the Italian ex-Communist and former resistance leader

⁶⁷ Schuyler, “The Negro Question without Propaganda,” speech delivered at the “Art, Artists, and Freedom” panel, June 27, 1950 and Yergan, “Negroes and Democracy in America,” speech delivered at the panel on “The Citizen in a Free Society,” June 28, 1950, CCF, III-1-7. The Berlin conferees would have been left with another impression of US race relations had Paul Robeson or W.E.B. Du Bois, rather than Schuyler and Yergan, been selected to address the Congress. Both Du Bois and Robeson participated in the 1949 Paris peace congress, where they emphasized that not the spread of Soviet-style socialism, but American-style colonialism posed the main threat to world peace. Robeson’s performance in particular created a sensation back home in the United States, as he was—wrongly—reported to have suggested that African Americans would not go to war on behalf of the United States against the Soviet Union. “Negroes Won’t Fight Russia, Robeson Says,” *Los Angeles Times*, April 21, 1949, 15; Robeson, *Here I Stand* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1971), 41; Du Bois, *The Autobiography of W.E.B. Du Bois: A Soliloquy on Viewing My Life from the Last Decade of Its First Century* (New York: International Publishers, 1968), 350.

⁶⁸ Montgomery, speech delivered at the “Art, Artists and Freedom” panel, June 27, 1950, CCF, III-1-9.

Ignazio Silone, suggested that precisely the ones who kept aloof from the “battles of our times” (the “conscientious objectors”) might be the ones “who will find the right answer.”⁶⁹ Nabokov (who, incidentally, was not a driving force behind the Berlin Congress, and had only been invited at the instigation of one of his New York Intellectuals acquaintances⁷⁰) decided not to allow Silone to shush the heightened rhetoric against neutralism. Instead of delivering the speech he had prepared on Shostakovich and the Waldorf Conference, he used his speaking time to press upon the audience’s mind that time for “active, realistic, constant, and obstinate readiness to fight” had come:

Peace and freedom are a sword and not a snuff-box of the period of Frederick the Great or Voltaire. One can easily be hanged, even when one only says “yes, yes” or “no, no,” if one is not ready to transmute into facts the consequences that arise from this “yes” or this “no.”...I believe we should consider our invitation cards to this beautiful totalitarian cultural congress as our party-cards and then organize out of this congress the first fighting organization, [which is to make] studies of all fighters, fighting organizations and means of fighting in order to use these studies in action. If we do not do this, we shall all be hanged sooner or later. The clock has long ago struck twelve.

According to the transcript of the session, Nabokov’s speech drew a “long and enthusiastic applause,” and it might well have been his ticket to the position he would come to assume in the future organization’s “politburo.”⁷¹

Unsurprisingly, several participants—in particular those from Britain, Scandinavia, France, and Italy—felt ill at ease with the verbal pyrotechnics employed by Koestler, Burnham, and Nabokov, arguing that an economically stable European union combined with (Christian-inspired) socio-political reforms presented a much better defense to Communist infiltration than nuclear bombs and antagonizing words. For the Oxford historian Hugh Trevor-Roper, who had been disturbed by Koestler’s critique

⁶⁹ Silone cited in the proceedings of the “Art, Artists and Freedom” panel, *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 390. In its most immediate context, Silone’s plea for political detachment articulated the anti-Atlanticist opposition of the Socialist Party of Italian Workers with which he was aligned at the time. But his words acquire another dimension against the knowledge, posthumously revealed, that he had served for more than a decade (1919–1930) as an informant on the Communist movement to the state police, that is, Mussolini’s secret police from 1927 onwards. Dario Biocca and Mauro Canali, *L’informatore: Silone, I comunisti e la Polizia* (Milan: Luni, 2000).

⁷⁰ William Phillips to Lasky, June 13, 1950, *Der Monat* Records, 9–8.

⁷¹ Transcript of Nabokov’s speech at the “Art, Artists and Freedom” panel, CCF, III-1-2. Nabokov refers here to the biblical verse “Let your communication be, Yea, yea, Nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these comes from evil” (Matthew 5:37), which Koestler had invoked in his speech at the aforementioned opening ceremony to advance his point that time had come to take a decisive “either-or,” rather than an ambiguous “neither-nor,” stance vis-à-vis Communism.

of the Labour Party's recent refusal to support a European federacy, there was no way to tell the difference between the denunciatory language of anti-neutralism or Stalinism. At one moment during the Congress, he reminisced, "I felt that we were being invited to summon up Beelzebub in order to defeat Satan."⁷² He and his like-minded colleague, the philosopher Alfred J. Ayer, insisted on the deletion of a clause in the draft manifesto stating that those who "deny spiritual freedom to others do not enjoy the right to citizenship in the republic of free spirits," and the addition of a call for "new and constructive answers to the problems of our time." Under pressure from those who supported the British amendment, Koestler amicably withdrew the disputed passage to preserve unanimity. In his thoughts, however, he must have cursed his critics for, willfully or not, misconstruing him. The previous day he had qualified his bold statements at the opening ceremony, saying that at no time he had intended the Congress to say "yes" to a political program. He only asked for an unequivocal expression of solidarity with the "ordinary men" who already said "no" to their leaders and took the train to the West. "When intellectuals cannot subscribe to this 'no' to concentration camps and totalitarianism, then I no longer understand language."⁷³ He would not tone down his temper a single notch as he recited, a few hours after its passage, the manifesto at the Congress's concluding rally, drawing deafening roars of approval at his concluding exclamation: "Friends, freedom has seized the offensive!"⁷⁴

Needless to say, the friction between the two main positions facing each other at the Congress emerged from distrust. The Koestler/Burnham/ Hook/Aron faction reproached its critics for not realizing that a US-led transatlantic coalition encompassing all, as opposed to merely social-democratic, political forces and employing every conceivable means was the only way to challenge Communist expansion. The Silone/Rousset/Trevor-Roper/Ayer faction, in its turn, feared the hardliner position would infringe their sovereignty and provoke an escalation of international tensions that could bring the war unfolding on the Korean peninsula to Europe. The disagreements between the conferees were no breaking points, though, and the very fact that they could come to the surface helped to support the claim that freedom of debate was secured in the West. In fact, Hook had anticipated that the differences among the participants would "certainly be considerable," something which was "not at all a bad thing" as long as

⁷² Trevor-Roper in an interview with Frances Stonor Saunders, July 1994, in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 79.

⁷³ Koestler cited in the proceedings of the "Science and Totalitarianism" panel, June 27, 1950, in *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 372, and Hook, "The Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom," 718.

⁷⁴ Koestler cited in the proceedings of the concluding rally, June 29, 1950, *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 473.

“things [would not] end up as they did in Paris.” Therefore, he had advised Lasky to see that there was at least one “concrete issue of a cultural character” at the Congress on which all participants could agree.⁷⁵ This “concrete issue” was provided by Józef Czapski, a Polish artist, author, critic, and one of the few wartime Polish army officers to survive the 1940 Katyn massacre, who proposed to the Congress to establish a university for refugee students.⁷⁶ That such a broad coalition of intellectuals with widely diverging backgrounds (disillusioned Communists, non-Communist members of antifascist resistance movements, refugees, and exiles) and of various political persuasions (liberal conservatives, social democrats, Christian democrats, socialists, European federalists) could jump over their own shadows to give their unanimous approval to this proposal as well as to Koestler’s manifesto supported precisely the image of an united front that the CCF’s organizers and patrons wished to convey.⁷⁷

These successes notwithstanding, the critique raised at the staunch anti-neutralism of the hardliner faction expressed very real concerns on the part of several European participants who as yet had to be convinced that the Congress was indeed the nonpolitical gathering of independent intellectuals that its organizers claimed it to be. Had they known at the time who was footing the bill of the Congress, then the CIA and its witting liaisons could have defended themselves—as they actually did when its sponsorship was disclosed in 1967—by claiming that secrecy had been necessary in order not to play into the hands of Communist critics. Also, they could have stated with good faith that the Congress, far from having been a propaganda stunt for the “American way,” did truly secure a free exchange of thoughts between intellectuals of various perspectives and persuasions who represented no one else but themselves. Nevertheless, the uncomfortable question would have lingered in the air: does a government of a self-proclaimed “free” society not compromise itself when it interferes in an intellectual debate in the way the OPC/CIA did, that is, by helping to advance a particular point of view that suits its foreign policy?

⁷⁵ Hook to Lasky, January 11, 1950, Hook Papers, 124-3.

⁷⁶ Czapski, “Wie können wir der Jugend helfen?,” speech delivered at the panel on “The Citizen in a Free Society,” June 28, 1950, in *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 429–31. This proposal had been developed in close collaboration with Burnham (and thus with the OPC), for whom Czapski constituted the main link with the Polish émigré community of Paris. Burnham, memorandum, March 1950, Burnham Papers, 9-3.

⁷⁷ François Bondy, a Swiss journalist who would become the CCF’s publications director, suggested that the outbreak of the Korean War so much “clarified the issues of peace and war,” that “there could be no [more] break between the more liberal, self-critical wing and the uncompromising group that put resistance to the Soviet empire above any other present issue” as there had been in at the counter-rally to the Partisans of Peace in Paris in the previous year. Bondy, “Berlin Congress for Freedom: A New Resistance in the Making,” *Commentary* 10 (1950): 247.

For the OPC/CIA's few witting CCF liaisons—Josselson, Burnham, Koestler, Schlesinger Jr., Hook, and Lasky⁷⁸—the answer was clear: in a situation as precarious as the one in which the world found itself in the years after the Second World War, the ends justified the means. Of course they saw the risks of teaming up with the OPC/CIA in pursuance of their aims, but they also knew that they could never muster the resources to orchestrate an adequate reply to the Soviet-controlled peace campaign without governmental support.⁷⁹ Having accepted the liability of their secret alliance with Wisner's office as a matter of necessity, they also realized that the success of their efforts to gain the upper hand in Western Europe's public opinion depended on avoiding every suspicion of governmental involvement, first of all by concealing the true auspices of the Congress; secondly, by preventing the Congress from adopting too obvious pro-

⁷⁸ Koestler knew from the outset that the US government was somehow involved in the organization of the Berlin Congress, which did not bother him "as long as there were no strings attached." Koestler to Josselson, April 25, 1967, Josselson Papers, 29-4. Schlesinger, who as OSS veteran had entertained strong ties with Washington's intelligence community, admitted in an interview with Frances Stonor Saunders that he was aware from the beginning of OPC's involvement in the CCF operation. Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 91. Hook claimed to have been unwitting of OPC's patronage, but he always suspected it. Hook, *Out of Step*, 450-1. However, in an interview with Saunders, Lawrence de Neufville, a former CIA recruiter, identified Hook as "a regular consultant to [the] CIA on matters of mutual interest." Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 443n4. The archival record confirms that Hook entertained close connections with key members of the OPC/CIA and the Psychological Strategy Board (PSB), the body created in 1951 to oversee and coordinate US anticommunist propaganda efforts. Hook to Walter Bedell Smith, CIA Director, September 25, 1950, Hook Papers, 27-26; Hook to Raymond Allen, PSB Director, November 26, 1951, Hook Papers, 29-23. In addition, there is evidence that Burnham nominated his NYU colleague for a similar OPC post as he occupied, but Hook did not obtain security clearance due his past record in radical politics. Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 77-8. This failure to obtain a permanent OPC position for Hook did not prevent Burnham from involving his friend in the plot. At the time of the establishment of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF), he instructed Hook that "[o]n the 'organizational' side, you should be authorized to act as, in effect, the American Secretary of the [ACCF], which must be understood in such a way that you have in practice clear control of the funds." Burnham to Hook, October 20, 1950, Burnham Papers, 6-38. Lasky claimed to be unwitting, but the meaningful adverb "conspicuously" in the following passage from his evaluation report suggests otherwise: "Had [the Berlin Congress] been organized, sponsored, officially backed or *conspicuously* supported by a government participating or leading in the Cold War, there would have been immediate distrust against motives and aims of the Congress." Lasky, "The Congress for Cultural Freedom: Proceedings," July 5, 1950, CCF, III-1-1. In an interview with Saunders, Donald Jameson, a former CIA agent tangentially involved with the CCF operation, mentioned "various meetings" between "Agency people" and "the top Congress people," the latter of which would include (besides Josselson) Lasky, Nabokov, Bondy, and others. *The Cultural Cold War*, 107-8. In the years ahead, Lasky, like Hook, would act as adviser to the CIA and/or the Psychological Strategy Board. PSB memorandum, "Briefing by Mr. Lasky," June 23, 1952, Edward P. Lilly Papers (DDEL), 57-PSB Memoranda Summaries (4).

⁷⁹ Hook applied with the Ford Foundation for a grant of \$1,000,000 to support the activities of the CCF in the United States and abroad for a three-year period, but to no avail: the application was turned down without motivation. Hook to John B. Howard, Director of the Division of Overseas Activities, Ford Foundation, April 30, 1951, and Bernard L. Gladieux, Assistant to the President, Ford Foundation, to Hook, June 27, 1951, Hook Papers, 124-3.

American tone; and thirdly, by ensuring that the imperatives of free debate would be observed at all times.

As mentioned before, the Congress was certainly not blatantly pro-American and nobody's view was censored. Nevertheless, it was not difficult to surmise from the lineup of invitees that the parameters of free debate were set to produce a consensus for the position that the well-being of Europe hinged on a transatlantic alliance against communism. The Congress did allow for a counterpoint of voices incomparable to the unison chorus of an average "totalitarian" rally, but it was incumbent upon the Congress organizers to assemble those voices that they thought would result in the consensual harmony they wished to hear. In practice, this meant the exclusion of voices that were either too critical or blindly supportive of the United States, as well as voices that tended to wriggle themselves out of the preset transatlantic arrangement. In other words, the Congress operators not so much played a Wurlitzer organ as a Putnam mixing console, fading in the voices they wished to support and fading out those they wished to tone down. It was naïve to think, however, that those targeted would not see through this scheme. Apart from the grandiose scale on which the Berlin Congress was organized in a Europe that was still in economic ruin, the ideological limitations set on the rostrum of speakers were sufficient to raise suspicions about its true auspices—suspicions that, as we will see, kept haunting the CCF throughout its existence.

The Cultural Turn: The Consolidation of the CCF

For the time being, though, Wisner had considerable reason to be pleased with the CCF project. The Berlin Congress had attracted worldwide attention, including that of students from Soviet-occupied areas, and even induced a number of eminent intellectuals to convert and defect to the West. Brigadier General John Magruder, the consultant on intelligence to the Secretary of Defense, valued it as "a subtle covert operation carried out on the highest intellectual level" and "unconventional warfare at its best." In Germany, HICOG officials sensed the Congress had given a palpable boost to the morale of West Berlin.⁸⁰ Finally, a State Department report praised the Congress as "a propaganda gold mine" and "a brilliant piece of work" for

⁸⁰ The estimations by Magruder and HICOG are cited by Warner, "Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom," 96. That those American delegates who initially had to decline the invitation for Berlin due to previous commitments were personally asked by the High Commissioner for Germany, John J. McCloy, to reconsider their decision indicates how determined US authorities were to make the Congress into a success. McCloy to Hook, May 5, 1950, Hook Papers, 124-3; McCloy to Schlesinger, May 9, 1950, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-19-nf.

which Lasky deserved full recognition.⁸¹ On that last point Wisner disagreed, though. “Very disturbed” that his earlier command to keep Lasky and Burnham out of the limelight had been bypassed, he gave his subordinates to understand that unless the CCF operation would be “sanitized” from all “persons of known or traceable official significance,” he would retract OPC’s backing.⁸² Josselson was infuriated, but had the good sense not to force the matter. Thereupon Lasky was moved to the background, from where he would continue to contribute to the CCF with his advice, editorial experience, and networking skills. Indispensable as a liaison between the OPC and its newest asset, Burnham was appointed to the executive committee that was to consolidate the Berlin Congress into a permanent organization on the condition he would never make public appearances again under CCF auspices.

The next problem Wisner had to deal with was Koestler. The Berlin congress had certainly benefited from the writer’s charisma and oratory skills, but the demagogic tone of his contributions—at one point he called proponents of the “neither-nor” position “imbeciles [who] preach neutrality toward the bubonic plague”—achieved the opposite of what the Congress was supposed to achieve, estranging the skeptics of blatant anticommunism instead of coaxing them to support the transatlantic coalition. Worse, his suggestion that only the Right—and not the moderate Left—was truly committed to fight the “tyranny of the extreme Left” threatened to break the often hard won goodwill from British and Continental social democratic parties for the American position.⁸³ That the GDR’s propaganda machinery, run by Gerhart Eisler, would discredit the Congress as a convention of “Wall Street monsters,” “American police spies,” “literary monkeys,” and “werewolves domesticated in freedom” was to be expected.⁸⁴ That some of

⁸¹ Undated report on the Berlin conference to Jesse M. MacKnight, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State. Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, Subject Files, A1 1587-M, 68-Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom.

⁸² Wisner to Scott D. Breckinridge, memorandum “Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom: Activities of Melvin Lasky,” August 8, 1950; see the FOIA section of the CIA website [<http://www.foia.cia.gov/>]. Wisner had instructed Josselson to keep Burnham and Lasky at low profile in Berlin for fear that their well-known anticommunism would compromise the operation. However, by the time Wisner approved the CCF project (April 7, 1950), Lasky had already been so far advanced in the preparations that his name was inextricably attached to the project. Josselson defended Lasky, explaining that no other person in Germany could have pulled off such a project and garnered so much enthusiasm for it among the European intelligentsia. Warner, “Origins of the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” 94.

⁸³ Koestler, “An Outgrown Dilemma,” speech delivered at the “Defense of Peace and Freedom” panel, June 28, 1950, published in Koestler, *Bricks to Babel*, 246–53.

⁸⁴ “Der USA-Spitzel-Kongress in Westberlin,” *Tägliche Rundschau* [SMAD], June 25, 1950, 1; Wolfgang Harich, “Werwölfe, in Freiheit dressiert: Gibt es im imperialistischen Lager ‘freien Geist’?,” *Neues Deutschland* [SED], June 27, 1950, 3. The Soviet press, too, displayed creativity in discrediting the Congress: *Pravda* (July 2, 1950) described the conferees as “dogs, spies, traitors,

the targeted intellectuals would describe the Congress as “an echo of Hitler’s Nuremberg,” a “Wroclaw in reverse,” a “KKK[K] congress” or an American-organized “propaganda exercise,” however, was a severe blemish on the otherwise positive, albeit lukewarm, reception by the Western European press.⁸⁵

Koestler, who was unwitting of OPC’s hand behind the Congress until about a year after its inauguration, turned out to be impossible to tame. Immediately after the Berlin conclave had ended, he took the lead in shaping the Congress as a permanent organization, a project that—as we know from his then-wife’s diary—turned into an obsession for him.⁸⁶ At a series of unofficial meetings of an interim steering committee convened in July 1950, it was decided that the Congress was to be consolidated as a capacity for (1) mobilizing anticommunist dissent in Western Europe after the example of the prewar Popular Front, involving and addressing the professional classes, trade unions, students, and other youth groups, first of all in France and Italy; and (2) conducting covert propaganda activities directed at the Soviet sphere of influence.⁸⁷ To those who wondered whether this aggressive approach did not contain the danger of escalating, rather than de-escalating, the Cold War, Koestler replied that to his view, “every proof that the free world is strong and united makes the danger of war recede one step further,” whereas “every political and ideological Munich brings war one step nearer.”⁸⁸ Burnham was in full agreement with this course, explaining that any strategy to thwart the Kremlin’s designs must have as its controlling

warmongers, henchmen, lackeys, Trotskyites, renegades, and archreactionaries”; *Literaturnaya gazeta* (July 1, 1950) spoke of the “ataman Melvin Lasky,” the “despicable renegade [Theodor] Plievier,” the “radio swindler Nabokov,” and other “onetime philosophers and artists who now march hand in hand with the whining and wicked Churchill.”

⁸⁵ Trevor-Roper, “Ex-Communist versus Communist: The Congress for Cultural Freedom,” *Manchester Guardian*, July 10, 1950, 4; Michèle Barat, “K.K.K.K [Kultur-Kampf-Koestler-Korea]: Le ‘Koestler’s congress’ à Berlin,” *L’Observateur*, July 6, 1950, 1. Lasky wrote a lengthy refutation of Trevor-Roper’s critique to the editor of the *Guardian*, July 24, 1950, Hook Papers, 124-3. For an overview of the press coverage on the Congress, see “Presse-Echo,” *Der Monat* 2/22–23 (1950): 485–96.

⁸⁶ Mamaine Koestler, entry August 8, 1950, published in *Living with Koestler: Mamaine Koestler’s Letters, 1945–51*, ed. Celia Goodman (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1985), 151. For an account of the Congress events based on Arthur and Mamaine Koestler’s diaries and correspondence, see Cesarani, *Arthur Koestler*, 350–69, or Scammell, *Arthur Koestler*, 354–70.

⁸⁷ Koestler, memorandum “Immediate Tasks for the Transition Period,” July 4, 1950, Brown Papers, 13-10; Minutes of a meeting between Koestler, Lasky, and Brown, July 18–19, 1950, Burnham Papers, 8-7.

⁸⁸ Koestler and Manès Sperber, pamphlet *Que veulent les Amis de la Liberté?* (Paris 1950/51), 6. Excerpts of this pamphlet are published in English translation in Koestler’s *Bricks to Babel*, 256–8. Other pamphlets written around this time attacked the Partisans for Peace movement: *Im Zeichen der Friedenstaube: Von Stockholm bis Warschau* (Berlin 1950/1951) or *Ce que sont les Partisans de la Paix* (Paris 1950/1951).

aim the “disintegration of the organized communist elite, and thus of the Soviet state power apparatus.”⁸⁹ To steer the consolidation of the CCF in the direction adumbrated by Koestler, Burnham—probably behind the back of his OPC patrons—planted a former Comintern strategist (Louis A. Gibarti) in the CCF secretariat, which in the meantime had been established in Paris.⁹⁰

Lasky, too, supported Koestler’s push for a mass movement that would challenge Communists eye to eye, but he realized that the consensus that the Berlin conference had managed to reach could be easily torn apart if the Congress would (solely) follow the Koestler/Burnham strategy. In fact, the first problem flowing from the hard-liner stance already emerged within two weeks after the conference, when one of its Honorary Chairmen, Nobel Prize winner Bertrand Russell, resigned upon learning of Trevor-Roper’s experiences—a decision he reversed after Hook, Koestler, and Schlesinger persuaded him that Trevor-Roper’s criticism was exceptional in its severity.⁹¹ In the meantime, OPC and State Department officials began to question the wisdom of placing ex-Communists at the helm of America’s counteroffensive. Their value as “informer[s] and tipster[s]” notwithstanding, some critics felt that ex-Communists had no moral authority to lecture those “who had sense enough never to become Communists in the first place.”⁹² But probably the most important reason to refrain from co-opting the services of people with complicated political biographies like Koestler was the risk it entailed at a time when Joseph McCarthy took governmental agencies to task for their affiliations with leftist elements. Josselson, who was from the outset more disposed towards a strategy of emphasizing common values between freedom-loving individuals than to acid polemics and barricade fighting, seems to have been the one who drew the ultimate conclusion: if the Congress was to win over Europe’s skeptic minds and wavering souls and maintain a broad consensus including proponents of the moderate left and right—the “vital center,” as Arthur Schlesinger, Jr. had famously called it—then headstrong

⁸⁹ Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.222, “The Strategy of the Politburo, and the Problem of American Counter-Strategy,” October 12, 1950, Burnham Papers, 11-3.

⁹⁰ Gibarti (alias for László Dobos) was a Hungarian-born artillery officer who before his break with the Communist Party in 1938 had worked his way up to become a key figure in Willi Münzenberg’s Comintern network of front organizations. Gibarti to CCF Executive Committee, August 28, 1950, and Gibarti to Burnham, September 8, 1950, Burnham Papers, 11-2.

⁹¹ On the CCF’s tempestuous with Russell which ultimately led him to resign definitely, see “Summary of Correspondence on the Resignation of Lord Russell,” ACCF, 14-13.

⁹² Edward Barrett, Assistant Secretary of State for International Information, *Truth Is Our Weapon*, 262.

anticommunism was not the course to pursue.⁹³ In the months that followed, Koestler was—in his own words—“made to withdraw in a gentle and effective way,” and saw his leading position being assumed by the Swiss author and European federalist Denis de Rougemont, whose résumé was free from Communist affiliation, and who favored a soul-searching approach through which Europe/the West could regain itself, and thereby stand stronger against external threats.⁹⁴

The divergence in visions about the objectives and methods the Congress emerged once more at the CCF’s follow-up meeting in Brussels, which was scheduled for November 27–30, 1950, as a reply to the second Partisans of Peace congress that had just convened in Warsaw, November 16–22. Some argued that the CCF should respond first of all to the urgent need for a full-scale propaganda offensive and a concomitant network of anti-Stalinist (front) organizations to unsettle the Soviet accusations that the United States was responsible for the Korean War. Others emphasized the importance of conveying the impression that the CCF was more than the Cominform’s counterpart. To them, the CCF should not merely expose the false promise that Communists held to the world, but to present an equally attractive but honest alternative. To that purpose, they proposed that the organization embark upon an exploration of the values that constitute the “essence of free culture,” one of which being that culture should not be instrumentalized for the pursuance of political objectives. Silone, for instance, proposed that the CCF carry on UNESCO’s global survey of cultural oppression into those member states that had been, for obvious reasons, uncooperative.⁹⁵

In contrast to his performance at the Berlin Congress, Nabokov now cast himself in the role of broker between these two positions. Employing the language of both the hard-line and moderate factions, he called for a “greater cohesion between free intellectuals” for the sake of an “intense and unceasing” struggle against “any form of dictatorship, either of the left or the right,” in both “free” and “totalitarian” countries. He agreed with Silone that the basic strategy to follow with respect to the “free world” should indeed not be limited to denunciation, but derive from a “positive revolutionary resolution founded on new ideas born of the fertile soil of

⁹³ Schlesinger, Jr., “Not Left, Not Right, But a Vital Center,” *New York Times Magazine*, April 4, 1948, 7, 44–7, and *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1949).

⁹⁴ Koestler to Manès Sperber, April 25, 1951, Koestler Archive, MS2377/3. Soon after his appointment, one of De Rougemont’s speeches was worked into a pamphlet that ascribed the success of totalitarianism in the twentieth century to the disintegration of traditional values, securities, and patterns of social life wrought by modernization, and suggested social democratic reforms and enlightened education to provide mankind with the means to cope with the reality of modern times. *Freiheiten die wir verlieren können* (Berlin 1951).

⁹⁵ Proceedings of the CCF International Committee’s reunion in Brussels, November 27–30, 1950, CCF, II-2-8+9.

Europe's culture." The Congress's operations in the "totalitarian" domain, however, would have to consist of various "indirect and secret actions, including infiltration, which bring with them very often the danger of death."⁹⁶

That Nabokov succeeded in bridging the dividing lines within the Congress appears from his election to the post of the CCF's Director of Cultural Relations (later renamed to Secretary-General), which at this time was conceived as an interim appointment.⁹⁷ What probably made Nabokov a favorable candidate for both sides of the Atlantic was his skill in giving each party the feeling that he understood their concerns. Not intervening in scholastic disputes, he—deliberately or not—posed as an interested observer lacking the intellectual baggage to fathom the deliberations of academics. Reading through the transcripts of his speeches, one notes how he consistently adopted a light and titillating tone that obviously made for a welcome change in the proceedings of a scholarly conference. He often started off by excusing himself for being "just a composer" and his poor proficiency in the language he was speaking in (English, German, or French). These "excuses" actually functioned as pretexts to (seemingly) extemporize on his bohemian past, passing from one anecdote and witticism to the other and never failing—at least according to the transcripts—to draw laughter. At a certain point, he would strike a serious tone and appeal to a sense of commonality among those "hav[ing] fled from the dark caverns of modern obscurantism into which the masses of so many countries have

⁹⁶ Nabokov, "Essential Aims of the Congress," speech delivered at the opening session, November 27, 1950, CCF, III-2-2. It should be noted, though, that Nabokov's speech drew some critical comments from the floor for being too abstract.

⁹⁷ The choice for Nabokov had not been unanimous. Koestler had been in favor of Louis Fischer, a prominent journalist and former Münzenberg affiliate nominated by Irving Brown, who, in defiance of Burnham, attempted to turn the CCF into an exponent of his larger agenda to strengthen the European center-left rather than to forge a broad coalition including both Leftist and Rightist elements. Nabokov, however, enjoyed the overwhelming support of Josselson, Schlesinger, Hook, and Burnham, in addition to Kennan and Bohlen, not least because he had not been—in Hook's words—"too closely identified in the past with the Communist movement" as Fischer had been. (Hook preferred De Rougemont for the secretary-general post, though, with Nabokov as his assistant.) Nabokov was enthusiastic about his new mission and the trust Burnham, in particular, had placed in him, but his then-wife, Patricia Blake, was worried that "Koestler might try to dismember the organization after this personal blow" of not having his preferred candidate elected. However, when she brought it up in a conversation with Koestler, he seemed not to be angry about it, but "only vaguely amused by the whole thing, and sorry for Fischer." Brown was disillusioned with the election proceedings, and confided to Fischer that "I am still skeptical about how the present machinery will operate.... Much more could be done if we had a driving militant leader as organizer." Schlesinger to Hook, October 17, 1950, Hook to Schlesinger, October 18, 1950, Schlesinger to Hook, November 11, 1950, Hook to François Bondy, November 21, 1950, Hook Papers, 124-3; Brown to Koestler, November 2 and 17, 1950, Brown Papers, 13-10; Patricia Blake to Marion and Arthur Schlesinger, December 5, 1950, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf; Brown to Fischer, January 9, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-10; Bondy to Nabokov, February 6, 1951, CCF, II-45-7.

been cast by their tyrants,” and as such knew more than anyone else the value of “untrammled freedom for the human spirit.” Finally, much to the liking of Burnham, Nabokov always knew how to remind digressing academics that a congress should result in concrete and practical propositions.⁹⁸

At the Brussels meeting, these concrete propositions were made in the form of resolutions to publish a “black book” of translations of official documents issued under Lenin and Stalin in order to “let the Soviets speak for themselves” with respect to “the enslavement of culture in Soviet Russia”; to install, as a counterpart to the Stalin Peace Prize, an annual Freedom Award for literary achievements; to urge governments in both the Soviet and the non-Soviet spheres to abolish all restrictions on free cultural exchange; and to challenge the Partisans of Peace to participate in a series of public CCF debates in major cities before and behind the Iron Curtain. Most of the time was spent on Józef Czapski’s proposal of an educational facility for exiled or refugee students from totalitarian countries, the need of which was indeed felt by all conferees, but the way how such a facility should be organized and what purposes it was to serve were subjects of heated debate.⁹⁹ At this point, the course of the Congress had not strayed too far from what Koestler and Burnham had in mind. Yet when the CCF secretariat rejected a proposal to cast a projected follow-up congress in Paris in the form of a large-scale political manifestation involving political parties and labor unions in favor of De Rougemont’s proposal for an exclusive assembly of celebrity writers and intellectuals, including those with “un-CCF-ish” mindsets such as Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir, and Thomas Mann (the latter a self-declared neutralist, the first two ever more drifting towards the French Communist Party), Koestler, whose patience over the progress and direction of the CCF project wore thin, had enough of it and positioned himself behind the typewriter. In a polite tone, he informed De Rougemont of his disagreement with the proposal to invite people who “have done everything in their power to confuse the issue between relative freedom and total unfreedom” and offered his resignation if the CCF president would

⁹⁸ See, for instance, his addresses delivered at (1) the public meeting of the Brussels conference, November 30, 1950, printed in the proceedings of the CCF International Committee’s reunion in Brussels, November 27–30, 1950, ACCF, 1-1; (2) a meeting on behalf of the CCF in Berlin, titled “Kunst im Totalitarismus,” June 15, 1951, CCF, II-249-1; and (3) the CCF’s 1953 “Science and Freedom” congress in Hamburg, the proceedings of which are published as *Science and Freedom* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1955).

⁹⁹ “Resolution on *The Black Book: Enslavement of Culture in Soviet Russia*,” “Resolution on Free Cultural Exchanges between the Soviet Sphere and the Non-Soviet Sphere of the World,” “Resolution on a Proposal for Debate between the Congress for Cultural Freedom and the Partisans of Peace,” CCF, III-2-2. For the discussion about Czapski’s proposal, see the aforementioned proceedings of the Brussels meeting.

insist on pursuing this course. In an unrestrained tone, he wrote to Burnham and to the American Federation of Labor—the union organization which he knew acted as a conduit for governmental subsidies to the CCF—to accuse them of ineptitude in running a front organization and called for the resignation of the whole secretariat in Paris if the invitations to Sartre, De Beauvoir, and Mann were not withdrawn.¹⁰⁰

Burnham managed to persuade Koestler not to break with the Congress, reassuring him that, for all its troubles, the project was showing “some real accomplishments” and exhibited promises that were “much more considerable and serious than ever before.”¹⁰¹ In reality, however, Burnham had similar doubts about the Paris office. In February 1951 he wrote François Bondy, a Swiss journalist appointed as the CCF’s Director of Publications, expressing his regret about machinations within the secretariat that ousted Gaullist elements in favor of socialist elements, thereby threatening to divide the “anti-Communist united front” of the center Left *and* Right which was the *raison d’être* of the CCF in the first place.¹⁰² Later that year he complained to Nabokov about the “tendency to make the Congress an office operation” rather than an instrument in “the fight against the enslavement of the world.” He was particularly despondent about the state of affairs regarding the University in Exile, a project that he felt should be given the highest priority.¹⁰³ Nabokov, who had insisted that the CCF should participate in the University project three months earlier, replied that he feared he did not have time left to spend on it, “except perhaps in a very sporadic way.”¹⁰⁴ This answer seems remarkable given Nabokov’s commitment to assisting refugees and exiles from areas under totalitarian rule. But at this time, Nabokov was still working on the assumption that his appointment as CCF secretary-general was temporary, and that his mandate was first of all to get the Paris office up and running—a task daunting enough. In fact, he was planning to return to the United States at the end of

¹⁰⁰ Koestler to De Rougemont, January 29, 1951; Koestler to Burnham, January 29, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3; Koestler to Jay Lovestone, AFL, January 29, 1951, Koestler Archive, MS2395/3.

¹⁰¹ Burnham to Koestler, February 8, 1951, Burnham Papers, 6-49.

¹⁰² Burnham to Bondy, February 6, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-6. To Nabokov, Burnham explained that “[p]artly by design and partly by inertia, the leftists, who dominate the staff numerically, are always tending toward the transformation of the [CCF] into simply another clique in their own image. Unless the [CCF] can maintain a united front which bridges the traditional right and left (and in France this means to include Gaullists), its whole point of existence evaporates. I feel sure that...your presence in Paris would be an effective guarantee against sectarianism.” Burnham to Nabokov, January 30, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3.

¹⁰³ Burnham to Nabokov, June 1, 1951, CCF, II-48-9. In December 1950, Burnham urged Wisner to start on the University in Exile project “with the greatest possible speed.” OPC memorandum 02.288, “Certain Recommendations Concerning OPC Operations,” December 11, 1950, Burnham Papers, 11-3.

¹⁰⁴ Nabokov to Burnham, June 6, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3.

the summer to assume the aforementioned job that had been offered to him by Kennan at the Ford Foundation's Free Russia Fund.¹⁰⁵

The CCF secretariat's seeming loss of interest in Czapski's plan was probably due to an internal reorganization within the CIA of which Burnham was not informed at the time of his complaint. In December 1950, Allen Dulles joined the Agency as Deputy Director of Operations, a newly created function that placed all intelligence and covert warfare operations under his supervision. Dulles's assistant, OSS veteran Thomas Braden, was struck by the lack of focus and coordination that hampered the efficiency of Wisner's fractured OPC office. Subsequently, the OPC, which until then had enjoyed a considerable freedom for maneuvering due to its independent status, was brought completely under the control of the CIA. In the process of this reorganization, the various front organizations of the OPC were subsumed under the International Organizations Division (IOD), a new coordinating body that was to streamline all the CIA's efforts aimed at uniting and mobilizing intellectuals for what came to be known as the "cultural Cold War." IOD's first action was to newly demarcate the front organizations in terms of objectives, methods, and target groups. Having been designed for propaganda activities and relief projects aimed at Eastern Europe, the National Committee for a Free Europe was put in charge of the University project, which was realized in the summer of 1951 in the form of the Free Europe University in Exile (*Collège de l'Europe libre*) near Strasbourg. The CCF, on the other hand, was to focus on winning the allegiance of what in Washington's lingo of the day was called the "Non-Communist Left" (NCL), i.e., the remaining intellectuals on the left wing of Western Europe's political spectrum who had not yet aligned themselves behind the United States in the struggle against communism. In order to achieve this, the challenge was to break down the negative stereotypes about American culture and democracy that formed the main obstacle for these intellectuals to accept the United States as the warden of their interests.

Thus the CCF steered away from a mass-oriented and confrontational strategy aimed at inciting freedom movements in the Soviet sphere of influence towards a strategy of elite-orientated and alliance-seeking events that were expected to demonstrate the moral and cultural superiority of the

¹⁰⁵ Flattering him by admitting that no one else "even approaching your qualifications for this position" had been found, Kennan urged Nabokov to accept the directorship of the Pushkin House, and asked Brown to assist in releasing Nabokov from his position in the CCF secretariat. Kennan to Nabokov and Brown, June 19, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16. When after a few months of working in Paris it appeared to Nabokov that he could mean more to the Congress than he initially thought, he hoped to combine his CCF and Ford Foundation appointments. Nabokov to Kennan, October 9, 1951, Kennan Papers, 32-13.

“free world” on their own terms. As Nabokov formulated the CCF’s program in a speech delivered at a meeting of the CCF’s Indian branch:

Ours is not a mass movement and here we should never be misunderstood. We are not a movement of large masses like a labor union. We are much more a band of people who respect each other’s beliefs and who claim the right to be a dissenter when it is necessary to be a dissenter....Our work cannot only be negative; it militates against the very spirit of man. Our work should be concerned with the positive advancement of our civilization. And here we cannot speak of Western or Eastern civilization. The time is passed for such distinctions. The time is passed for such distinctions. Civilization is one and we have together to study the various aspects of it and preserve the verities of the civilization, yet always recognizing the total and complete freedom of the creative mind responsible only to its conscience for its beliefs.¹⁰⁶

Concretely, this meant that, a few exceptions aside, the Congress would limit its protests to violations against intellectual or artistic freedom to press declarations¹⁰⁷ and financial assistance to dissident intellectuals from the Communist realm, and spend the lion’s share of its resources on cultural diplomacy aimed at enhancing what was still a fragile rapport between intellectuals from both sides of the Atlantic. There is little doubt that Josselson and Burnham convinced the OPC/CIA leadership that Nabokov would be the best man to execute this mandate. When Kennan tried to persuade Nabokov to accept the directorship of the Ford Foundation’s projected Pushkin House, Burnham intervened, writing to Nabokov that “it would be a shame to throw things back to the pre-Nabokov period, [since] with you, the congress staff is blossoming as an effective *équipe*,” and to the OPC that Nabokov would have to be maintained for the post of CCF secretary, since “there is virtually no one with the combination of qualities which makes him so valuable to the CCF.” Immediate actions were to be taken to explain to Kennan the importance of Nabokov’s remaining in Europe with the Congress and to dissuade Nabokov from accepting the Ford Foundation job—something that “would not be too difficult to do, granted that he can be assured that the Congress work is going to continue on a big and expanding scale, and that his finances—including his own

¹⁰⁶ Nabokov, “Our Dedication,” inaugural speech delivered at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in Bombay, December 17-18, 1955, in *Freedom First* [ICCF] (February 1956): 4-5.

¹⁰⁷ For instance, against the imprisonment of opponents to the Perón regime (1954) or the Franco regime (June 1959), the Soviet repression of the Hungarian resistance (November 1956), the exclusion of African American citizens to Alabama University (1956), South African *apartheid* (November 1957), and Beijing’s annexation of Tibet (March 1959).

salary—are going to be responsibly handled.”¹⁰⁸ As mentioned earlier, the Pushkin House project was eventually put on ice, and Nabokov’s salary problems were ironed out such that he would remain at the helm of the CCF for nearly fifteen years.

Nabokov was worth his money. As soon as he assumed his office in Paris on May 1, 1951,¹⁰⁹ he worked frantically to inspire, coordinate, and facilitate the establishment of CCF affiliates all over the world, to launch the first in a range of cultural-political magazines and other types of publications that were to cultivate an anti-neutralist and pro-NATO consensus, and to organize a small-scale seminar on the question how to address the communist intellectual.¹¹⁰ In addition, he travelled like a “Fuller Brush Man all over Europe, trying to sell to reluctant customers the idea of collaborating with the Congress.”¹¹¹ Given that the CCF was received with almost universal suspicion, this was an unrewarding task. “Many think of our Congress as of some kind of semi-clandestine American organization

¹⁰⁸ Burnham to Nabokov, June 16, 1951, CCF, II-48-9; Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.432, “Nicolas Nabokov,” June 4, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-5. The CCF’s paymaster, Irving Brown, initially offered Nabokov \$6,000 plus 15% per annum, which was apparently considerably lower than what he earned at the Peabody Conservatory and Sarah Lawrence College. Brown promised to get back to Nabokov on short notice, but an answer failed to materialize. This was probably due to a lack of faith in the CCF project, and of OPC/CIA stratagems in general, on the part of Brown’s boss, Jay Lovestone. Early in January 1951, Lovestone’s protégé, Arnold Beichman, called Nabokov to strongly urge him not to take a job on the CCF staff, as he had been told by Lovestone that the Congress was definitely going to be folded up before September. Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.310, January 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-4. A few days later, Burnham stepped into the breach on behalf of the OPC and enabled Nabokov to inform Brown that his original offer had become acceptable. “Other arrangements to compensate me for my considerable loss of income will be made here, and will not appear on the books of the operation in Europe.” Nabokov to Brown, December 6, 1950, and January 17, and September 3, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16. From a letter to Burnham it appears that these “other arrangements” involved a sum of “\$100 per month payable directly to me by the American Committee.” From the ledger of the ACCF, however, it appears that Nabokov received \$250 per month as of June 1951. Nabokov to Burnham, January 21, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3; ACCF, 6-9.

¹⁰⁹ Nabokov could not leave the United States sooner due to contractual obligations with the Peabody Conservatory and Sarah Lawrence College. Nabokov to Irving Brown, February 3, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

¹¹⁰ During its existence, the CCF network consisted of affiliate committees—some more active and lasting than others—in the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, West Germany (Berlin, Hamburg, Munich, and Cologne), Austria, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Cuba (until the 1959 revolution), Peru, Uruguay, Lebanon, Israel, India, Ceylon, South Vietnam, South Korea, Pakistan, Japan, and Australia, and facilitated magazines in all major languages or geographical areas: *Preuves* (French), *Encounter* (English), *Soviet Survey* (English), *Der Monat* (German), *Forum* (Austria), *Cuadernos* (Spanish), *Cadernos Brasileiros* (Portuguese/Brazil), *Examen* (Mexico), *Tempo Presente* (Italian), *Perspektiv* (Danish), *Transition* (East Africa), *Black Orpheus* (West Africa), *Himar* (Arabic), *Quest* (India), *Jiyu* (Japan), *Chinese Quarterly* (English/Chinese), *Solidarity*, later *Comment* (Philippines), and *Quadrant* (Australia). In the United States, the CIA/CCF would come to the rescue of *The Partisan Review* and *The New Leader* when they found themselves in financial troubles.

¹¹¹ Nabokov to Schlesinger, July 19, 1951, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf.

controlled by you [and] Koestler,” Nabokov wrote to Burnham about his PR visit to England.¹¹² Even someone as close to Nabokov as Isaiah Berlin refused to lend his name to the organization, explaining—obviously with the Berlin conference in mind—that “I do not think that the answer to communism is an equally fervent and militant counter-faith” that proceeds from the assumption that “one must fight the devil with the devil’s weapons.”¹¹³ The incorrigible habit of the American CCF affiliate to insist that their European counterparts respond with more rigor to communist propaganda did not help to dispel this skepticism. It was up to Nabokov to mediate between the anticommunist intelligentsia on both sides of the Atlantic, each of which expected him to represent their interests. During all of this, the CCF remained in the doldrums due to the persistent lack of financial security. If “operation-congress” was to result in “a broad and a solid front opposed to totalitarianism,” Nabokov advised Burnham, then “[o]ur friends in America should be fully aware [that] a lot of time and I am afraid a lot of money” was going to be needed.¹¹⁴ For the next project he had in mind, he had not said a word too much.

¹¹² Nabokov to Burnham, June 6, 1951, CCF, III-2-7.

¹¹³ Berlin to Herbert Elliston, editor of *The Washington Post*, December 30, 1950, cited by Michael Ignatieff, *Isaiah Berlin: A Life* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1998), 199. From a letter to Nabokov in the 1970s, it appears that Josselson and Ford Foundation official Shepard Stone had tried to persuade Berlin to be the British representative at the Congress as “a simple act of gratitude for the generous behavior of the Ford Foundation to Wolfson College.” Berlin answered that he considered himself to be “totally unsuited for this role” and recommended someone of his colleagues. Berlin to Nabokov, December 21, 1976, Nabokov Papers, 21-8.

¹¹⁴ Nabokov to Burnham, June 6, 1951, CCF, III-2-7. Nabokov had already entreated Burnham in January of that year to help to obtain “an efficient modus operandi” that would enable the CCF financially to respond “as swiftly as circumstances and political conditions demand.” Nabokov to Burnham, January 21, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3. Burnham forwarded this letter to the OPC/CIA as memorandum 02.341, Burnham Papers, 11-4.

Fêteing the *Pax Atlantica*, Waging a “Constructive Sort of War”

Nabokov’s Paris Festival (1952) and Rome Convention (1954)

The free world is at last on its toes, blowing its own horn, acting its part, painting itself in its true colors, speaking out in the multiple accents of creative independence. The galaxy of plays, operas, concerts, arts shows, and forums which will go to make up this exposition should do something to show the resources of “bourgeois cosmopolitanism” in a divided world. Since the American contribution will depend on private philanthropy rather than government subsidy, we trust that alert citizens will be prompt to recognize the potentialities in this constructive sort of war.¹

Christian Science Monitor (1952)

Denise Tual, director of the Biarritz Festival, thought Nicolas Nabokov had lost his mind when he asked her to assist him in realizing his “hallucinatory,” if not outright “insane,” plans for a month-long exposition of the best the “free world” had to offer in the fields of art, philosophy, literature, theater, dance, and music.² Indeed, different from what its rather bland-sounding title suggests, the *L’Œuvre du XX^e siècle* festival (which in English went by the title “Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century” and will hereafter be referred to as “the Festival” or “the Exposition”) was not to be a regular affair. To the contrary, Nabokov explained at a press conference, this international happening that was to take place in Paris, May 1952, was conceived as an answer to “powerful political movements” that tried to “stifle free creation” and sought—to some extent successfully—to “implant in our own minds doubts of the validity, strength and vitality of our Western culture.” The Festival was to provide an effective answer to this “anti-democratic propaganda” by showcasing the artistic legacy of the first half of the twentieth century as the praiseworthy achievement of a culture that had not tried to “transform the artist into an instrument of the state.”³

¹ Editorial, “Cultural War,” *Christian Science Monitor*, February 11, 1952, 4.

² Denise Tual, *Le temps dévoré* (Paris: Fayard, 1980), 245.

³ Nabokov quoted in “Exposition of Arts is Planned in Paris; What Western World Has Done in Music, Ballet, Drama and Thought to Be Shown in May,” *New York Times*, November 29, 1951, 51. See also Nabokov’s press statement, titled “This Is Our Culture,” which is reproduced in abridged form in Appendix C1.

The political rationale of the Festival went further than Nabokov expressed in public. In internal memoranda about the Festival's set-up and purposes, he explained that the event was not intended to become "another music festival of which there are already too many in Europe," nor was it intended to be "a kind of 'cultural fair' aimed at amusing and entertaining the Parisian snobs and international tourists." What it was supposed to do was to consolidate the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) in Europe and the world at large as "a watchdog of freedom, the *conditio sine qua non* of true culture." To be recognized as such by those who were wavering on the brink of the Communist Party line, the Festival was to enable visitors to compare "the fruits of freedom to the sorry output of writers, poets, painters, and musicians living under tyranny," and show them how "the true creative values of our civilization [are] derided and ultimately destroyed" by totalitarian regimes if "we" should fail to come up with an answer. Such a challenge of the "culture of the free world" to the "un-culture of the totalitarian world," Nabokov surmised, would give "a kind of sense and purposefulness to the dislocated and disintegrated cultural life of France and most of Europe" and, as such, restore the fighting morale which he found lacking everywhere he went on the continent that had only recently experienced firsthand the meaning of totalitarian oppression.⁴

To dissipate apathy towards the "totalitarian challenge" was not the only mission the CCF/CIA needed to accomplish. Europe's so-called "neutralists" also were to be made to see that they needed the United States to assist, if not lead, them in facing the challenge. The Festival's additional objective, then, was to convince "neutralists" that the Old and New Worlds were dependent on each other in terms of both political and cultural solidarity. This objective posed a problem to the CCF/CIA that was arguably even more challenging: the breakdown of—in Nabokov's words—"the pernicious European myth (successfully cultivated by the Stalinists) of American cultural inferiority."⁵ This "pernicious myth" continued to cause many American intellectuals and politicians a headache. In a 1949 study of European views of the United States, about half of the interviewees indicated to believe that Americans were "too materialistic," and three out of ten felt that Americans were "uncultured."⁶ Nabokov, too, was all too

⁴ Nabokov, "International Exposition of the Arts of the Western World: Progress Report," December 17, 1951, CCF, III-4-3; Nabokov to Irving Brown, "Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan," July 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

⁵ Nabokov to Irving Brown, "Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan," July 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

⁶ Common Council for American Unity, *European Beliefs Regarding the United States: A Survey under the Direction of Henry Lee Munson* (New York, 1949), 8. This study was undertaken to obtain information to formulate a strategy aimed at "correcting misconceptions about the United States, counteracting propaganda against our country, and spreading the democratic idea."

familiar with the distorted image of the United States circulating in the European mind—“a frozen image based on the set of worn-out symbols of the early 1920s[:] skyscrapers, gangsters, and the ‘Revue nègre’”—and attributed its persistence to a pervasive “fear of losing cultural, as well as political and ideological leadership in the Western world.” The disquiet among Europe’s intelligentsia was especially acute in the field of music, Nabokov reported to the American reader. American travelers were often confronted with Europeans who would not believe that the United States had built up a music tradition of its own, and assumed that those composers who had emigrated to the United States in the 1930s (Schoenberg, Stravinsky, Bartók, and others) had succumbed to “mass-production culture” and the “Tin-Pan Alley taste of the average American.”⁷

Indeed, American social life contains “certain elements” conducive to “despicable ambitions” at the expense of “authentic artistic concerns,” René Leibowitz informed the readership of the CCF’s archenemy, *Les Temps modernes* (although as a true Existentialist, he conceded that artists were solely responsible for choosing to prostrate themselves before the “‘idols’ of America”). Having just returned from a trip to the United States, the advocate of dodecaphony could report that “our deracinated [composers]” (*déracinés*) were “protecting” and even “enhancing” the “tradition” (i.e., the “polyphonic tradition” of which Schoenberg was, according to Leibowitz, the most authentic representative at the time), albeit against the odds of a “closed system” that hardly allowed for their works to be performed. Even the societies that promoted contemporary music focused on American-born composers whose name had already been established and who preoccupied themselves with developing a “national style” (Leibowitz refers to Copland and Roy Harris). Adopting a Freudian lens, Leibowitz interpreted this “chauvinism” as a sign of a musical culture still in a “nascent state” and uncertain about how to relate to the European tradition to which it at the same time so profoundly submitted. Its performance infrastructure might have surpassed that of European countries, but the “fossilization” (*pétrification*) that it entailed and the failure of “compositional consciences” (*consciences compositionnelles*) who, rather than resisting the established order and engaging themselves with “the fundamental problems of musical composition,” resorted to an “academic, retrospective, [or] folkloric”

⁷ Nabokov, “Performers and Composers: Festivals and the Twelve-Tone Row,” in *America and the Mind of Europe* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951), 98–100. This publication is an anthology of articles originally published in a special issue of *The Saturday Review of Literature* (January 13, 1951), the theme of which was suggested by the OPC/CIA front American Committee on a United Europe (ACUE). Apart from Nabokov, the set of contributors included Raymond Aron, Arthur Koestler, Melvin Lasky, and Denis de Rougemont. A German translation (*Amerika und der europäische Geist*) was published a year later and distributed through the US information services in Austria and Germany.

attitude, seriously hindered American music's maturation.⁸

Leibowitz's presentation of the state of affairs in American music may have been more even-handed than the average expression of anti-American disdain that resounded through the Old World at the time, it nevertheless did little to counter the stubborn prejudices that many Europeans held towards the New World. The US government regularly received appeals from its literary and artistic citizens to send out a greater proportion of America's "serious," and less of its "popular," culture into the world in order to disprove such prejudices.⁹ In 1948, at the opening of the annual summer session of the Berkshire Music Center, Sergey Koussevitzky urged the Truman administration to supplement the Marshall aid with a cultural program so that "the morally hungry and mentally destitute peoples of Europe" would cease feeling that the United States had nothing to export but "the power and value of the dollar." For "when art is attacked at its very roots," the conductor continued without explicitly referring to the Soviet Party's decree on music issued a few months earlier, "we [cannot] remain silent."¹⁰

As discussed in Chapter 3, it was not for lack of interest on the part of the Office of War Information (OWI) and State Department officials that America's accomplishments in the field of the fine arts were poorly promoted in Europe. Immediately after the liberation of Paris from the Nazi oppressors, OWI scheduled a large-scale music festival in the French capital in June 1945 to show Europeans that America's artistic development had not stagnated during the war. Six weeks after its announcement, however, the event had to be cancelled, officially because of logistical difficulties resulting from the increased tempo of the war in the European theater, officiously because OWI failed to secure congressional subsidies for the project and the French government refused to contribute its share to the project in underwriting the costs of rent, PR, and contracting local musicians.¹¹ Two years later, Secretary of State George Marshall found

⁸ Leibowitz, "Musiques d'Amérique: Déracinement et implantation d'une tradition musicale," *Les Temps modernes* 4 (1948): 805, 809. Leibowitz discusses the work of Eisler, List, Adorno, Paul Dessau, Edward Steuermann, Ernst Křenek, and Erich Itor Kahn.

⁹ See, for instance, the advice from Roy Harris, former OWI Music Director, to Charles Thomson, Acting Advisor of the State Department's Office of International and Cultural Affairs, June 18, 1946, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Office of Information and Educational Exchange, Division of International Exchange of Persons, Subject Files, UD 57, 5-UNESCO 1946 (music).

¹⁰ Koussevitzky quoted in "Export of Culture: Dr. Koussevitzky at Berkshire Center Asks That Europe Get More Than Dollars," *New York Times*, July 5, 1948, 9.

¹¹ Mark A. Schubart, "U.S. Music Festival Planned in Paris," *New York Times*, March 1, 1945, 23; "Festival of Music in Paris Canceled," *New York Times*, April 21, 1945, 18. According to Aaron Copland, who had been asked to assume the coordination of the program, OWI "made something of a mess of its own plans" due to inexperience in the field of concert management. Copland to Nadia Boulanger, April 14, 1945, Copland Collection, 248-12. By the time the OWI

himself forced by conservative public opinion to call back from Europe and Latin America a State Department-sponsored travelling exhibition of homegrown modernist paintings on account of its presumed subversive and “un-American” leanings. (“All modern art is Communistic,” Republican Congressman George A. Dondero infamously averred.) Marshall was even to avow before Congress that no more tax money would be spent on the promotion of the United States through any art at all.¹² Needless to say, such incidents had done little to disprove Communist propaganda about American philistinism and cultural immaturity.

Things had to change, drastically and quickly, Edward W. Barrett, Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, lectured in late 1951. So far, the United States had lost many an intellectual and artistic battle without a struggle. Looking back at 1950, Barrett reported that the Kremlin had exploited the openness of the “free world” to send abroad some 39,000 Soviet citizens on propaganda missions while allowing only about 17,000 foreign persons in hand-picked delegations to enter Russia on a closely chaperoned tour. Indeed, in 1948-49, the State Department had made to the Soviet Union no less than twenty-five official overtures for cultural exchange, each of which had been turned down or ignored. In addition, at various international fairs and festivals the Soviets had overwhelmingly upstaged US presence, not only by the size of their delegations or the brilliance of their presentations, but also by defeating the Americans at, for instance, the 1951 Queen Elisabeth Music Competition in Brussels (three of the five prizes in violin performance went to the USSR). Estimating the Soviet government’s expenditure for propaganda in France alone at a dazzling sum of \$150,000,000 a year (roughly sixty-five times the budget the US administration had reserved for its total program of information and educational exchange), America’s entrance into what was now definitely conceived as a “cultural war” was inevitable. However, with the prohibition of Congress to sponsor initiatives aimed at promoting the United States by its cultural accomplishments, Barrett could only appeal to private sponsors to accrue the formidable financial means needed to mount a serious cultural

did manage to present one concert of American music in Paris in October of that year after all, it had ceased to exist: President Truman dissolved the OWI by executive order on August 31, 1945. For more on the OWI festival, see Fauser, *Sounds of War*, 90–1.

¹² Ironically, the “Advancing American Art” exhibition was so well-received in Prague that the Kremlin, by way of equipoise, quickly sent over a collection of socialist-realist paintings. For detailed discussions of this notorious failure of US cultural diplomacy, see Margaret L. Ausfeld and Virginia M. Mecklenburg, *Advancing American Art: Politics and Aesthetics in the State Department Exhibition, 1946–48* (Montgomery, AL: Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, 1984) and Taylor Littleton and Maltby Sykes, *Advancing American Art: Painting, Politics, and Cultural Confrontation at Mid-Century* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1989).

counteroffensive.¹³ That is to say, this is how it looked like from the outside. As it turned out, the United States came to be represented at the Paris Exposition by much more than what one promotion flyer described as the “virtue of private philanthropy.”¹⁴

This chapter discusses the objectives, successes, and failures of the Paris Festival and the subsequent International Convention of Contemporary Music in Rome, April 1954. The first section reveals the overt and covert funding mechanisms that enabled Nabokov’s enterprises to be executed on an unusually impressive scale. The second section analyzes the rationale underpinning the Paris Festival as well as Nabokov’s struggles to ensure the program’s ‘universal’ outlook. The third section highlights the considerations of the Festival organizers that led to the inclusion of Virgil Thomson’s *Four Saints in Three Acts*, performed by an all African-American cast, in the program. The fourth and fifth sections assess the politics and aesthetics of the Paris Festival. While the Festival’s secret sponsors considered the Festival an “overwhelming success” in terms of demonstrating the cultural maturity of the United States, a substantial segment of the targeted “neutralist” audience in Paris was suspicious of the Festival’s auspices as well as the “freedom” message it tried to sell them. The sixth section focuses on the Rome Convention, and shows how Nabokov transformed the “freedom” message into a “cosmopolitan” message, stressing the importance of music institutions and professionals looking beyond their national and aesthetical boundaries and reviving the prewar climate of international collaboration and exchange.

Necessity Knows No Law: Creative Accounting for Cultural Freedom

The *New York Times*, among others, agreed with Barrett’s call to arms and even went a step further by holding everyone who failed to acknowledge “the immense importance” of the “cultural offensive” responsible if the United States were to lose the trial of strength with the Soviets. Referring to the upcoming CCF festival in Paris, the newspaper urged its readers to take this “golden opportunity” to make up arrears in the “propaganda war,” and praised the fundraising efforts of the American Committee for Cultural Freedom (ACCF) and the generosity of some philanthropic foundations in meeting the expenditures involved. “But obviously more examples of America’s impressive cultural life could be brought to Europe if more funds were available.”¹⁵ Barrett’s assistant, John Devine, took this last sentence as a

¹³ Barrett quoted from an address delivered at a conference of the Institute of International Education, “U.S. Found Losing in ‘Cultural War,’” *New York Times*, November 15, 1951, 12. See also Barrett, *The Truth is Our Weapon*, 181–4.

¹⁴ A copy of this flyer is located in the Virgil Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

¹⁵ Editorial, “Export of Culture,” *New York Times*, December 4, 1951, 32. The author of this editorial was John B. Oakes, an OSS veteran who generally voiced the concerns he Non-Communist Left.

criticism of the State Department for not supporting the Festival—a criticism he considered “quite unfair,” especially because he had informed the *New York Times* that the State Department had been “favorably impressed” with the project. As it transpired, the “sponsors of the Congress [for Cultural Freedom]” had requested Barrett’s team to “allow the Congress to go its own way,” since the enterprise was intended as “a thoroughly private one without any official propaganda label.” Devine was about to put the *New York Times* right on this, till he suddenly got word from his “clients” that “the situation ha[d] undergone a basic change” to the effect that “[a]ll available funds ha[d] been committed in developing a program for the Congress through private channels.”¹⁶

The mysterious “sponsors” and “clients” whom Devine referred to were staff members from Frank Wisner’s office, the liaisons connecting the overt world of the State Department to the OPC/CIA’s secretive laboratory of psychological warfare stratagems. As explained in the previous chapter, the CCF emerged from this laboratory as one of a series of organizations that, in order not to arouse suspicion among conservative constituencies, were deliberately set up as private civic associations concerned with shoring up support and raising funds for causes that were identical to the government’s own objectives. According to Charles Douglas “C. D.” Jackson, OSS veteran and major advertising executive, such initiatives did “an important selling job on the American public in the matter of psychological warfare and the importance of such an effort to our nation,” and created an effective infrastructure “which could respond to almost any kind of stimuli we want to apply.”¹⁷

That Jackson’s appraisal was not too sanguine emerges from the experience of James and Marcia Burnham, who assisted in the Festival’s preparations on behalf of the OPC, in particular by securing the

¹⁶ Devine, memorandum of conversation, December 20, 1951; Devine to Howland H. Sargeant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, memorandum “Congress for Cultural Freedom,” December 7, 1951, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF.

¹⁷ Devine, memorandum of conversation, January 17, 1952, in *FRUS: The Intelligence Community, 1950–1955*, doc. 100. These are the minutes of a top secret meeting between representatives of the OPC/CIA (Allen Dulles, Frank Wisner, Tom Braden, and Gates Lloyd), the State Department (Edward Barrett, Howland Sargeant, Foy Kohler, Robert Joyce, and John Devine) and their creation, the National Committee for a Free Europe (C. D. Jackson and Abbott Washburn) at which the NCFE’s 1951 Crusade for Freedom, a fundraising campaign for Radio Free Europe, was evaluated. Incidentally, Jackson was familiar with Nabokov’s work for the US Military Government in Germany. When the US Army asked his advice about how best to remobilize its psychological warfare capacity for the Cold War, Jackson produced a memorandum including a list of “the people who come quickly to mind as having shown exceptional qualities during the war and who might be equally valuable now when the enemy is no longer Germany.” Nabokov was on that list. Jackson to Tyler Port, Office of the Secretary of the Army, March 8, 1950, Jackson Papers, 82-nf.

participation of the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO).¹⁸ Against their own expectations, “our contacts with big business impressed us with an entirely different attitude than they might have had a year or two ago.” The president of the American Express Company was apparently so intrigued with the idea of sending off the BSO on the first European tour in its history that he suggested going to see “the General Electric people,” while the CEO of the Singer Manufacturing Company trusted he would have no difficulty in persuading his board to put some money towards the guarantee (providing others went along with them).¹⁹ When this information reached his desk, Barrett, determined not to forfeit this opportunity, threw in his own weight and wrote the American Express chairman to encourage him to pursue his intentions. “The events which are being prepared impress me as potent weapons in reaching many of the straddlers [*sic*] and doubters in Europe.” Presenting “the best that Western civilization has produced in music, painting and letters during the past fifty years” on the one hand, and addressing “the strangulation of culture behind the Iron Curtain” on the other, this was a “chance to strike some blows for American cultural achievements.” As to the qualifications of the CCF members, Barrett ensured that “[t]hey have an assorted background which is one of the things that makes it possible for them to reach into the opposition....[W]e are lucky to have them lined up on our side, [and] I am convinced that [the CCF] can be depended on to make a solid contribution to the fight that you and I have been spending so much time on.”²⁰

For all his enthusiasm, Barrett’s addressee could not promise more than assistance in the logistics of the BSO tour, explaining that “the size of the monetary contribution requested was so far beyond anything we could

¹⁸ BSO conductor Charles Munch was approached by Nabokov in June 1951, and was immediately enthusiastic about the prospect of having the BSO contribute to the Festival. The initial reaction of the BSO’s Board of Trustees was more reserved owing to the need for a guarantee against financial deficits. Nabokov to Henry B. Cabot, President of the BSO Board of Trustees, June 27, 1951, CCF, III-2-6.

¹⁹ Marcia Burnham (Mrs. James Burnham) to Robert P. Joyce, OPC Policy Planning Staff, October 1, 1951, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF; Marcia Burnham to Stanley A. Holme, General Electric Co., October 19, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-6.

²⁰ Barrett to Ralph Reed, President of the American Express Company, October 17, 1951, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF. The American Express Company was from time to time called in by the State Department to act as a cover for transactions that had to appear private to the public. Upon his return to the United States from Berlin in 1950, for instance, the company arranged for Hook to travel to the West Coast to spread the word about the CCF’s birth. F. M. B. [*sic*] to Barrett, July 1, 1950, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 68-Berlin Congress for Cultural Freedom.

possibly make.”²¹ Plans of the New York Philharmonic Orchestra and Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra to tour Europe and beyond in the 1951-52 season (undoubtedly inspired by the then-current favorable political climate for such undertakings) likewise foundered on a failure to raise the necessary funds.²² The ACCF, too, did not see how it could ever raise sufficient funds to finance the participation of both the BSO and the New York City Ballet at the Festival, not to mention other American ensembles on Nabokov’s shortlist. Indeed, the American CCF affiliate had been “somewhat appalled by the size of the guarantee needed,” C. D. Jackson (who happened to be a member of the BSO’s Board of Trustees) reported euphemistically.²³ By early September 1951, nothing seemed to have moved on the financial front, leaving Nabokov in doubt whether he should “go ahead with the idea or drop it.”²⁴

In fact, most ACCF members were not all too thrilled about the Festival idea in the first place. Nabokov’s proposal of the arts exposition in May 1952 had been unanimously accepted at the second meeting of the CCF International Executive Committee in Versailles, May 15–17, but many in the ACCF, who thought that Nabokov had been on “their” side, preferred the original idea of a small-scale congress in Paris in the fall of 1951.²⁵ Some thought the Festival was not the kind of undertaking the CCF should be involved in at all, arguing that “the main activity of the Congress must be to make demonstrations, to take principled stands and to involve European intellectuals, *not* to mobilize the works of artists.” Others thought the money

²¹ Reed to Barrett, October 26, 1951, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF.

²² Howard Taubman, “1952 European Tour for Philharmonic,” *New York Times*, August 28, 1951, 18; “Tour Abroad Urged for U.S. Orchestras,” *New York Times*, September 26, 1951, 36; John B. Oakes, “Two U.S. Orchestras Plan European Tours,” *New York Times*, December 28, 1951, 16. It was intended for either or both of these orchestras to stop by Paris to give three concerts in Nabokov’s Festival. Nabokov to Dimitri Mitropoulos, Music Director, NYPO, November 13, 1951, CCF, III-2-7; Virgil Thomson to Nabokov, undated but probably autumn 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

²³ Jackson to Cabot, August 3, 1951. Jackson had “volunteered” to check with the ACCF as to the financial guarantees they would be able to make to realize a European tour of the BSO. George E. Judd, BSO Manager, to Jackson, July 10, 1951, Jackson Papers, 38-BSO 1951.

²⁴ Nabokov to Irving Brown, September 3, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16. Nabokov had asked Brown to procure a green light for the Festival before August 10, 1951, adding that if “no Go-Ahead signal and a first installment of \$15-20,000 should be attained by that date, the Festival *cannot* be produced by May 1952 and hence should be postponed for another year.” Nabokov to Irving Brown, “Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan,” July 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

²⁵ In February of that year, when Nabokov was still in the United States and participated in the ACCF Executive Committee meetings, he seconded the Committee’s unanimous wish to abandon the idea of a large-scale congress modeled after the Berlin meeting in Paris for “a number of mass rallies and forums to be held at points of strategic importance in Europe,” including “resounding counterdemonstrations” against impending congresses of the Partisans of Peace movement. Nabokov to Bondy, February 3, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-2.

was better spent on consolidating the local CCF committees France, Italy, Germany, and Great Britain and backing first-rate periodicals in the respective languages.²⁶ Why should works by “Communists or Communist fellow-travelers” such as Aaron Copland and Kurt Weill be promoted as “masterpieces of the twentieth century?,” the émigré writer Norbert Mühlen asked his fellow ACCF members. “How [should] the performance of these perhaps admirable masterpieces in Paris help the free world to defend itself against, and defeat, the Stalinist threat”? Was it not illusory to think that even a single exponent of the target group would change his or her political opinions after attending a concert, the more so because “it is a matter of experience that the visitors of avant-garde concerts and ballets are rarely people interested in politics at all”? Mühlen feared the Festival would damage the CCF’s still fragile position: “If its greatest action in two years after the Berlin Congress will be a festival appealing to snobs and esthetes, I fear it will have lost its reputation.”²⁷ *Commentary* editor Elliot E. Cohen, too, considered Nabokov’s plans “a total diversion of our minds and energies” and even felt “scandalized that we permit ourselves to get involved in this kind of hoopla.”²⁸ For Koestler, Nabokov’s proposal, which in his eyes turned what had been founded as a political force into an “effete” arts movement, provided the reason to resign from the international Executive Committee.²⁹

Nabokov was not surprised at all that his proposal met with resistance from the ACCF, as most of its members were “political journalists who have little understanding for the importance of the arts in our culture.” As he saw it, the CCF, by asserting “the true values of our culture,” would gain “enormously in prestige and in meaningfulness” from the Festival.³⁰ To

²⁶ Minutes of the ACCF Executive Committee meeting, June 6, 1951, ACCF, 7-3.

²⁷ Mühlen to the ACCF Executive Committee, October 3, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3. Mühlen had not been present at the meeting during which Nabokov unfolded his plans, but he was briefed by *The New Leader* editor Sol Levitas: “Yesterday, we had a meeting of the [ACCF] at which Nabokov presented his final plan for the ‘festival’ in Paris. Although...no one opposed it, there wasn’t a single person, with the exception of James Burnham, in the room who was for it. It strikes everyone as a tremendous venture that will cost close to half a million dollars with very little chance of making a dent in the intellectual ranks of France. You can very well imagine how I felt sitting in at the meeting where a mountain of money was being spent and I had no funds to even meet the payroll! You should see the swanky new offices that the Committee moved into [from 35 West 53rd Street to 141 East 44th Street, New York City]; the rent alone is close to \$500 a month.” Levitas to Mühlen, September 28, 1951, Mühlen Papers, 18-df.

²⁸ Cohen to Hook, October 5, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3.

²⁹ Koestler to Nabokov, July 30, 1951, Koestler Archive, MS2395/3. In his diary, Koestler sourly dismissed the Festival as a “useless pageant” and a waste of money, distracting the CCF from its intended aims. “I and others created [it] as a potential Deminform, which became a ladder for climbers like Nicholas, Rougemont and little Bondy.” Koestler diary, entry May 30, 1952, Koestler Archive, MS2305.

³⁰ Nabokov to Burnham, June 27, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-6.

accommodate the ACCF's concerns, he ensured ACCF chairman Sidney Hook that the Festival would be given "a definite political character along the lines of our Freedom Manifesto." But previous experiences had proven that in order to reach a European audience beyond its existing contingents of supporters, the Congress needed to make "an oblique approach by linking it with a broad cultural demonstration of some kind," since European intellectuals tended to "shy away from what is narrowly or overtly political." By focusing on what united Europe and America with respect to "our heritage of freedom" instead of merely engaging in—as Nabokov put it—"fruitless polemics with the other side," the Festival was to instill a climate of receptivity for the US position in a Europe "confused" by strong sentiments of neutralism and anti-Americanism.³¹

Perhaps rather surprisingly given his academic and political interests, James Burnham seems to have been the only ACCF member who was genuinely in favor of the Festival plan, and who promised Nabokov to explore "every possibility" to translate it into reality. He agreed that if this "contrasting display of what they [the Soviets] and we have to offer in the arts, music, and literature" could be done "properly," it alone would show "which side represents the future" and assure "the world standing of the Congress for ever after." "Properly done," however, implied that the Exposition had to be done on "a really big scale," requiring a sum of "at least one and possibly as much as two million dollars."³² Even the most generous private gifts would never have added up to the roughly \$300,000 at which Nabokov estimated the costs of the Festival project in July 1951, not to mention Burnham's seven-figure numbers.³³ Indeed, as an unsigned letter explained to the State Department in early October, the costs of having the United States represented at the Festival by the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the New York City Ballet, and some smaller companies could not be covered by the available funds. "Their financing must come in considerable measure from new sources."³⁴

³¹ Hook to Hans Kohn, October 23, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-3; Nabokov, "Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century: Progress Report," December 17, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.

³² Burnham to Nabokov, June 16, 1951, CCF, II-48-9; Burnham to Nabokov, July 10, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-6. Nabokov recognized Burnham as an influential supporter of his plans: "[F]rom the beginning, when so many members of our committee treated the Festival idea with indifference or hostility, you were my real moral support!" Nabokov to Burnham, May 11, 1952, Burnham Papers, 7-8.

³³ On June 24, 1951, Nabokov cabled Burnham that "experts" had calculated that the Festival could be achieved "grand scale" on \$200,000, of which \$85,000 would need to be reserved for the music part (additional income was expected from ticket sales). Burnham Papers, 8-6. An estimate of the Festival budget dated July 17, 1951, estimates the expenses at \$283,900, of which \$90,000 was to be covered by the revenue from box office receipts. CCF, III-4-3.

³⁴ This unsigned document (dated October 1, 1951) appears as a cover letter to a memorandum about the Paris Festival (dated July 20, 1951) drafted by Nabokov's team. Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and

These “new sources” were found sooner than anyone could expect—anyone, except a few. What most ACCF members did not know, or perhaps only suspected, was that their organization initially functioned as a backstop for the OPC/CIA to launder funds into their parent organization in Paris. Authorized by the 1949 Central Intelligence Agency Act, covert government money was channeled into the ACCF via Burnham or other front organizations, like C. D. Jackson’s NCFE, and from there dispatched abroad to CCF projects around the world by the ACCF’s executive secretary, Pearl Kluger, like Burnham an ex-Trotskyist and for that reason sufficiently trusted to be privy of the secret.³⁵ It soon turned out that not every dollar reached its purpose: some beneficiaries purloined their CCF subsidy for private purposes. To prevent this from happening with the large sums of covert money that were primed to be injected into the Festival project (“a couple of million dollars,” being “considerably less than one B-36”), a new checking account was to be set up under the joint control of Hook and Kluger “in covert understanding with an OPC representative.” Additionally, with a view to obviate any suspicion, ACCF members were told that “this entire Festival activity is undertaken on behalf of the International Congress and is not, either in financing or direction, a project of the American Committee.”³⁶

The OPC representative responsible for the account was a certain Albert L. Donnelly, Jr., like Burnham a Yale alumnus, who was to take charge of “all necessary negotiations for the Festival.” Kluger was briefed not to contact anyone in Washington with respect to the Festival, including “Mr. B.” “Mr. Donnelly has certain telephone facilities at his disposal which make any further indiscretions of this nature unnecessary.”³⁷ Once this “Festival

Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF. As this letter does not accompany the copy of the memorandum located in the records of the CCF (III-4-3), it is likely that it concerns an internal correspondence between the OPC and the State Department rather than a direct communication from Nabokov to the State Department.

³⁵ As long as the CIA’s files about its 1950s front operations remain closed, the best place to look for explicit evidence is the archival record documenting the foundation of a front, that is, at the moment when the *modus operandi* to safeguard secrecy has not yet been routinized. So we read in the minutes of an early ACCF meeting (undated but probably February 1951) that “[n]egotiations with the NCFE indicate that it will make available its own or Crusade for Freedom funds to get the American Committee started and to put it into a position to get going under its own steam. Since they are interested in world activities they are asking the American Committee to use some of the funds they will supply to make certain dollar credits available for the purposes of the Paris office.” Burnham Papers, 6-49.

³⁶ Burnham, OPC memoranda 02.433, “An International Arts Festival,” June 4, 1951, and 02.467, “The Financial Control of the Paris Arts Festival,” August 15, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-5. The opening of this account was approved by the ACCF Executive Committee at its meeting of November 30, 1951. ACCF, 7-3.

³⁷ Memorandum “Requested of Pearl Kluger,” undated, Burnham Papers, 8-3. For more on the intricacies of the CIA’s covert funding setup of the 1950s and 1960s, see Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 83–6, and Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 129–45.

Account” was opened at the Rockefeller Center Branch of the Chase National Bank and filled with a first installment of \$40,000, Julius Fleischmann, the ACCF secretary appointed to deal with the finances of the Festival, could inform the BSO that \$30,000 had come available, which was to amass to \$100,000 while negotiations with other “prominent individuals and organizations” were pending. A day later, Fleischmann telephoned the BSO to inform that assurances of an additional \$30,000 plus a concert at the Free Europe University in Exile in Strasbourg had been attained through C. D. Jackson’s NCFE.³⁸ In the weeks thereafter, more dollars would pour in on the Festival account from unidentified “middle-western businessmen” and “guys’ who got interested” in the Festival.³⁹

It was a start, but not enough to meet the demands of Burnham, who could no longer hide his dissatisfaction with the lack of efficiency and urgency which his “clients” displayed. “There is no doubt plenty of money somewhere,” he had written a year earlier to Koestler, “but those who have control of the monies are always tough cookies to convince.”⁴⁰ More than once he had made clear that in order to realize the Festival’s “potential political value,” the OPC/CIA would have to come up with real money, meaning at least \$500,000, but preferably a figure between \$1,000,000 and \$2,000,000. Another source of irritation for Burnham was that the OPC/CIA remained hesitant about authorizing him to solve problems. When Josselson asked him to assist in “discovering some channel that might be used for transferring Festival funds in such a way that they could appear to come from French sources,” it took Burnham merely a few weeks to

³⁸ Julius Fleischmann, Chairman, American Finance Committee of the Paris Arts Festival, to George E. Judd, BSO Manager, October 2, 1951; Judd to Cabot, October 3, 1951, Jackson Papers, 38-BSO 1951. Correspondence with the Chase National Bank and the Festival Account ledger are located in the ACCF Records, 6-9+10. Among the major and clearly covert deposits on the Festival account are \$40,000 from the “Fleischmann Foundation” (October 10, 1951), \$20,000 from the Chase National Bank (October 29, 1951), \$20,000 from the “Hayfields Foundation” (December 20, 1951), \$35,000 from Fleischmann himself (January 15, 1952), the abovementioned \$30,000 + \$4,500 from the NCFE (February 15, 1952), and \$36,000 from the “Heritage Foundation” (April 10/22, 1952). According to the auditor report of the Festival account, dated May 5, 1952, the Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas received \$4,500, the BSO \$6,500, Bruno Walter \$2,500, and the New York City Ballet \$12,000. The contribution to the art exposition amounted to \$9,716.95. ACCF, 6-8.

³⁹ Nabokov to Ted Weeks, Editor of *The Atlantic Monthly*, November 23, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-7. At one point Fleischmann informed Nabokov how he had told “our sad story [i.e., the difficulty in raising the remaining \$75,000 needed to underwrite the costs of the BSO venture] to a “guy” who got interested and raised \$65,000 within just twenty-four hours. “I had to promise to withhold his name and I don’t even know the names of his associates.” Fleischmann to Nabokov, December 13, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-5. (Interestingly, this letter is written on NCFE letterhead.) Such a (little credible) cover story might suggest that Nabokov was not privy to the OPC/CIA network, but it could also be coded language in a correspondence that was open to uninitiated eyes.

⁴⁰ Burnham to Koestler, September 2, 1950, Koestler Archive, MS2376/3.

complete an arrangement that enabled him to route sums of various amounts up to an overall total of \$100,000. “Granted proper authorization,” Burnham repeated for the umpteenth time to his superiors, “I believe that I can, without too much delay or difficulty, set up mechanisms for transferring internationally, by secure and financially responsible methods, sums of money up to a total of several million dollars yearly.”⁴¹ Seeing these behind-the-screens operations at work truly gives another dimension to Olin Downes’s praise of the Festival organizers for meeting the infinite problems “with uncommon imagination and sagacity.”⁴²

Julius “Junkie” Fleischmann, Jr., scion of a Cincinnati yeast and gin fortune, and (former) patron and/or director of various cultural enterprises, including the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo, the Metropolitan Opera, and various Broadway productions, had been approached by Burnham, initially only with the request to lend his cooperation in raising funds for the Festival. His role was soon to grow, though. When the increasing number of financial transactions between the OPC/CIA and the CCF called for a more stable *modus operandi*, Fleischmann, a US Naval Attaché in Intelligence stationed in London during World War II, became involved in the development of a new security check in the covert funding chain: the dummy foundation. Rather than that the covert money being transferred directly from the OPC/CIA liaison to the front organization, it would pass (often via other fake conduits) through the account of what ostensibly was a philanthropic organization, set up by a wealthy patron who could be believed to donate large sums for cultural events like the Paris Festival and endowed with a board of trustees drawn from America’s corporate elite.

The dummy trust over which Fleischmann was to preside, the Heritage Foundation, Inc., was incorporated on January 30, 1952, its objectives being described to the outer world as “voluntarily extending aid by financial contributions to those selected organizations, groups and individuals engaged in increasing and preserving the cultural heritage of the free world,” and revealing “the inherent dangers which totalitarianism poses in the intellectual development of the arts, letters, and sciences.” This foundation, renamed the Farfield Foundation in August of the same year, was to assume the ACCF’s role as conduit for CIA funds to the CCF headquarters in Paris throughout the 1950s and early 1960s.⁴³ As Diana Josselson, Michael Josselson’s spouse, remembered, the directors of the Foundation met every

⁴¹ Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.503, “Paris Arts Festival,” October 23, 1951, and OPC memorandum 02.532, “Transfer of Money to Paris Arts Festival,” December 10, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-6.

⁴² Downes, “Twentieth-Century Art: Programs in Paris Stress Accomplishments of Western World in Past Fifty Years,” *New York Times*, May 11, 1952, X7.

⁴³ See the Certificate of Incorporation (dated January 30, 1952) and other materials pertaining to the Farfield Foundation in ACCF, 6-16.

other month in New York where there would usually be a ‘guest’ from the Congress—Nabokov, Josselson or Malcolm Muggeridge (a member of the CCF’s steering committee and liaison to the British intelligence agency MI6). They approved the payments, asking no questions, acting out what Muggeridge called “the comedy” as a patriotic duty.⁴⁴ It was a deceptively simple design, and apparently a credible one, too: the US press was lavish in its praise for Fleischmann’s fundraising skills (\$500,000), while the French president would decorate him with the degree of Chevalier of the Legion of Honor.⁴⁵ The BSO management very much appreciated how Jackson’s NCFE and the CCF/ACCF were “bending every effort to give prominence and importance to the Orchestra’s first trip to Europe,” and angled for financial guarantees to match the European tour of 1952 by a transcontinental tour of the Americas in the spring of 1953.⁴⁶

Several members of the ACCF, however, smelled a rat when seeing these operations unfolding right under their nose. In October 1951, Burnham reported to the OPC/CIA that several members of the American CCF affiliate expressed “a general feeling of uneasiness about the relations of the Committee with ‘the government’, and a half-conscious feeling...that they are being exploited for purposes over which they have no real control.”⁴⁷ This feeling was more than justified. Fed up with the State Department’s feeble attempts to steal a march on the Soviet Union, Thomas Braden, the man in charge of overseeing the OPC/CIA’s construction of an international network of front organizations like the CCF, already had Nabokov’s plan approved by the OPC’s project review board in April 1951.⁴⁸ That is, at the time of the second meeting of the CCF International

⁴⁴ Diana Josselson in interviews with Peter Coleman (July 1983) and Frances Stonor Saunders (March 1997). Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 49; Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 127.

⁴⁵ “If you think you could get a few American millionaires to get up half a million cash, no names to be publicized, to put on a thirty-day exhibition of dancing, painting, writing and music in Paris—you try it. It is some sort of testament to this man [Fleischmann] that he got the money in about 36 hours on a telephone.” Column by Whitney Bolton, *Evening Times* [Cumberland, Maryland], April 30, 1952, 4. “High praise must accrue to...the self-effacing and magnificent open-handedness of Julius Fleischmann, who, as we are informed from sources he neither knows nor suspects, was its unfailing financial supporter, in an amount which turned out to be some three times what had originally been estimated.” Olin Downes, “Paris Exposition in Sum,” *New York Times*, June 15, 1952, X7.

⁴⁶ George Judd, BSO Manager, to C. D. Jackson, February 14, 1952, Jackson Papers, 38-BSO 1952–1954 (2).

⁴⁷ Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.505, “American Committee for Cultural Freedom,” October 29, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-6.

⁴⁸ Braden in an interview with Frances Stonor Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 114-5. It is at the moment not possible to verify Braden’s date of April 1951. In his autobiography (*Bagázh*, 243), Nabokov related that he wrote the first draft for the Festival proposal during his flight to Paris (which he pins down on May 23, 1951, but should be approximately May 1, 1952). Be it as it may, it seems likely that Braden was looking for someone in the CCF who could put off a “counter

Executive Committee in May of that year, the Festival proposal—and with that, the course of the CCF—had already been signed and sealed in Washington. This probably explains why Nabokov seemed so ostensibly undisturbed by the criticism leveled at his plans and the difficulties he and his team encountered in acquiring funds and cooperation along overt channels.⁴⁹ Indeed, when he asked Denise Tual to join him in the Festival team the eve before he was leaving for the US East Coast (August 8, 1951), he “loudly laughed away” her concerns about the finances, assuring her that “all numbers had been worked out.”⁵⁰ Even if he was not aware of the CCF’s real sponsors, he at least must have felt sufficiently backed by influential supporters of his argument that an event such as he envisaged not only would “draw more attention to our Congress and gain more support for it among distinguished European intellectuals than fifteen public meetings and thousand public speeches,”⁵¹ but also that it had to be handled on a “too-big-too-fail” scale lest the Communists be handed “a new propaganda weapon” which “they could be counted upon to exploit.”⁵² Finally, as the moment of truth drew near, Nabokov had another reason to be confident: two days before the opening of his panorama of the West’s twentieth-century legacy in the arts, tickets for the first two weeks of performances were sold out.⁵³

festival,” and regardless of whether he contacted him directly or indirectly, Nabokov must have been recommended to him by Kennan, Bohlen, or someone else from the ‘witting’ circle.

⁴⁹ Assisted by Ben Sonnenberg, the PR adviser of Unilever Brothers, Burnham and Donnelly had approached corporate businesses like General Electric, General Motors, Singer, Monsanto, Pan American, and Coca Cola to fill the gap of \$75,000 needed to assure the representation of the BSO at the Paris Festival. Most applications were turned down, including an application to the Ford Foundation. Donnelly to Fleischmann, November 6, 1951, ACCF, 7-11. The President of the BSO Board of Trustees, Henry Cabot, who was involved in the OPC front American Committee on a United Europe (ACUE), had approached the Gillette Company, the Norton Company of Worcester, the First National Bank of Boston as well as the Boston chapter of the Crusade for Freedom (NCFE’s fundraising arm), but it is not clear whether these contacts resulted in any funding. Cabot to Burnham, October 17, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-6; Fleischmann to Nabokov, October 23, 1951, CCF, III-2-6.

⁵⁰ Tual, *Le temps dévoré*, 246.

⁵¹ Nabokov to Burnham, June 6, 1951, CCF, III-2-7. To Arthur Schlesinger, Nabokov expressed the same formula in spicier terms, stating that his Festival would have “much more *retentissement* than hundred speeches by Arthur Koestler, Sidney Hook, and James Burnham about the neuroses of our century.” Nabokov to Schlesinger, July 19, 1951, Schlesinger Papers, P-20-nf.

⁵² Nabokov to Geoffrey Parsons, Jr., NATO Information Service, December 28, 1951, CCF, III-2-7. In this letter, Nabokov suggested that the NATO countries assume the expenses of artists holding their respective citizenships and primed to perform at the Festival, or at least assist in obtaining the best of their artists to participate.

⁵³ State Department, *Wireless Bulletin*, April 29, 1952, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Education Exchange, Program Development Staff, Program Reporting Staff, Operations, A1 3023, 1-CCF.

“Let the Great Works Speak for Themselves”: Optimizing the Offensive

Nabokov’s “symphony of freedom to combat Communist cacophony”—as one US headline read—opened on April 30, 1952, with a concert dedicated to the memory of “all victims of oppression in the twentieth century” in the Church of St. Roch.⁵⁴ “[You] symbolize better than any[one] else the meaning of our Exposition,” Nabokov welcomed the refugees from behind the Iron Curtain as well as two hundred former prisoners from Nazi, Spanish, and Soviet labor camps who were among the overflowing audience. “You have suffered or given [your] lives for the ideas for which we stand: freedom of thought, freedom of expression and determined opposition to any form of political tyranny and oppression.”⁵⁵ Presented by the Chorale St. Guillaume of Strasbourg and the Orchestre Lamoureux of Paris under direction of Fritz Munch, the program featured performances of Francis Poulenc’s *Stabat Mater* as well as J. S. Bach’s *Magnificat* in D Major (BWV 243) and the cantata “Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden” (BWV 6). The choice of these works—Poulenc’s a declaration of recognition of the righteousness of “God my Savior” and Bach’s a supplication to “Him” not to abandon “us” now that “darkness has taken over in many places”—seemed only too fitting for the occasion.⁵⁶ Thus the tone was set for a month-long marathon of opera, ballet, symphonic and chamber concerts, in particular showcasing those composers who had been castigated in Nazi Germany and were being castigated in the Soviet Union (see Appendix B1 for a full program).

Besides the French debuts of Alban Berg’s *Wozzeck* (a reprise of the 1951 Salzburg Festival production by the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Choir of the Vienna Opera under the direction of Karl Böhm) and Benjamin Britten’s new opera *Billy Budd* (performed by the Royal Opera of Covent Garden under the baton of the composer), the program included two concerts by the RIAS Orchestra of West Berlin (whose participation was

⁵⁴ Harold Rogers, “Symphony of Freedom to Combat Communist Cacophony: Festival of Twentieth-Century Masterpieces to Spotlight Art of Unfettered Peoples,” *Christian Science Monitor*, April 24, 1952, 13. Similar headlines read: “Western Culture Sings of Self in Paris Church” (*Manitowoc [Wisconsin] Herald Times*, May 1, 1952, 16), “Western Culture Shows Commies We Are Civilized” (*The Big Spring [Texas] Herald*, May 1, 1952, 13), and “Western Culture Sings to Freedom” (*Janesville [Wisconsin] Daily Gazette*, May 1, 1952, 6).

⁵⁵ Nabokov cited in the State Department’s *Wireless Bulletin*, May 1, 1952, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Education Exchange, Program Development Staff, Program Reporting Staff, Operations, A1 3023, 1-CCF.

⁵⁶ As a justification to open a twentieth-century music festival with Bach, the program booklet advanced the view that no other composer had been so influential on the course of music history (especially that of the twentieth century) and so resistant to national or aesthetic “extremism.” CCF, III-4-6. At the earliest stage in the planning, it was intended—undoubtedly as a refutation of Communist atheism—to have Mozart’s Mass in C Minor performed in Les Invalides or at Notre Dame, as well as to have three special programs of religious music at a Catholic church, a Protestant church, and a synagogue.

secured through Marshall Plan counterpart funds) which were obviously designed as direct responses to the Zhdanov Decree: one all-Bartók concert (May 23) featuring works of the Hungarian composer that could not find approval with Marxist ears, and one concert (May 24) featuring Hindemith's *Metamorphoses*, Prokofiev's *Scythian Suite*, and a concert suite of Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District*, a score which had taken Nabokov quite some trouble to procure.⁵⁷ Equally meaningful selections were Arthur Honegger's Second Symphony (written in Paris during the Nazi occupation and commonly interpreted in terms of victory over violence) and Luigi Dallapiccola's *Canti di prigionia* (Songs of Imprisonment) (written as a direct response to Mussolini's introduction of race laws to his new Roman Empire).⁵⁸ But the uncontested sun of the Festival around which all other stars of the "free world" orbited—at times to the dismay of those stars—was Igor Stravinsky, who himself conducted performances of his *Oedipus Rex* (oratorio version), *Scènes de ballet*, Symphony in C, Symphony in Three Movements, and the Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra.⁵⁹ The endless ovation after the reprise of his *Le Sacre du printemps*, performed by the Boston Symphony Orchestra under the direction of Pierre Monteux (the same maestro who had conducted its notorious premiere in 1913), was saturated with the propaganda value which the Festival was supposed to accrue.⁶⁰ Another intended and similarly powerful demonstration against totalitarianism was a performance of Schoenberg's *Survivor from Warsaw*, but for unknown reasons this was not realized. Nevertheless, the alternative, his

⁵⁷ In the wake of the 1936 ban on Shostakovich's music in the Soviet Union, Stalin recalled all scores of *Lady Macbeth* circulating abroad. (Scores of works by Soviet composers were owned by the Soviet government and only lent for performances.) A search for a copy of the score in the Western realm was fruitless until Ferenc Fricsay, exiled Hungarian conductor of the RIAS Orchestra, wired from Vienna that an inquiry through underground channels had led him to a score of a concert version of the opera. Needless to say, Nabokov's team did not fail to pitch the discovery to the press, including *Time* magazine ("Hail to Freedom," May 5, 1952, 79). Along the way it turned out that Artur Rodziński still owned a photostat copy of the full score he used for the opera's American premiere with the Cleveland Orchestra in 1935, but Nabokov had been told he had lost it. Nabokov to Rodziński, March 19, 1952, Rodziński Papers, 7-2.

⁵⁸ Nabokov had also tried to get hold of a score of Manuel de Falla's two-part cantata *Atlántida*, but the work, left incomplete at the composer's death in 1946, was prevented from being published by the Franco regime as its libretto was based on the eponymous poem by Jacint Verdaguer (1845–1902), a pivotal figure in the Catalan nationalist movement. Nabokov, "Élégie funèbre sur quatre notes," *Preuves*, no. 15 (May 1952): 7–8.

⁵⁹ Henri Sauguet and Georges Auric, for instance, felt that during the rehearsal period all the attention went to *Oedipus Rex* at the expense of their ballets. For an amusing account of Tual's behind-the-scene experiences as assistant manager of the Festival, and especially of Stravinsky's charm and antics, see Tual, *Le temps dévoré*, 253-68. Incidentally, Stravinsky's fee for his presence amounted to \$6,500 (\$1,500 for each of three performances; \$2,000 for travelling expenses) which was paid directly from the ACCF/CIA account. Minutes ACCF Executive Committee meeting, November 30, 1951, ACCF, 7-3.

⁶⁰ Nabokov to Irving Brown, "Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan," July 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

monodrama *Erwartung*—a textbook example of Expressionism or, in the Soviet textbook, of “pathological aberrations” typical of a “bourgeoisie in decay”—was no less rife with symbolic power. In fact, an additional layer of political meaning was added by the work’s unlikely pairing with its artistic antipode, Stravinsky’s *Oedipus Rex*. No concert program could have better communicated the message that the soldiers of rivalling compositional trends (as represented by Schoenberg and Stravinsky) should come out of their trenches to join forces in the struggle against a common enemy.

As indicated before, the framing of the Festival, and with that, the composition of its program, had been a delicate matter for Nabokov. On the one hand, his American CCF allies needed to be convinced that the gross expenditures on the Paris extravaganza were legitimized by the political purposes it was to serve. On the other hand, in order not to deter audiences in Europe, especially France, “[t]he political, cultural and moral meaning of the Festival and of its program should not be overt.” Faith was Nabokov’s answer, faith in the intrinsic power of Western culture. Given that all modernist trends of the first half of the twentieth century had been branded as “formalist, decadent and corrupt” by Stalinists and Soviet aestheticians, Nabokov argued, their mere representation in a retrospective exposition should suffice to lead audiences to draw their own “inevitable logical conclusions.”⁶¹ After all, as “[n]o ideological polemic about the validity and meaning of free culture can equal the products of this culture itself, let the great works of our century speak for themselves.”⁶² Therefore, Nabokov advised, the publicity campaign of the Festival was to be built up progressively, first emphasizing its cultural impact, and only gradually its political meaning enclosed in the program itself. “If we start making speeches and propaganda now, we will put the whole [operation] in jeopardy.”⁶³ The full political implications, then, would be the subject of a public session of the CCF membership that was to close the Exposition. In a nutshell, Nabokov imagined this CCF manifestation as a trial of the thesis that the creative richness and variety of “Western civilization” (in itself a tacit assumption, of course) could only be ascribed to that same civilization’s commitment to freedom and democracy: the Festival items were to produce the evidence, and the final debate to reach the verdict.

⁶¹ Nabokov to Brown, “Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan,” July 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16. To assist the audience in drawing its own conclusion, the program booklets to the concerts and exhibitions would be compiled of statements on the specific work at hand by mouthpieces of both “free” and “totalitarian” aesthetics. Nabokov wrote to, among others, Nicolas Slonimsky and Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt to supply quotations and other material. Nabokov to Slonimsky, February 25 and March 6, 1952, Slonimsky Papers, 153-2; Nabokov to Stuckenschmidt, February 26, 1952, Stuckenschmidt Papers, 18.

⁶² Nabokov, memoranda “Masterpieces of Our Century,” July 20, 1951, and “Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century: Progress Report,” December 17, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.

⁶³ Nabokov to Kluger, December 20, 1951, CCF, III-2-7.

Nabokov had succeeded in convincing the ACCF of his point of view. At a meeting in January 1952, the ACCF Executive Committee reached the consensus that “the Festival should aim to stand on its own merits as a cultural phenomenon,” and that, consequently, the political significance of the event “should *not* be emphasized in publicity about it.”⁶⁴ Two months later, Irving Brown, upon his return to the United States from Europe, had confirmed the soundness of Nabokov’s argument, reporting that overt political activity in Europe at that time had become almost impossible. No one, Brown reported, seemed to have been interested in political arguments whereas the political situation in every European country deteriorated by the day. In this climate, the Soviets had gained considerable credit in the field of culture. For instance, by the brilliance of their performances alone, a ten-headed Soviet delegation of dancers, singers and musicians to the 1951 *Maggio Musicale* in Florence (including pianist Emil Gilels, cellist Mstislav Rostropovich, violinist Galina Barinova, and ballerina Galina Ulanova) had succeeded in drawing visitors who initially had been determined to stay away. The CCF managed to cast a shadow over one of these triumphs by drawing media attention to an interview with Leonid Kogan, the winner of the 1951 edition of the Queen Elisabeth Competition, in which he claimed that people were starving in Brussels. This act of counterpropaganda was hardly the beginning of a full counteroffensive, though. If the CCF was to reach the “middle-of-the-road intellectuals” beyond the already converted, it had to think big and act accordingly.⁶⁵

Nabokov sensed that if his Festival was to be successful in seizing the initiative from the Soviets, it needed to be as inclusive as possible. He only intervened in the process of programming (which was left in the first place to the musical ensembles he had contracted) when artists with a controversial relationship to former fascist regimes popped up (like, for instance, Ottorino Respighi with his *Fontane di Roma*) or when artists held an association with the Communist movement. It was “out of the question,” for instance, that George Balanchine’s wish to have “Comrade Picasso” doing the set design of *Le Sacre* would be honored for any production under

⁶⁴ Minutes ACCF Executive Committee meeting, January 9, 1952, ACCF, 7-3. Eventually, two weeks before the start of the Festival, the ACCF would be told that the CCF Executive Committee had decided not to go ahead with the concluding political meeting, as it would be “not feasible.” A more precise reason for this cancellation has not been recorded in the ACCF minutes, but it was likely due to the failure to contract sufficient CCF members, including the CCF’s honorary chairmen, to Paris for this one-day occasion. Minutes ACCF Executive Committee meeting, April 16, 1952, ACCF, 7-3

⁶⁵ Minutes ACCF Executive Committee meeting, March 12, 1952, ACCF, 7-3; Howard Taubman, “Soviet Artists in Italy: Delegation Sent by Government Creates Deep Impression at Florence Festival,” June 24, 1951, 83; Nabokov, “Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century: Progress Report,” December 17, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.

CCF auspices.⁶⁶ Likewise, his active membership of the French Communist Party prevented Roger Désormière from being hired to conduct the projected French premiere of Stravinsky's *The Rake's Progress*.⁶⁷ On the other hand, Nabokov ignored rumors that Jean Cocteau, contracted to design the production of *Oedipus Rex* (originally conceived with Stravinsky in 1926–27) and to assume the role of the Narrator, had subscribed to the Stockholm Peace Appeal. He also did not act upon the ACCF's feeling that Cocteau "should be dropped from the Exposition program" after he had signed "the obviously Communist-inspired document protesting the execution of Soviet spies in Greece."⁶⁸ Likewise, noted "neutralists," "fellow-travelers" or onetime Popular Front members featured on the program, like Charles Koechlin, Elsa Barraine, Henri Dutilleux, and Aaron Copland.⁶⁹ Nabokov even followed up on Irving Brown's advice to try—at the dismay of

⁶⁶ Nabokov to Stravinsky, June 27, 1951, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 381. Nabokov referred in particular to Picasso's protest against the intervention of the United States and the United Nations in the Korean War as articulated in his painting *Massacre in Korea* (1951). Stravinsky replied that "[e]vidently Picasso would have been the most desirable had he not been deemed 'undesirable'." Stravinsky to Nabokov, July 3, 1951, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 381. In the end, *Le Sacre* was performed in concert form. Picasso was, incidentally, represented in the Festival's art exhibition.

⁶⁷ Nabokov to Stravinsky, January 17, 1952, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 382. The presentation of *The Rake* under Festival auspices did not materialize as the Opéra had decided to mount Rameau's *Les Indes galantes* (1735) first. Nabokov's objection that Rameau's opera had "waited 250 years to be staged there, and, [therefore], could surely wait a few more months" had been to no avail. Nabokov to Stravinsky, February 13, 1952, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 383. Nabokov, incidentally, thought highly of Désormière's musicianship, and when the conductor suffered a massive paralytic stroke (from which he never recovered) in early 1952, Nabokov was profoundly disturbed. José Bruyr, *L'Écran des musiciens*, second series (Paris: Corti, 1933), 88; Nabokov to Thomson, March 19, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

⁶⁸ Denise Tual, Assistant Manager Paris Festival, to Jean Cocteau, January 21, 1952, CCF, III-2-7; Pearl Kluger, ACCF Executive Secretary, to Nabokov, April 9, 1952, ACCF, 7-13. It seems that Cocteau had been found unsuitable to direct *The Rake*, though, for at one point Stravinsky wrote Nabokov that "[i]t is too bad that Cocteau is not acceptable [to direct] *The Rake*," but "I am pleased to know that he will participate in *Oedipus Rex* [as interpreter of the Narrator role]." Stravinsky to Nabokov, January 22, 1952, *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 382. It should be noted that, given the advance publicity, a last-minute decision to ban Cocteau from the program would have done more harm than good. The absence of Picasso, the original set designer of *Oedipus*, was already blatant enough. According to Tual, who had been entrusted with the coordination of the *Oedipus* production, Stravinsky had been on the verge of retracting his participation. Tual, *Le temps dévorisé*, 255.

⁶⁹ Especially Copland's performance at the Waldorf Conference would have sufficed to preclude him from a CCF stage, one might think. Nabokov was well acquainted with Copland, though, and since the most eminent composer of the United States had decided soon after the Conference to drop his political engagement altogether, there was no problem to ask him for a "purely cultural" conference. Indeed, at an early stage Nabokov had asked Copland to come to Paris to take charge of a music conference that was to be organized apart from the Festival program. Nabokov, "Rapport sur le voyage de M. Nicolas Nabokov aux États-Unis du 2 au 8 août 1951," August 14, 1951, CCF, III-4-4. On Copland's retreat from politics and resort to serialism, see Jennifer L. DeLapp-Birkett, "Aaron Copland and the Politics of Twelve-Tone Composition in the Early Cold War United States," *Journal of Musicological Research* 27 (2008): 31–62.

Fleischmann—to get such a controversial figure as Charlie Chaplin to Paris to present the European premiere of his newest film, *Limelight*, with the express purpose to score “a considerable and resounding victory in the eyes of the neutralist and FT [Fellow-Travelling] masses of [the] European intelligentsia, in particular the Fellow-Travellorish [*sic*] world of the moving-picture industry.”⁷⁰

Preventing the Festival from being discredited as a merely political affair also meant preventing it from being discredited as a vehicle for American propaganda. For this reason, references to the NCFE’s support were crossed out from draft press releases, and Nabokov advised Shepard Stone, the representative of the Allied High Commission for Germany (HICOG) who was to take care of the German leg of the BSO tour, not to use the name of the CCF in PR materials.⁷¹ As to the program, the participation of American composers and organizations of the highest standing was called for in order to prove to Europeans that the United States had “contributed its share to the cultural edifice of our time,” yet at the same time US representation was to be limited “in order not to give the impression that we are trying to

⁷⁰ When Fleischmann learned of the invitation to Chaplin, he wrote Nabokov to remind him that “Charlie Chaplin has been identified with every leftist movement in the country for the past decade and has proclaimed it from the house tops! To have him at the Exposition would be a mockery of everything we are doing and would certainly give our friends on the other side of the [C]urtain not only a good laugh but a wonderful chance to use the Exposition as a propaganda vehicle for themselves.” The situation was especially embarrassing for Fleischmann, as “two of the people who are helping me out financially heard about it and, to put it mildly, they are not pleased.” Fleischmann to Nabokov, undated, Nabokov Papers, 1-5. Nabokov explained to Fleischmann that he had invited Chaplin not on his own initiative, but on special instructions from Irving Brown who knew that Chaplin had for some time been wavering after having been “worked upon’ by some close friends of ours, in fact by some of the people who support and finance our organization.” The idea was that if Chaplin would agree to appear under the sponsorship of the CCF, he would “not compromise the Congress, but *compromise himself* once and for all in the eyes of F[ellow] T[raveler]s and [C]ommunist sympathizers.” Nabokov to Fleischmann, January 28, 1952, Nabokov Papers, 1-5. Chaplin, incidentally, responded favorably to Nabokov’s invitation, but was uncertain whether *Limelight* would be completed in time. Nabokov to Chaplin, January 17, 1952, CCF, III-2-7; Harry Crocker, Chaplin’s PR representative, to Nabokov, January 24, 1952, Brown Papers, 13-16. When later that year Attorney General James P. McGranery denied Chaplin reentry to the United States after a visit to Europe on account of his “leering, sneering attitude toward the country whose gracious hospitality has enriched him,” the ACCF took the side of the comedian, stating that “[m]uch as we detest Mr. Chaplin’s political opinions, we believe the Attorney General’s action to be beneath the dignity of his high office and unworthy of a great democratic government.” ACCF press release, September 22, 1952, ACCF, 10-4.

⁷¹ Nabokov to Stone, February 13, 1952, CCF, III-2-7. In a draft for a release dated December 28, 1951, the following sentence was crossed out: “Although most of the great costs of underwriting transportation [of the BSO] are being borne by the intellectuals who are contributing to the Congress, some of the expense is being carried by the National Committee for a Free Europe, of which Radio Free Europe is an activity, which will broadcast the European concerts [of the BSO].” ACCF, 12-8.

impose something which the Europeans do not want.”⁷² For the same reason, Nabokov tried to dissuade Leopold Stokowski from including in the program of the Festival’s final concert works by little-known American composers like Randall Thompson, Howard Hanson, and Hall Johnson. He also discouraged the performance of Aaron Copland’s *Lincoln Portrait* (an orchestral work culminating in the recitation of excerpts from Abraham Lincoln’s speeches, including the Gettysburg Address) and suggested the composer’s *El Salón México* as an alternative. In addition, he urged Stokowski to balance his American-inclined program by works of one German and one French composer in addition to Sibelius’s *Finlandia*, not only because works by this composer were still lacking on any of the other concert programs, but also because Finland had become “in the minds of the free world a symbol of courage and resistance.”⁷³ Probably Stokowski thought this interference to be too much, for in the end the concluding concert (June 1, 1952) was conducted by Pierre Monteux, with a program aimed at a larger music-loving audience and including last-minutes “correctives” for the lacunae that had been pointed out in the French press (Vincent d’Indy and Gabriel Fauré).⁷⁴

Indeed, it had been “very difficult to enthruse conductors for a program designed by us, [and] to convince them that there is no question of imposing them works that we want them to play,” Nabokov complained to Jacques Maritain, who had written his old friend to remind him not to forget to include a work on the Festival program by his protégé Arthur Lourié.⁷⁵ From all sides people tried to induce Nabokov to include works they considered to be indispensable for the Festival’s purposes, and quite a few musicians offered themselves to appear as a soloist.⁷⁶ The Spanish CCF representative, Salvador de Madariaga, had written him that a festival without the music of the Polish-born Jewish composer Aleksander Tansman would be a “scandal,” American musical organizations urged him to include more American works on the program, and his French friends thought the omission of works by Jacques Ibert, Louis Aubert, and Florent Schmitt an injustice with respect to French music. “I really had to put myself

⁷² Nabokov, “Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century: Progress Report,” December 17, 1951, CCF, III-4-3; Nabokov to the Executive Secretary of the US National Music Council, February 25, 1952, CCF, III-2-7.

⁷³ Nabokov to Stokowski, January 25, 1952, CCF, III-2-9. Nabokov also did not see the need of including Stokowski’s transcription of Shostakovich’s E♭ Minor Prelude, “unless you insist.”

⁷⁴ The British conductor John Barbirolli, too, cancelled the two concerts he was slated to give with the Hallé Orchestra (Manchester) and the Sheffield Choir because of Nabokov’s interference in the program. Rolly Myers, “The Paris May Festival,” *The Chesterian* 27 (July 1952): 22.

⁷⁵ Nabokov to Maritain, February 7, 1952, CCF, III-2-7.

⁷⁶ Pianist Robert Fitzdale apparently even offered to play one of Nabokov’s works, which Nabokov “definitely” forbade him to do. Nabokov to Fitzdale, February 12, 1952, CCF, III-2-6.

above my own tastes and personal sympathies and be entirely directed by a sense of justice and impartiality.”⁷⁷

Serge Lifar, the ballet master whom Nabokov knew from his days with the Ballets Russes, strongly disagreed with Nabokov’s self-proclaimed impartiality. In a series of acid open letters he criticized the fact that his Paris Opéra Ballet had never been asked to contribute to the Festival whereas George Balanchine’s New York City Ballet Company was scheduled for no less than six nights.⁷⁸ Although Nabokov had proposed to commission two new ballets from Lifar’s Ballet (which was declined by the director of the *Théâtres lyriques nationaux* on grounds of the current engagements the Ballet was to fulfill), he deliberately avoided all contact with Lifar because of the ballet master’s dubious relationship with Nazi occupation authorities as director of the Opéra Ballet—a liaison of which, after the war, he was whitewashed by the Communist Party. “Obviously [Lifar’s] letters do not represent mere professional jealousy, but are part of a very evident CP campaign, working through the neutralist papers,” Nabokov explained to Burnham.⁷⁹ The CCF’s public response to Lifar’s bitter attack was deliberately cool: could not the Opéra Ballet be seen every week whereas the New York City Ballet was really a *novum* for Parisian audiences?⁸⁰

Before the Saints Go Marching In: Addressing Jim Crow

Another of Nabokov’s not entirely impartial moves had been to accept a self-imposed invitation coming from one of his closest friends, Virgil Thomson. More precisely, Thomson suggested forming a “Negro troupe” to stage Gershwin’s *Porgy and Bess* as well as his own opera, *Four Saints in Three Acts*, a mystic opera to a libretto by Gertrude Stein which at the time of its premiere in 1934 was unique in its unconventional topic, its non-narrativity, and its minimalistic staging.⁸¹ Most important for the Festival’s purposes, the work had been unprecedented in being performed by an all-black cast, and as such it provided an excellent occasion to answer the second leitmotiv which Communist presses were adept in exploiting with respect to the United States (the first being its alleged cultural backwardness), namely, the discrimination of non-white segments in US society. In his 1949 defense of

⁷⁷ Nabokov to Maritain, February 7, 1952, CCF, III-2-7.

⁷⁸ Lifar’s open letter to the Festival organization was published by the neutralist daily *Combat* on April 30, 1952.

⁷⁹ “The Secretary for Fine Arts, [Jacques] Jaujard, told me the other day: ‘Qu’est-ce que vous voulez, Lifar est un hôte chez les Communistes.’ The fact is, that Lifar was, like so many others, whitewashed of collaboration by the CP...Besides, he hopes to become ballet master in Leningrad!” Nabokov to Burnham, May 11, 1952, Burnham Papers, 7-8.

⁸⁰ Jacques Carat, “La presse française et l’Œuvre du XXe siècle,” *Preuves* 16 (May 1952): 53-4.

⁸¹ Nabokov, “Rapport sur le voyage de M. Nicolas Nabokov aux États-Unis du 2 aux 8 août 1951,” August 14, 1951, CCF, III-4-4.

liberal democracy against its rivals to the Left and to the Right, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., recognized that “[t]he sin of racial pride” was America’s most critical Achilles heel. Indeed, not only did the “shocking racial cruelties in the United States or in most areas of western colonialism” give Communism “a special prestige for African or Asiatic intellectuals,” but it also basically subverted “any attempt to contain Communism by way of propagating American values.” If the United States was to lend credibility to its claims to leadership in the “free world,” Schlesinger persuasively argued, it had to bridge the embarrassing discrepancy between rhetoric and practice, and “demonstrate a deep and effective concern with the racial inequities” within its borders.⁸² In other words, Thomson’s proposal to bring to Paris the two stage works from the US operatic repertoire that were inspired by African American music and culture hardly needed defending. In fact, the State Department was already toying with the idea of sending off a production of *Porgy and Bess* to the second edition of the Berlin Festival—an enterprise conceived by HICOG as a reply to the KPD-sponsored youth manifestations (*Deutschlandtreffen der Jugend*)—in September of the same year.

But for Thomson’s proposal, too, the adage “easier said than done” held true. If the pain and troubles to secure the participation of the BSO in the Festival already seemed impressive, then the efforts to realize a production of *Four Saints in Three Acts* at the Festival truly were of a nature that would have merited that those involved in them should be declared saints. It all started off so well. In mid-October, Nabokov estimated the costs of the venture at \$30,000 and it looked like the State Department, next to HICOG which probably would sponsor a tour of several German cities, might chip in. Burnham, too, was optimistic that he could furnish “adequate financing for the production.” In the meantime, Thomson managed to gather a production team, including the set designer Pavel Tchelitchev (who, parenthetically, had designed the Diaghilev production of Nabokov’s *Ode* in 1928), Frederick Ashton, the choreographer of the original *Four Saints* production in 1934, and the conductor Thomas Schippers as his assistant.⁸³ So far, so good.

A couple of days later, however, Nabokov wrote an alarmed letter to Thomson, expressing his “extreme concern about the chances of the production of *Four Saints*.” A review with the CCF treasurer had shown that if the production were completely carried by an American crew, the costs would certainly exceed \$45,000. This figure could be cut down by at least

⁸² Schlesinger, *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin, 1949), 190–1, 230, 235.

⁸³ Nabokov to Thomson, October 18, 1951; Burnham to Thomson, October 19, 1951; Thomson to Nabokov, October 22, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16. Tchelitchev, who had a mother and sister living in Moscow, wished not to be credited for his contribution to the Paris Festival. Thomson to Nabokov, October 30, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

50% if most of the required cast of six soloists, a small chorus of eight and a large chorus of twenty would be contracted in Europe instead of New York. (Pay scales for musicians were lower in Europe, and the rate of exchange was favorable.) A few soloists could be brought over from America at no charge to the Festival budget, including one of Nabokov's protégés, the young Leontyne Price, whose expenses would be covered by her patrons.⁸⁴ Thomson was initially not all too keen on the idea of a mixed American/European cast, nor was the Festival team in New York, which felt that for "psychological reasons" the entire cast of *Four Saints* should be "American Negro":

In dance and in song, *Four Saints* exploits the sense of music and rhythm which is the American Negro's special forte. At the same time, unlike most American musical and dramatic vehicles for Negro performers, *Four Saints* presents the Negro in an atmosphere of grace and dignity. But, more important, the psychological effect of an all American-Negro *Four Saints* well performed at the Exposition would be, of necessity, most rewarding. It would contradict unanswerably Communist propaganda which claims that the American Negro is a suppressed and persecuted race. A performance by foreign Negroes, on the other hand, would lead immediately to derision from the Communist camp, e.g. to the effect that the U.S. would not let its Negroes 'out.'⁸⁵

In the end, budgetary constraints did not allow for a full American cast, though, and thus Nabokov's production team went ahead with a search for "Negro talent" in Europe. By mid-November, Nabokov reported to Thomson that this search proceeded expeditiously, and that he had found, next to "my Negro girl" (as he used to call Price affectionately), a "young and absolutely outstanding lyrical soprano," who he had been told was "a very good-looking 'café-au-lait' number."⁸⁶

The financial challenges piled up each day, however. More than one New York producer approached to invest in the production had declined, and prospects of the New York City Ballet producing *Four Saints* for the City Center, meaning that the CCF could buy a finished production, fell through.

⁸⁴ Nabokov, acquainted with Price's patrons, had adopted the soprano as his protégé, introducing her to, among others, Thomson and Samuel Barber. At the time he let her audition for Thomson, she had just appeared in her first major operatic role as Mistress Ford in the Juilliard production of Verdi's *Falstaff*. Nabokov to Thomson, October 24, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

⁸⁵ Thomson to Fleischmann, October 29, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16; Donnelly to Fleischmann, November 15, 1951, ACCF, 7-11 and Nabokov Papers, 1-5. Josselson had asked Donnelly to track down the African-American reception of the 1934 production of *Four Saints* to make sure that the opera could not be abused for hostile propaganda. Donnelly could find "no Negro journal comment, either news or critical." Donnelly to Josselson, December 18, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-5.

⁸⁶ Nabokov to Thomson, November 12, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16. The name of this soprano is not given.

At one point the whole budget earmarked for *Four Saints* disappeared when Fleischmann decided to seize the opportunity of having the Covent Garden production of Benjamin Britten's newest opera *Billy Budd* on the Festival program.⁸⁷ Nabokov grew desperate and urged Thomson to exhaust all opportunities for private funding. (Interestingly, contradicting his earlier hope that the State Department would pay part of the costs, Nabokov now indicated that "we would like to stay away from any government backing unless this government backing goes through some organization like the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People."⁸⁸) Suddenly, salvation seemed to come from the American National Theater and Academy (ANTA), a non-profit organization founded in the New Deal era as part of the Federal Theater Project that in the post-war world found a new role in facilitating American theater and ballet companies to tour foreign countries. The resulting state of euphoria was short-lived, though, for soon ANTA had to advise Thomson that the estimated \$44,000 of running expenses seemed to make it "almost prohibitive to produce the show."⁸⁹

Nabokov was now really distressed and pressed Fleischmann to find a solution which as yet would enable to get *Four Saints* to Paris. Fleischmann put Nabokov's mind at rest and explained the whole matter to him. What happened was that upon the decision of the BSO to participate in the Festival, it had become clear that there would be no sufficient funds to present *Four Saints*. Fleischmann then appealed for aid to the State Department, which, as mentioned before, at the time was contemplating to sponsor a transatlantic tour of *Porgy and Bess*.⁹⁰ For reasons he did not

⁸⁷ Thomson to Nabokov, December 5, 1951; cable Nabokov to Thomson, January 21, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16. The shipping of the entire production of *Billy Budd* was probably paid for by OPC/CIA's British counterpart, the Information Research Department (IRD), a division of the Foreign Office. Also, as mentioned by Frances Stonor Saunders (without a reference), Labour MP Woodrow Wyatt, a personal friend of the Secretary of the Exchequer, Hugh Gaitskell, had promised to raise additional funds. Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 116.

⁸⁸ Nabokov to Thomson, November 24, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16. The suggestion to approach this civil rights organization to secure governmental assistance for the Festival came from Samuel Barber. Thomson to Nabokov, undated, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

⁸⁹ Lewis Allen, ANTA Assistant Managing Director, to Thomson, January 24, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

⁹⁰ Fleischmann's move was expected by the State Department's Bureau of Public Affairs. John Devine reported to his superiors that "[t]he sponsors [ACCF] are now in the position of needing certain American artistic contributions and not being able to finance them. As a result, it is expected that Mr. Julius Fleischman[n]...will soon approach you on the possibility of the Department of State's financing an all-American Negro troupe to perform Virgil Thomson's *Four Saints in Three Acts*." Devine advised that "we ought to try to make a contribution to the Festival. I think that the private nature of the enterprise has been sufficiently established now so that a Government contribution would not have a decisive effect." Devine to Howland H. Sargeant, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs, memorandum "Congress for Cultural

explicate, he “felt very strongly that *Porgy* was the wrong type of propaganda to be exported from the United States,” and tried to persuade the State Department to sponsor *Four Saints* instead. After “a great many negotiations back and forth,” however, the State Department decided to stick to its original commitment and gave *Porgy* its blessing. Subsequently, Fleischmann tried to get ANTA to present *Four Saints* along with *Porgy* with two thoughts in mind: not only could money be saved by integrating the two all-black casts of the two stage works, but also would their combined presentation “somewhat detract from the unfavorable type of publicity” which Fleischmann feared *Porgy* would attract.⁹¹ At one point this seemed to have been the ideal solution for all parties involved, but in the weeks that followed it became apparent that this plan would not materialize for reasons that were beyond Fleischmann (and us) to fathom. In the end a deal was struck to the effect that ANTA would bear the costs of the production for a run at the Broadway Theater (April 16–27, 1952) and theater entrepreneur Ethel Linder Reiner those of bringing the production to Europe. This meant that the singers who had been cast in Europe had to be called off, but what counted was that another crisis had been averted. *Four Saints* ran at the Champs-Élysées Theater on May 30 and 31, 1952 (and with four extra performances after the Festival), with a full African American cast as Thomson had meant it to be, for—as visitors could read in their program booklet—not only “the Negro singers have a most perfect diction and are the best choristers,” they also possess “an extreme devotion and dignified stage presence, superior to those of white artists...”⁹² As Thomson recalled, the Paris press was divided over the opera’s seeming simplicity and, conditioned as it was to Josephine Baker and to the Katherine Dunham dancers, “feigned some astonishment at our lack of Negro sex display.”⁹³

Freedom,” December 7, 1951, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF.

⁹¹ Nabokov to Thomson, January 31, 1952; Fleischmann to Nabokov, February 8, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16. Fleischmann probably thought that *Porgy* would convey the wrong message due to its ambivalent representation of African American culture. The fact that Gershwin’s opera was not as highbrow as *Four Saints* does not seem to have been a problem, as Fleischmann “heartily agreed that as a production *Porgy* is perfectly wonderful.” Fleischmann to Nabokov, December 17, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-5. In his memoirs, Thomson noted that Nabokov rejected *Porgy and Bess* as “sociologically false (a white man’s story) and culturally degrading to Negro actors (because sociologically false).” Thomson, *Virgil Thomson: An Autobiography* [1966] (New York: Dutton, 1985), 405.

⁹² Preface by Thomson in the program booklet of the Paris production of *Four Saints*. Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

⁹³ Thomson, *Virgil Thomson: An Autobiography*, 409.

The Mark Overshot? Assessing the Politics of the Paris Festival

From the day it started, the Festival provoked controversy on both sides of the Atlantic, first of all with respect to its program. The number of Americans complaining that the American funds should have been used for more extensive propagation of American music was matched by the number of Frenchmen who felt offended that the United States was serving them fruits grown in pre-war Paris on a silver platter they themselves could not afford, and those who rose above chauvinistic sentiments often wondered whether the concert programs were sufficiently representative of five decades of musical labor.⁹⁴ Needless to say, little else was to be expected from a festival bearing such a presumptuous title as it did. But one can see what Olin Downes meant when he concluded that the Festival had been a “lopsided affair.”⁹⁵ Regardless of whether or not one does attach value to such qualifications, certainly not every work on the program could pass for an “incontestable masterpiece” as had been stated to be the guiding criterion for the compilation of the program.⁹⁶ “Lopsided” is also the correct qualification if one looks at the Exposition as a whole, which, given the considerably smaller budget spent on literature and the visual arts as well as the sheer neglect of drama, film, and other domains of culture, actually should have been called a music, opera and dance festival rather than anything else.⁹⁷

To be sure, not all of these imbalances can be attributed to Nabokov. In the earliest stage of planning, the fields of film and theater were to be covered through the efforts of Fleischmann, who as backer and (co-)producer of many Broadway and Hollywood productions was the obvious person to take care of this part of the program. From Fleischmann’s correspondence it appears that Bernard Shaw’s *Caesar and Cleopatra* (produced in association with Fleischmann and starring Laurence Olivier

⁹⁴ For a review of these press reactions, see Jacques Carat, “La presse française et l’Œuvre du XXe siècle,” *Premes* 16 (May 1952): 48–58; Everett Helm, “The Paris Festival,” *Musical America* 72/9 (July 1952): 5, 20; Henry Barraud, “A French Critic Observes the Paris Festival,” *Musical America* 72/10 (August 1952): 8. Barraud conceded that, if the Program Committee would have included all the names that were brought up “in bitter criticism and vengeful apostrophes,” the Festival would have turned into “a display of mediocrity that would have defeated its purpose.” Yet he thought it to be a serious omission not to have something performed by Kurt Weill and Florent Schmitt.

⁹⁵ Downes thought Stravinsky to be over-emphasized, Hindemith under-emphasized, the absence of Ernest Bloch a serious lacuna, and the failure to include one of the major symphonies of Sibelius a token of “a superficiality and prejudice of a rather provincial kind.” Downes, “Paris Exposition in Sum,” *New York Times*, June 15, 1952, X7.

⁹⁶ “All the works performed at the Festival must be incontestable masterpieces, i.e., works of music which have been accepted as having played a major role in the cultural life of the last fifty years.” Memorandum “Masterpieces of Our Century,” July 20, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.

⁹⁷ Herbert Lüthy, “Selling Paris on Western Culture: Report on an American-Sponsored Exposition,” *Commentary* 14/1 (July 1952): 72.

and Vivian Leigh) was to be shown under Festival auspices, as was Vincente Minnelli's new musical film *An American in Paris*, starring Gene Kelly and Leslie Caron.⁹⁸ Additionally, in a tentative program released to the press in February 1952, mention was made of "dramatic readings in English" by Arthur John Gielgud and Michael Scudamore Redgrave as well as "dramatic readings in French" by Jean-Louis Barrault (from Kafka's *The Trial*) and Madeleine Renaud of the Marigny Theater.⁹⁹ For reasons that remain unclear, none of these projects materialized. Probably they were fraught with organizational complications, and because of the already staggering amount of energy, perseverance and money required to realize the projected music, art and literature program, the proposals for film and theater silently disappeared from the agenda.

Likewise, for all his experience as the New York Museum of Modern Art's former curator, the compilation of the exhibition of paintings and sculptures was all but a sinecure for ACCF member James Johnson Sweeney. Few museums and private collectors (including Nabokov's former employer, the late Albert C. Barnes) were willing or able to lend their top pieces of Europe's modernist art to the Paris Festival, and the announced number of two hundred pieces could not be reached (the counter stuck on 126). Besides, Sweeney's exposition faced the threat of drowning amidst the usual abundance of exhibitions that cram the month of May in Paris. (In 1952, there were, apart from the permanent exhibitions and the dozens of active galleries, expositions running on post-Impressionist French art, medieval Italian Art, two thousand years of Mexican art, and the still life through the ages.) Nevertheless, the exhibition attracted—according to MoMA, the greatest contributing partner—the highest attendance of any show since the war.¹⁰⁰ The opinion of the French press was generally favorable, although some suspected that the selection reflected an "American taste" for "the most spectacular, the most provocative, the most 'international', [in short], the most mo-der-n."¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Fleischmann to Nabokov, December 17, 1951, Nabokov Papers, 1-5.

⁹⁹ Press release on the Festival program, February 18, 1952, ACCF, 12-8.

¹⁰⁰ Nabokov to Sweeney, February 11, 1952, CCF, III-2-7; Burnham, memorandum "Telephone Conversation with James Johnson Sweeney," March 4, 1952; Sweeney to Burnham, March 14, 1952, Burnham Papers, 8-6; Alfred Barr, MoMA Director, cited in a report about the local press reactions to the Festival prepared by the US Embassy in Paris, May 29, 1952, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Education Exchange, Program Development Staff, Program Reporting Staff, Operations, A1 3023, 1-CCF. Frances Stonor Saunders cites a document (without giving the reference) from which it appeared that another \$7,000 of CIA money had been made available to Fleischmann for the purpose of shipping the art exhibition to the London Tate Gallery, where it was shown for the month of July. Note that the Exposition did not include specimens of Abstract Expressionism, presumably for the same reason why Nabokov cared not to overexpose the United States.

¹⁰¹ Claude-Roger Marx, "Vingtième siècle, goût américain," *Le Figaro Littéraire* (May 10, 1952): 3. Marx's claim that the Exhibition merely reflected American taste was, incidentally, refuted by

Finally, the round-tables and public debates scheduled for the last two weeks of the Festival failed in the eyes of most commentators. This was foreshadowed by the extreme difficulty with which their organizers (Roger Caillois, René Tavernier, François Bondy) managed to attract men (and a few women) of letters to speak about deliberately transnational but rather convoluted themes as “Isolation and Communication,” “Revolt and Solidarity,” “Diversity and Universality,” and “The Future of Culture.” The odd assembly of writers, poets, artists and mostly journalists, very disparate in caliber and eloquence, proved to be hardly a recipe for in-depth discussions, nor did it help that the most popular acquisition for this festival component, Nobel Prize winner William Faulkner, had fallen prey again to his weakness for the alcoholic muse, which disabled him from producing more than a few inchoate sentences about how European wisdom should unite with American muscles. (An hour before his performance, Nabokov and Tual had to drag him out of his hotel room where they found him seated in a fauteuil, dead drunk and stark naked.)¹⁰²

As for the musical program, every experienced festival organizer will recognize that various pragmatic issues inhibit him/her from presenting his/her ideal playlist. As we have seen, some conductors were quite insistent on promoting their favorites, but even if they had been willing to perform everything as requested by the organizer, the feasibility of doing so would still have depended on the familiarity of the orchestra with the pieces, the rehearsal time required to master them, and, the availability and affordability of the extra forces frequently required for twentieth century music. In other words, it was already enough of a challenge to compile within the various financial and organizational constraints (the CIA did not take them all away) as impressive a program as possible, let alone an as exhaustive and ideologically correct one as possible. For the same reason, the criticism that the Festival gravitated too much around Stravinsky was also rather undeserved. With Schoenberg and Bartók having passed away, the composer who in his native land had been declared to be the embodiment of the anti-Soviet devil remained one of the few logical choices to ask to appear in person at a demonstration of “free world” music. True, Hindemith, for instance, would have been another possibility. But in contrast to Hindemith, Paris and Stravinsky shared a history, and as such, the composer of *Le Sacre* was the perfect poster child of the newly forged NATO alliance with which both French and American elites could (potentially) identify.

critics known for their critical stance towards the United States, such as André Breton (*Courrier international des Arts* [May 15–21, 1952]: 12) and Charles Estienne (*L'Observateur* [May 15, 1952]: 23). See also Carat, “La presse française et l'Œuvre du XXe siècle,” *Prewes* 16 (May 1952): 50–2.

¹⁰² Tual, *Le temps dévoré*, 267–8; Janet Flanner, *Paris Journal 1944–1965*, ed. William Shawn (New York: Atheneum, 1965), 17–4.

Having said that, some critical comments are justified with respect to the Festival's prime rationale of showing that artistic vitality and variety are contingent upon political freedom. As the French composer Henry Barraud advanced, the thesis might have been better served if the audience had been given the opportunity to compare the artistic output of "free world" countries with those of countries under "totalitarian" control. Of course, this would have entailed a risk, as one might arrive at the conclusion that a Shostakovich opera was no less boring than Britten's *Billy Budd* (most critics seemed to agree that Britten's newest opera was a disappointment in comparison to *Peter Grimes*), but then at least the impression would have been avoided that works that might have supported an opposite view were deliberately kept from the program.¹⁰³ For the conductor Artur Rodziński, too, the program should have included contemporary works from behind the Iron Curtain, although the one example he came up with—Karol Szymanowski's *Stabat Mater*, which "undoubtedly could have replaced with advantage and greater success a work of similar character by another composer [allusion to Poulenc]"—is implausible considering the Festival's purposes. (The Polish composer, not to mention his religious compositions, could by no means be held representative of postwar musical life in Soviet-controlled areas, if only because he died in 1937 after having lived the life of a cosmopolitan.) But apart from the programming question, Rodziński asked rhetorically, would the CCF not have made a better case altogether if it had invested the sum of somewhere between \$500,000 and \$750,000 that these "musical social gala events" had cost in a foundation aimed at helping "the struggling composer...while still alive, thus preventing a recurrence of the Béla Bartók case?" (Bartók had died in 1945 in a New York hospital in such poverty that a collection had to be held among his colleagues to pay his hospital and funeral bills.)¹⁰⁴

"No," Nabokov retorted. "Struggling composers" did need help, but the best support they could be given was a platform for their works to be heard, a platform that for many modern composers remained beyond their reach as symphony orchestras, opera houses and ballet companies preferred to play it safe. It was also a misunderstanding, Nabokov continued, to think that the Festival Committee pretended to have given a complete picture of the evolution of music in the first half of the twentieth century. As the number of concerts that could be given was limited, omissions were simply inevitable, including Szymanowski, Rachmaninoff, Ernest Bloch, Edward

¹⁰³ Barraud, "A French Critic Observes the Paris Festival," 8, 28. For the Paris reception of *Billy Budd*, see *Letters from a Life: The Selected Letters of Benjamin Britten*, ed. Philip Reed, Mervyn Cooke, and Donald Mitchell (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), vol. 4, 64–7.

¹⁰⁴ Artur Rodziński, "The Paris Festival," *New York Herald Tribune* [European edition], May 20, 1952, Rodziński Papers, 60–4.

Elgar, Florent Schmitt, and many other European and American composers who had been named by the Festival's critics. As to the criticism on the absence of contemporary musical specimens of socialist realism, he might have countered (but he did not) that it is easier said than done to realize a performance of works of which the materials and rights are monopolized by a state that is not sympathetic to the aims of the CCF. Also, the aim of the Festival had never been to demonstrate that *all* types of authoritarian regimes frustrate the flourishing of the arts. To the contrary, Nabokov explained, Europe had seen the high points of its artistic achievements being created under Emperor Augustus, the papal Borgia family or King Louis XIV. Yet, the confusion to which "many well-meaning persons" fell prey was, according to Nabokov, to conflate the authoritarian state of the past with the totalitarian state of the present whereas they are incomparable in every way. After all, "by virtue of its nature, the totalitarian state—that monstrous child of our time—must control every form of human endeavor," including the arts. The aim of the CCF Exposition, then, was nothing less or more than to "demonstrate the value of an art born in a climate of freedom, unmolested as yet by the demands of totalitarian propaganda, an art whose variety, vitality and scope is in such striking contrast to the uniform, straitjacket 'art' peddled by Soviet propagandists under such labels as 'socialist realism' or 'proletarian art.'" One might think (as Barraud and Rodziński did) that Western culture did not need a defense, but in the face of "those who are ready to surrender their freedom for a plate of Stalinist porridge," it seemed extremely important to assert "our belief in the freedom of creative imagination." And to parry a last slip in Rodziński's reasoning, Nabokov pointed out that the CCF did not claim that the West was a perfect paradise for the artist. With respect to the tragic case of Bartók, he had personally noted in the Festival's *vademecum* that, despite the conditions of the twentieth century generally having improved, there have been "some tragic exceptions, more than we like to think."¹⁰⁵

Nabokov did not go into Rodziński's suspicion that "elements other than musical ones [had] crept into the picture" in the process of selecting "masterpieces." Whether this silence was intended or not, Nabokov could not prevent that the Festival was being dragged into a controversy about its politics and allegiances, if only because the political climate at the time was fraught with tension. The new French center-right cabinet formed and led by the conservative liberal Antoine Pinay had unleashed feelings of resentment across the entire leftwing of the French political spectrum, as had the impending initialing of the European Defense Community treaty (which in the end failed to obtain ratification from the National Assembly,

¹⁰⁵ Nabokov, "Reply to Dr. Rodzinski," *New York Herald Tribune* [European edition], May 20, 1952, Rodziński Papers, 60-4; Nabokov, "Élégie funèbre sur quatre notes," 10-11.

partly because of fears about West Germany's remilitarization). Particularly controversial was the imminent arrival in Paris of General Matthew B. Ridgway, who was to take over the direction of the fledgling NATO from General Eisenhower on May 30, 1952. Dubbed the "microbial killer" by Moscow and its allies in connection with charges that UN forces under his command in Korea had used bacteriological weaponry, the General was welcomed with Communist-incited demonstrations that left one dead and several hundreds wounded on both the side of the police and the rioters.¹⁰⁶ It was only to be expected that the Communist press would use all these coincidences to lambast Nabokov's Festival (an "obstreperous carnival," a "freakish cacophony," a "parody of the twentieth century," etc.) as an American "political propaganda enterprise" designed to facilitate the ideological occupation of France and "deceitfully and contemptuously" organized at the same time when "they [the Americans] are frantically preparing the total, atomic, bacteriological war; that is, the annihilation of culture, art, [and] freedom; that is, the extermination of humankind."¹⁰⁷

Bernard Dort, columnist of Sartre's review *Les Temps modernes*, too, felt obliged to ensure his readers that the true agenda of the Festival was not so much to show which works were representative of twentieth-century art as to avail themselves of these works to justify a society and its politics, viz., "the neo-capitalist society of the Occident and its 'defense' politics." The guiding principle on which the Festival was predicated, i.e., that the works presented at the Festival had been made possible "thanks to the liberty that is the measure of [Western] society," attested, according to Dort, to a determinist line of thought that would make "orthodox Marxists blush." To Dort, the contributions by the men and women of letters invited to speak about the position of the writer and artist in present times came across as self-complacent apologies for pursuing their own, i.e., "non-societal," interests. Especially André Malraux, Charles de Gaulle's cultural adviser, pushed this attitude to the "realm of the absurd" with his understanding of culture as the repository (an "imaginary museum") of "all forms of art, love and thinking that in the course of millennia has enabled human beings to be less slavish." Neither could Dort approve of Malraux's abstract defense of genius (that is, the creator of modernist art) as someone capable of "showing the world in all its forms" and, with that, also humankind's "immeasurable

¹⁰⁶ "French Riot over Ridgway," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 29, 1952, 1; Jacques Duclos, PCF Secretary, "Conspiracy à l'Américaine," *For A Lasting Peace, For A People's Democracy* [Cominform], July 4, 1952, 3.

¹⁰⁷ Jean Gandrey-Réty, "Le faux-nez du XXe siècle," *Les Lettres françaises* [PCF], May 9, 1952, 1, 6; Jean Kanapa, "Le festival du XXe siècle...américain," *L'Humanité* [PCF], April 26, 1952, 5. Ever since its foundation, the PCF press had caricatured the CCF as an US-sponsored "organization of clandestine armed militias which are to establish a terror regime in France." "Trois milliards pour la corruption," *Action*, July 31, 1950, Bohlen Papers, 3-df.

heritage of transformed values.” The really biting dilemma, moreover, for which Dort would have liked to hear a solution during the Festival and its surrounding discussions, remained entirely untouched: how to explain, and overcome, the “evident rupture between modern art and the audience?”¹⁰⁸

Nabokov probably did not lose any sleep over this criticism from the Communist and Existentialist corner. He also did not bother to reply to the rather hackneyed observation that most of the artists represented in the program were, or had been, critical of their socio-cultural milieu, and that therefore their works could hardly be considered as endorsements of the Western claim to freedom. (The point the CCF wished to make was, of course, that only in the non-totalitarian West these artists could express their social critique.) It must have been a greater concern to him that the moderate Left and Right in France alike were none too pleased with Ridgway’s appointment and the prospect of West Germany’s rearmament. Neither was their general reserve for all that is American diminished by the various incidents that coincided with the Festival month: the alleged assertion of the Chief of US Naval Operations, Admiral William Fechteler, that war with the Soviet Union was inevitable by 1960 if the United States were not to increase its military presence in Europe;¹⁰⁹ the controversial performance of the US Army in handling the riots in a Korean prisoner-of-war camp;¹¹⁰ and the increase of US trade restrictions on ever more European products, a measure incompatible with the promises made by the Marshall Plan.¹¹¹

Discontent over these issues also rubbed off on the assessments of the Festival by the moderate press—a segment of public opinion which the organizers had hoped to be unanimously positive about this CCF initiative. The non-Communist leftist daily *Combat*, which ran a series of four columns on the Festival, delved into the political allegiance of the CCF in a way that

¹⁰⁸ Bernard Dort, “À propos de l’Œuvre du Vingtième Siècle,” *Les Temps modernes* 8/83 (September 1952): 574–6. Malraux’s speech, delivered at the last session of the literary symposium, has been published as “Das Abenteuer der Kunst” in *Der Monat* 4/46 (July 1952): 339–44.

¹⁰⁹ “Fechteler Sees War in 8 Years, Paris Is Told,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, May 10, 1952, A5. Fechteler’s alleged assertions were derived from a report which had fallen into the hands of *Le Monde*. In the end, the French newspaper had to admit that this report turned out not to be an official policy document, but the damage had already been done. “Doubt Cast on *Le Monde*’s Fechteler Tale,” *Washington Post*, May 16, 1952, 4.

¹¹⁰ At the end of May, UN commander General Mark W. Clark tightened discipline among the POWs (most of them Communists) held captive at Geojje (Kobe) Island, South Korea, after earlier that month US camp commander Brigadier-General Francis T. Dodd had been held hostage for 78 hours on grounds of inhumane conditions. “U.S. General Seized by Red Prisoners at Kojje as Hostage,” *New York Times*, May 9, 1952, 1; “Paratroops Sent to Kojje to Block Any New Uprising,” May 18, 1952, 1; “U.S. Guards Stamp Out Pusan POW Rebellion,” *Washington Post*, May 21, 1952, 3.

¹¹¹ “Showdown Nears on Import Curbs,” *New York Times*, May 11, 1952, F1; “French Worried by Export Trade,” May 12, 1952, 32.

must have been uncomfortable to both Nabokov and the CIA. The fact that some of America's "big capitalist lovers of France and its past are spending a sum of money [on this Festival] which, according to certain rumors, amounts to hundred million or even one billion francs certainly does not offend us," the first of these columns read. But the sheer coincidence of this generosity is improbable, the column continues, once one realizes that "we are in 1952," a time when "the world is submitted to two different influences, both of them trying to ideologically impress that small cape of the Asiatic continent called Europe."¹¹²

To be sure, Nabokov never hid the political rationale of the Festival, that is, defending the (imperfect) way liberal democracies treat their artists vis-à-vis the claim that Soviet-style democracies offer the perfect solution for the gap between art and society. Therefore, it probably did not give rise to concern that his enterprise was referred to as "NATO's festival" by *Combat's* editor-in-chief.¹¹³ In fact, by inviting the President of France, Vincent Auriol, the Foreign Minister Robert Schuman, the US Ambassador James C. Dunn, and then-NATO Commander, General Eisenhower, he made sure that the link between NATO and the Festival would be seen.¹¹⁴ Yet it must have stung that the Festival was so often described as a counterpropaganda outlet instead of being assessed on the validity of the message it tried to convey. *Combat's* columnist only zoomed in on the hapless situation of "free-minded people," who in a time when "totalitarianism is triumphing everywhere," saw themselves forced to seek refuge in "paralyzing solitude." *Combat's* editor-in-chief, however, was more acerbic about the matter, and advanced the classical neutralist argument: why were Greek resistance fighters of Communist hue or "friends of the Negroes lynched in the Southern States of the United States" not represented next to the survivors of the Nazi, Franco and Soviet concentration camps who were the Festival's guests of honor? "Has the Committee on Anti-American Activities [*sic*] been asked for advice as to the choice of the oppression's victims?" This was precisely the type of reasoning that the Festival was supposed to neutralize. Nabokov responded by asking whether those who considered the CCF as "too openly and rigidly anti-Communist and anti-dictatorist [*sic*]" really could not see that

¹¹² The columns, written by Guy Dumur, are published in the *Combat* issues of May 15 to 18. The citations in this and the following paragraph are taken from the English translations provided by the US Embassy of Paris. Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Education Exchange, Program Development Staff, Program Reporting Staff, Operations, A1 3023, 1-CCF.

¹¹³ Jean Fabiani, editorial, *Combat*, May 7, 1952, 1.

¹¹⁴ Eisenhower had to decline the invitation because of the many obligations with respect to his presidential campaign. Nabokov to General Eisenhower, April 10, 1952; C. Craig Cannon, Aide to General Eisenhower, April 17, 1952, Eisenhower Pre-Presidential Papers (DDEL), Secondary File, 5-nf.

their “neutralism and defeatism [would] serve Russia far better in the long run than the Communist Party.”¹¹⁵

As suggested by the American Embassy in Paris, which kept close track of the local press reactions to the Festival, the failure to nudge the neutralist press into the direction of the Atlantic alliance might have been prevented if a more prudent press policy had been followed. It was, after all, more than unfortunate that the Communist and neutralist press found their ammunition in American reports written for domestic consumption. The Communist weekly *Les Lettres françaises* referred to an article from the *New York Herald Tribune*, which explicated in plain words the political purpose of the Festival which—as *Les Lettres françaises* inferred—“Mr. Nabokov’s agents” had deliberately tried to conceal by “painting [the Festival] with the false colors of ‘freedom of expression.’”¹¹⁶ Even the strongly anti-Stalinist monthly *Commentary*, which opined that the idea behind the Festival had been “admirable, noble and generous,” advised that it “would have been better, perhaps, if there had been no advance ideological proclamations made by the Festival organization.” In fact, was it not ill-advised altogether to “mobilize the creations of a culture around a flag like soldiers, even if it is the flag of freedom?” Do these creations, by being mobilized for ideological purposes, not “cease to be art at all?”¹¹⁷ In less subtle terms, the Paris correspondent of *The New Yorker*, too, qualified the Festival as “the biggest cultural propaganda effort, either private or governmental, since the war,” concluding in antonymous terms that “[i]t has spilled such gallons of captious French newspaper ink, wasted such tempests of argumentative Franco-American breath, and afforded, on the whole, so much pleasure to the eye and ear that it can safely be called, in admiration, an extremely popular fiasco.”¹¹⁸ These were clearly not the “inevitable logical conclusions” Nabokov wished his Exposition of “free culture” to elicit.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Nabokov quoted in “Paris Opens Free World Arts Festival,” *The Stars and Stripes*, May 1, 1952, 3.

¹¹⁶ Cited in a press report written by Lawrence S. Morris, Cultural Attaché, US Embassy in Paris, “Local Press Reactions to the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” May 9, 1952, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Office of Education Exchange, Program Development Staff, Program Reporting Staff, Operations, A1 3023, 1-CCF. The *New York Herald Tribune* article referred to by *Les Lettres françaises* bore the title “The War for the Spirit of Man: Soviet Cultural Propaganda Will Receive a Response in Paris This Spring Through a Festival Presenting Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century,” April 21, 1952, 3. Other factors that have been suggested to explain the unfavorable criticism from the Paris press is that none of its exponents had been asked to serve on the Festival committee, and worse, hardly any tickets had been made available to them.

¹¹⁷ Lüthy, “Selling Paris on Western Culture,” 71.

¹¹⁸ Janet Flanner (Genêt), “Letter from Paris,” *The New Yorker*, May 31, 1952, 62–5, and “Festival of Free-World Arts,” *Freedom & Union* (September 1952): 6–7.

¹¹⁹ Nabokov to Brown, “Explanatory Notes to the Festival Plan,” July 1951, Brown Papers, 13–16.

Another serious flaw brought up by several commentators concerned the CCF's response to the case of Roger Vailland's play *Le colonel Foster plaidera coupable* [Colonel Foster Will Plead Guilty], which ran at the time of the Festival at the Théâtre de l'Ambigu-Comique. Dissecting the horrifying impact of war crimes committed by an American colonel on the battlefield of wartime Korea, the play was a blatant allusion to General Ridgway and was closed down by governmental decree on charge of "inadequate fire precautions." Needless to say, the Communist press flogged the incident to death.¹²⁰ It was indeed more than awkward that Ridgway's visit and the ensuing ban on Vailland's play coincided with the closure of a festival that aimed—in the words of one moderate critic—"to show how lucky artists are, all the way from Bach to Britten, not to have lived or be living under the Soviet system of police controls."¹²¹ The CCF wished to stay out of local daily politics, but given the fact that so many French critics from various political persuasions protested the ban—even the Gaullist newspaper *Le Monde* published a petition protesting the closure of the play—the CCF had better given a statement to the effect that, however much it might have disapproved of the insinuations at the address of Ridgway, it did not accept a ban as an appropriate response. Instead, it only issued a statement a few weeks after the event, explaining that in its opinion, Vailland's play had not so much to do with freedom of opinion as with provocation.¹²² In failing to indict the French government's act of censorship, the CCF had lost a chance to show its impartiality.¹²³

To be sure, there were also declarations of support for the purposes set forth by the Festival, even from the neutralist press (the weekly *L'Observateur*, for instance¹²⁴), but most came from those newspapers and magazines that had already been aligned with the CCF, if not actually being edited by CCF members, like *Franc-Tireur*, *Le Figaro*, and *Figaro Littéraire*. The critics of Nabokov's plan within the CCF/CIA ranks had been quite right in their premonition that the Festival would overshoot the mark: hardly a soul seemed to have won, a mind changed, or a prejudice removed. As one

¹²⁰ "Le colonel Foster, le générale Ridgway et la liberté de la culture," *L'Humanité*, May 25, 1952, 2.

¹²¹ "Paris: Admirals and Generals," *New Statesman and Nation*, May 17, 1952, 575. At this time, the *New Statesman and Nation* was the voice of those British who had welcomed the election of the Labour Party in 1945, but were now critical of the government's Atlanticist foreign policy. Also Hellmut Jaesrich, one of Lasky's editors of *Der Monat*, too, thought the CCF should have denounced the French government's usage of the "cheap" and "hypocritical" methods of the "opposite party." Jaesrich, "Töne und Theorien: Ein Bericht von den 'Meisterwerken des XX. Jahrhunderts,'" *Der Monat* 4/46 (July 1952): 350.

¹²² Jacques Carat, "À propos d'une interdiction: Roger Vailland, *Le colonel Foster plaidera coupable*," *Preuves*, no. 16 (June 1952): 68.

¹²³ Colin Mason, "The Paris Festival," *Tempo* [New Series], no. 24 (Summer 1952): 17–18.

¹²⁴ "En marge de l'Œuvre du XXe siècle," *L'Observateur politique, économique et littéraire* (April 30, 1952): 12.

former CIA agent put it, the operation was a “very expensive cover story” that failed to cover anything. Lasky did not think Nabokov’s spectacle, despite its scale, to have been a match for Soviet cultural manifestations. To the contrary, rather than neutralizing anti-American sentiments in France, it seemed to have given “more weight to the idea that America was behind the Congress.”¹²⁵ For Nabokov, though, the Festival had been, despite the French press, “a psychological success.”¹²⁶ In the “complex and depressingly morbid intellectual climate of France,” Nabokov explained to Hook and Burnham, his project had been “the only kind of action we could have undertaken here in Paris [to] establish the Congress in the minds of the European intellectuals as a *positive*, and not only a *polemical* organization. It had established the Congress as “a *cultural* organization with *cultural* objectives,” and “gained the respect of a great many of those non-Communist intellectuals who are on our side, yet who hesitated to support our movement.”¹²⁷ And finally, hearing “the tremendous ovations which have greeted our performances,” especially those of the Boston Symphony and the New York City Ballet, Nabokov was convinced that “we have succeeded in our act of faith in our free culture.”

The great works of this century which we are exposing here in all their variety of style, form and conception, speak implicitly and explicitly of the climate of freedom necessary for their creations. In this we are virtually invulnerable to the attacks of the Communist press, which have been savage and stupid, aiming its blasts not so much at the idea but at individuals.¹²⁸

¹²⁵ Interviews by Frances Stonor Saunders with Lawrence de Neufville (a CIA agent who had recruited Josselson), Melvin Lasky and Diana Josselson (Michael Josselson’s spouse), 1996–1997, in Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 124–5. Lasky, incidentally, wrote Nabokov at the time that the Festival outline struck him “as truly splendid.” In reality, however (as he explained in interviews with Saunders and Scott-Smith), he did not think the enterprise would have any effect at all on European public opinion. He kept his skepticism at the time to himself, though, as he was not one to “undermine the greater cause.” Lasky to Nabokov, August 15, 1951, CCF, II-241-4; Saunders, *Ibid.*, 114; Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture*, 133–4. ACCF member William Phillips, too, reminisced later in life that at the time he had been put off by the operation of transporting the BSO to Paris “at a cost, it was rumored, of half a million dollars.” Phillips, “Comment: The Liberal Conspiracy,” *Partisan Review* 57/ 4 (1990): 11. In the end, the total costs of the BSO venture would amount to \$171,606.21. Auditor report BSO, November 13, 1952, CCF, II-46-1.

¹²⁶ Nabokov to Burnham, May 11, 1952, Burnham Papers, 7-8; Nabokov to Hook, July 3, 1952 (original emphases, Hook Papers, 124-4.

¹²⁷ Nabokov does not mention the names of “non-Communist intellectuals” who had been won over for the Congress. Earlier he had reported to Burnham that he had secured the adherence to the Congress of several personal friends of his among French musicians and artists, including Olivier Messiaen and Francis Poulenc, both of whom he considered “enough to make the Congress top rank in the musical field in France.” Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.349, February 2, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-4.

¹²⁸ Nabokov to Burnham, May 11, 1952, Burnham Papers, 7-8.

Indeed, in the months ahead, Nabokov would feel heartened by complements showered upon him by, for instance, Vittore Branca, the head of UNESCO's cultural section, and representatives of its International Music Council, who "all spoke of the Festival as the most important event of the century, best organized and most useful," and "all listened to me as to someone who represent the 'white hope' of composers and musicians in general."¹²⁹

The Associated Press, too, could not be deterred by the strains of criticism in the French press from declaring a triumph. The Festival finally had "proved to critical old Europe that the United States has achieved an astonishing cultural maturity."¹³⁰ This enthusiasm was certainly not entirely fanciful: the concerts and art exhibition drew large flocks of Parisians, including numerous members of student, youth and labor organizations who had been offered free or discount entrance and even put into the privileged position of attending dress rehearsals. The Boston Symphony Orchestra in particular had every reason to pat itself on the back. More than once it deftly defied Murphy's law (failing transportation, lost passports, blackouts, oversleeping musicians, impeding union regulations), and, most importantly, it drew lavish praise in every city it called on during its European tour.¹³¹ Sure, there were always critics who found something to criticize, mostly on the sound balance which supposedly suffered from that "typical" American lack of subtlety and delicacy. But most confessed to have been genuinely surprised by the quality of the performances, which some of the French observers attributed to the fact that the orchestra was blessed with a twenty-odd contingent of French-born members and led by a conductor whose cradle stood in Strasbourg (Charles Munch).¹³²

Indeed, "from the standpoint of the Great Cause," C. D. Jackson wrote enthusiastically to a fellow BSO Trustee member, this "overwhelming

¹²⁹ Nabokov to Josselson, September 20, 1952, ACCF, 7-13.

¹³⁰ John Roderick, "Free World Shows Europe She Has Come of Age, Culturally Speaking," *Los Angeles Times*, June 2, 1952, 10; "Cultural Counteroffensive," *Cincinnati [Ohio] Enquirer*, June 8, 1952, 2; Emily Genauer, "Battle of the Arts," *New York Herald Tribune*, July 13, 1952, 8-9, 42.

¹³¹ Apart from at Nabokov's Festival (May 6, 8, and 21), the BSO performed in The Hague (May 10), Amsterdam (May 11), Brussels (May 12), Frankfurt (May 13-14), Berlin (May 15), Strasbourg (May 17), Metz (May 19), Lyons (May 20), Paris (May 21), Bordeaux (May 24-25), and London (May 26). The concerts in Germany were sponsored by HICOG and the Paris concert of May 21 was given under the auspices of the French CCF branch (Les Amis de la Liberté) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). An extensive collection of American and European clippings covering the BSO tour can be found in the Boston Symphony Archives, Scrapbook 1951-1952 (Series 56, Volume 82), 241-86.

¹³² René Dumesnil, "Charles Munch et l'Orchestre symphonique de Boston," *Le Monde*, May 8, 1952; Clarendon (Bernard Gavoty), "Charles Munch conduit à la victoire l'orchestre de Boston," *Le Figaro*, May 7, 1952; Claude Baignères, "Quand Charles Munch mène à la victoire son bataillon de choc," *Le Figaro*, May 9, 1952; Marcel Schneider, "Le Boston Symphony Orchestra avec Charles Munch et Pierre Monteux," May 13, 1952.

success and acceptance of the Boston Symphony on its European tour made worth the preliminary blood, sweat, and tears” it had cost. The challenge had been not only to convince Europeans that there is more to the United States than “Coca-Cola, bathtubs, and tanks,” but also to negate “the asinine, if not sinister, self-consciousness of American intellectuals, who somehow or other manage to earn their daily bread by denying their cultural heritage and their cultural present which exists quite dynamically side by side with the Coca-Cola, etc.” The BSO’s contribution to defuse these prejudices had been “immeasurable but immense.”¹³³ So also thought Thomas Braden, who could high-five his team at the CIA’s International Organizations Division over the success of operation QKOPERA, the codename of the CCF. One and a half decades later, after the CIA’s involvement in the CCF had been exposed, he could still feel “the enormous joy I got when the Boston Symphony Orchestra won more acclaim for the U.S. in Paris than John Foster Dulles or Dwight D. Eisenhower could have bought with a hundred speeches.”¹³⁴ Indeed, for the BSO, the whole European adventure had been an extremely successful test case for the next transatlantic tour it was to embark upon, in 1956, this time under the auspices of the State Department, to the land of the ideological enemy, the Soviet Union.

What Braden at the time could have realized (but apparently did not) was that other American orchestras did not intend to play second fiddle and now also would expect a donation in the name of cultural freedom. This was precisely what happened. In May 1953, Eugene Ormandy approached Nabokov with the question to furnish the last \$20,000 needed to enable his Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra to tour Europe in 1954. Nabokov thereupon wrote Fleischmann, suggesting that if the Farfield Foundation would chip in, “the Congress could greatly benefit from it” by sponsoring four or five concerts of this tour under the same conditions and title (“Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century”) as the BSO in 1952. It took some time for Fleischmann to respond, but then he was in a position to inform

¹³³ Charles D. Jackson to Francis W. Hatch, September 5, 1952, Jackson Papers, 38-BSO 1952-4 (1).

¹³⁴ Braden, “I’m Glad the CIA Is ‘Immoral,’” *Saturday Evening Post* (May 20, 1967): 12. Ian Wellens goes at great length to suggest that Braden’s statement indicates that the CIA did not think its investment in the BSO tour to have been “an irrelevant waste of money,” and that the correspondences with Nabokov’s phraseology about the merits of an arts festival above political speechifying imply a dynamic between the CIA and Nabokov. Although I also think that Nabokov was at least aware of the covert construction, the fact that both he and a CIA operator used a formula that by that time had already turned into a tattered truism (“music can do more than words”) cannot be said to prove anything. Neither can I see why it should be proven that the CIA thought the BSO operation worth its money. Braden would certainly not have obtained approval for the operation if his superiors had not thought the venture would pay off (and if it did not, they would certainly not have admitted it). Undoubtedly Braden’s proposal was just as controversial for some in the CIA ranks as it had been for some ACCF members. Yet, as shown previously, Braden had CIA Director Allen W. Dulles on his side. Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 61–2.

Nabokov that “his” Foundation was “not interested in supplying the funds in connection with the CCF.”¹³⁵ Around the same time, a similar request from the Metropolitan Opera trickled down to Fleischmann via C. D. Jackson (who had been a board member of the Metropolitan Opera Association before being appointed as President Eisenhower’s special consultant on psychological warfare) for a European tour of the full Metropolitan cast, choir and orchestra in the autumn of 1954.

One can imagine how the discussion proceeded between the various government agencies involved in overt and covert propaganda operations. This was the time when these operations were subjected to a close review, leading to the creation of the United States Information Agency (USIA), a body separated from, but subordinated to, the State Department, which eventually took over the kind of operations that Braden’s office could not afford on a regular basis.¹³⁶ Thanks to this agency as well as the closely related American National Theater and Academy (ANTA), a European tour would become reality for the Philadelphia Orchestra in 1955, followed by a second tour in 1958, this time including the Soviet Union and several Eastern European countries. A similar tour for the Metropolitan Opera, despite the support of various agencies up to Vice-President Richard Nixon, never materialized.¹³⁷

¹³⁵ Nabokov to Fleischmann, May 22 and June 9, 1953; Fleischmann to Nabokov, June 8, 1953, Nabokov Papers, 5-6. It should be noted that the letter of May 22 was not a personal letter to Fleischmann, but as a subsidy application that Nabokov knew would be reviewed by someone else. From his correspondence with Nabokov, it transpires that Ormandy had apparently lived in the assumption that the CCF would sponsor a tour for 1953, and that things were all in Nabokov’s hands. Nabokov could not “make head or tail of what went on” between Fleischmann and the Philadelphia management, and did not know how he could be of help if Fleischmann refused to sponsor a tour. Nabokov to Ormandy, June 9, 1953, Ormandy Papers, 15-1002; Nabokov to Thomson, December 15, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

¹³⁶ For a detailed discussion of this review ordered by President Eisenhower at the start of his first term, see Kenneth Osgood, *Total Cold War: Eisenhower’s Secret Propaganda Battle at Home and Abroad* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006), 76–103.

¹³⁷ Rudolf Bing, the Metropolitan Opera’s general manager, was convinced that his organization could make a far more effective “propaganda weapon in the ‘cold war’ effort” than either the Voice of America, the Berlin Cultural Festival, or the 1952 Paris Festival. Presuming that the CCF might be interested to sponsor such a tour, Jackson passed on the proposal to Fleischmann, who thought it “a wonderful thing to do,” although, if the CCF was to act as a sponsor, the event was not to be framed as purely “American propaganda.” What if the international composition of the Metropolitan’s cast and chorus (Fleischmann did not realize that Bing’s proposal included the orchestra as well) would be played up as to demonstrate to Europeans that “we, in the United States, are a melting pot,” and that, for that matter, “some sort of European federation is entirely practicable”? The next three years, Bing talked with the State Department, Fleischmann with Wisner, Jackson with CIA director Allen Dulles and the USIA, but all to no avail. It was not for lack of interest, but no governmental agency could cough up \$750,000 to cover the project’s expenses. Bing to Jackson, January 16, 1953; Fleischmann to Jackson, February 17, 1953; Bing to Jackson, March 9, 1953; Fleischmann to Jackson, March 25, 1953; Bing to Jackson, May 16, 1953; Jackson to Dulles, May 20, 1953; Reginald Allen, Metropolitan Opera Association, memorandum “European Tour 1957: Synopsis of Metropolitan Opera European Tour Negotiations,” June 30,

Avant-Garde or Rearguard Defense? Assessing the Aesthetics of the Paris Festival

Whether or not the Festival was a success in terms of the immediate impression it left on the minds of its visitors depended, of course, on the person to whom the question was posed. On a deeper level, however, some commentators touched upon what many professionals in the musical field felt to be an uncomfortable truth. Artur Rodziński took it for granted that the legacy of prewar modernism was nothing to be ashamed of, and certainly not tantamount to the last spasms of a culture in decay as Nazi and Soviet aesthetics would like the world to believe. He wondered, however, whether postwar creative activity was indeed more vital on the western side of the Iron Curtain rather than on its eastern side. Responding to an editorial statement contending that “the Kremlin has cleverly hidden the corpse of Soviet artistic creation under the flowers of Soviet artistic performance,” Rodziński wondered if the Paris Festival had not actually demonstrated the same with its program being a mix of “quasi-classical masterpieces with contemporary output, whose lasting value can only be determined by the element of time,” all performed by excellent musicians.¹³⁸ To Downes, too, the Festival looked “in some respects old-fashioned, looking mainly at the past, and little at the present and future,” or, as another observer put it, “much of the fare offered was not representative of today’s esthetics.”¹³⁹

Thus quite a few critics responded in the negative to Denis de Rougemont’s open question (published in the preface of the Festival program) whether or not the Festival would show “the effervescence of a new order in its nascent state.” To them, the unanimous acclaim for Stravinsky’s *Le Sacre*, the most notorious affront against the Parisian *bon ton* of thirty-nine years ago, proved that the vitality heralded by the Festival actually belonged to a faded past. There may have been a grain of truth in the critique of those who held that the audience attending the Festival events were there not so much to defend the value of artistic freedom as to show off their status and prestige, or as Downes put it, their “snobbishness and affectations of fashion.” (Tellingly, lifestyle magazine *Elle* devoted an issue to the question how to dress for the Festival.) Herbert Lüthy concurred that what the CCF called “freedom” might better be understood as

1955; Jackson to Theodor C. Streibert, Director USIA, July 28, 1955, Jackson Papers, 75+76-Metropolitan Opera-Misc. 1953/1954–56. Frances Stonor Saunders’s paragraph on these plans suggests that the tour materialized, but that was not the case. Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 225.

¹³⁸ Rodziński responded to a statement by Barry Bingham, editor of *The Louisville Courier-Journal*, which had been published in the *New York Herald Tribune* [European edition] of May 7, 1952.

¹³⁹ Downes, “Shadow of the Past: Spirit of Nineteenth Century Looms Over Works at Twentieth-Century Exposition in Paris,” *New York Times*, May 25, 1952, X7; Downes, “Paris Exposition in Sum,” X7; Suzanne Demarquez, “Paris Festival of Arts Has Rare Contrasts,” *Musical Courier* 146 (July 1952): 6.

“indifference.” He considered it rather hypocritical that a society that grants so little of its attention to art should “congratulate itself on its generosity” and posthumously take credit for artists who died unappreciated, like Berg and Bartók.¹⁴⁰

These observations touched on the weak spot—to use the Communist phraseology—of the “decadent bourgeoisie of the West.” Nabokov’s festival might have shown the innovation and diversity in artistic trends characterizing the first three decades of the twentieth century in much of Europe, czarist/Soviet Russia, and the United States, but what it did not adequately address was the alienation of large parts of the public from contemporary art and music. Many speakers at the round-tables and public debates had lost themselves in abstractions about the ontology of their art, as well as the need for the artist to remain detached from the state and the “culture industry,” or even from society altogether. Yet they never asked why so many lovers of art, literature, and music did not follow them, and resorted to the late-Romantic repertory instead. For all what one may think about the way it was imposed, did not the aesthetics promoted by the Communist Party “genuinely reflect the taste of the ordinary people in Russia?,” the British music critic Colin Mason asked. And did not this taste differ very little from “what commends itself to the taste of the average English, French or American family?”¹⁴¹

Indeed, as argued in Chapter 3, for many artists, the attraction of Stalin’s view of things resided in the fact that it met the issue of art’s function in the contemporary world head on, whereas his “bourgeois” counterparts seemed to evade it. If artists living in a liberal-democratic society worked, either deliberately or out of necessity, on their own little islands for the sake of a high-flying ideal of art, artists living in a socialist society found themselves appreciated for their efforts towards serving the common good (or at least that is how it seemed). Of course, many who cared for it could not feel inspired by the way Stalin had “solved” the issue, but the West did not offer an inspiring alternative, either. As they saw it, both East and West had,

¹⁴⁰ Denis de Rougemont, “L’Œuvre du XXe siècle: une réponse, ou une question?,” *Preuves*, no. 15 (May 1952): 2; Downes, “*Oedipus* in Paris,” *New York Times*, June 1, 1952, X5; Hellmut Jaesrich, “Töne und Theorien: Ein Bericht von den ‘Meisterwerken des XX. Jahrhunderts,’” *Der Monat* 4/46 (July 1952): 350; Lüthy, “Selling Paris on Western Culture,” 71–4.

¹⁴¹ Colin Mason, “The Paris Festival,” *Tempo* 24 (Summer 1952): 18. Socialite Susan Mary Alsop, wife of journalist Joseph Alsop, was only too honest when she admitted that with respect to, for instance, *Oedipus Rex*, “I was out of my depth and confused by the narration [by Jean Cocteau] but much too much of a snob to say so at a supper party for the cast afterwards given by Hervé Durgardin, director of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées at his beautiful house on the rue de l’Université.” Alsop to Marietta Tree, May 1952, in Alsop, *To Marietta from Paris, 1945–1960* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1975), 205. For Downes, both *Oedipus Rex* and its audience, “so brilliant, so knowing, with such an air of *dernier cri* about it,” exuded “the air of a period of the past.” Downes, “*Oedipus Rex* Given at Paris Festival,” *New York Times*, May 20, 1952, 21.

creatively speaking, “hit a rather sterile period...owing to circumstances beyond our control, and which are decidedly not conducive to artistic creation (among them the Cold War, etc).”¹⁴²

Nabokov turned out to be the first to recognize these concerns. In a survey of the post-war musical scene in Europe written in the previous year, he commented that the “festival frenzy” which had taken hold of the Continent and the British Isles catered to a significant degree to the tourist industry. A substitute for “the sedate spa of the nineteenth century,” Nabokov observed, the festival catered to the “deep-rooted cultural snobbishness” of the wealthy tourist for whom music had taken over “the therapeutic role of Vichy water, which soothes, not the liver, but the troubled mind or soul.” Yet, at the same, Nabokov argued, the festival boom could also be seen as a way for Europeans, “worried and doubtful [as they were] about the value of their culture,” to regain their lost self-esteem. It was unfortunate, Nabokov continued, that the cultural regeneration of Europe developed so much along national lines: each country had its own festivals and radio stations on which, apart from the classical repertory, mainly its own composers were promoted. Although understandable (“[W]hy should one play one’s neighbor’s latest dodecatonalist [*sic*] or neo-classicist where there are at least two or three at home clamoring for attention?”), this practice led to a rather undesirable sense of “isolationism and parochialism” which Nabokov had intended to dispel with his own festival. As to the creative value of the works produced in the postwar cultural renaissance, Nabokov had to concur with Rodziński that, in contrast to the early twentieth century, what was most attractive in the Europe of the early 1950s were “the superb young performers” (many of whom Nabokov mentioned by name and were contracted for his festival) and not the composers, “who linger in the shadow of the earlier masters of our century.” Generally speaking, the new works they produced were “not striking, not fresh, not new enough to stir up real enthusiasm among the larger and more international segment of the European public.”¹⁴³

Indeed, what was, or should be, the next step after Debussy and Ravel, after the Second Viennese School, or after Bartók, Hindemith and Stravinsky? Many wondered, but few seemed to know. Some argued the case for Expressionism, with the artist screaming for attention at the alienation of the individual in late-capitalist society. Others thought that a return to the Enlightenment aesthetic and moral conception of art was the best way to get out of the spiritual crisis that had led to the atrocities of the first half of the

¹⁴² Rodziński, “The Paris Festival,” *New York Herald Tribune* [European edition], May 20, 1952, Rodziński Papers, 60-4.

¹⁴³ Nabokov, “Performers and Composers: Festivals and the Twelve-Tone Row,” in *America and the Mind of Europe* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1951), 94-5, 103-4.

twentieth century. Nabokov, as we have seen, advocated the latter position, and present-day commentators on his Paris Festival never fail to refer to his polemics with Leibowitz to prove his dislike of the Second Viennese School and to explain the neoclassicist or (neo-)tonal inclinations in his programming.¹⁴⁴ True, given his knowledge of Nazi and Soviet rhetoric, he should have known better when, in his indignation at Leibowitz's patronizing portrayal of Stravinsky, he described Schoenberg's legacy as part of a set of obsolete "Mittel-europa ideas" (undoubtedly communism and existentialism are implied here as well) "infiltrat[ing] into the 'cora' of French civilization."¹⁴⁵ Equally true, the disquieting, nightmarish world of Expressionism was not his cup of tea, and he undoubtedly agreed with Henry Barraud that *Wozzeck*, despite "its richness of invention and writing, the dramatic power of the score, and the beauty of the musical materials and form," was, in the final analysis, a "decadent work."¹⁴⁶ He could even empathize with the Roman Catholic Church's view of *Wozzeck* as "a blasphematory [*sic*] work, dangerously 'nihilistic' and corrupting the youth."¹⁴⁷ However, as Catholic as Nabokov's musical taste might have been (indeed, very literally so¹⁴⁸), it was also catholic in the sense that his personal predilections did not let him to *exclude* works that from the vantage point of the early 1950s seemed pivotal in the course of music history, including those of the Second Viennese School.¹⁴⁹

Those who refer to Nabokov's sword-crossing with Leibowitz forget to point out that his musical confession of colors, so to speak, was not triggered by any practitioner of the twelve-tone technique, but by the presumptuous narrative that advocates of it like Leibowitz and (in a more convoluted way) Adorno had constructed around it: the narrative that

¹⁴⁴ Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe*, 12–13; Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 58–9.

¹⁴⁵ Nabokov, "The Atonal Trail: A Communication," *Partisan Review* 15/5 (1948): 581.

¹⁴⁶ Barraud, "A French Critic Observes," 28. Telling in this regard is Nabokov's account of a concert that had opened with Beethoven's String Quartet No. 11 (Op. 95), which was "one of the pieces of music which does something very direct to me, like *un coup de poing dans l'estomac*. It is music which is at the limit of instrumental possibilities and at the limit of reality. After that the horrible caffè-klatch *Verklärte Nacht* of Schönberg was like a rotten pear on a rotten worm-eaten tree." Nabokov to Parmenia Migel Ekstrom, December 20, 1944, Migel Papers, Folder 155.

¹⁴⁷ Nabokov to Thomson, December 4, 1951, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

¹⁴⁸ Apart from the previously mentioned *Chants à la Vierge Marie* (1926), Nabokov's affinity with Catholicism found expression in his *Symboli Chrestiani* for baritone and orchestra (1956); Biblical Symphony (1965); and Third Symphony, "A Prayer," dedicated to Pope John XXIII and J. Robert Oppenheimer (1967).

¹⁴⁹ Nabokov could even be enthused by the success which *Wozzeck* enjoyed at his Festival. The day after the performances of *Wozzeck* (May 2 and 3) he wrote Thomson (who was not yet in Paris) enthusiastically about how "absolutely superb" they had been. "Huge success. In fact I rarely saw such a success. Papa Igor [Stravinsky] was in my box with [Albert] Camus and was explaining to Camus how much better he likes Schoenberg and Webern (*sic*!); how much more 'actual' they are, but that Berg 'c'est quelque chose de très honorable et important—c'est du [Oskar] Kokoschka.'" Nabokov to Thomson, May 4, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

declared the dissolution of tonality to be the only viable, if not legitimate, path to follow for any composer living after World War II. No one put this in bolder terms than Leibowitz's pupil Pierre Boulez, one of the most outspoken spokesmen of the generation that claimed the future of music. Just months before the Festival started, Boulez had taken Stravinsky and the late Schoenberg to task for failing to pursue the "inevitable" and "logical" implications of their inventions to the fullest extent possible, i.e., the course of rhythmic experimentation begun with *Le Sacre* as far as Stravinsky was concerned, and the uncompromising application of the serialist method on all other compositional parameters besides pitch as far as Schoenberg was concerned.¹⁵⁰

Although present-day commentators are consistent in classifying his taste as "conservative," Nabokov was, of course, far from an exception within his generation (two decades removed from Boulez's) who looked with suspicion at such verbal patricide.¹⁵¹ Indeed, little of the "gallons of captious newspaper ink" spilled over the Festival was spent on embracing Boulez's vision of the musical future as the answer to a generally perceived artistic lethargy. Even Everett Helm, who as OMGUS music officer in Hesse had warmly supported the Darmstadt Holiday Courses as the hotbed of the most advanced music, found it difficult to take "integral serialism" seriously: "It is very funny for a time," he reported about the premiere of Boulez's *Polyphonie X* in October 1951, "but it soon becomes deadly boring, being ice-coldly cerebral....How advanced can one be and still write music?"¹⁵² Nabokov could not hear the attraction of the music advocated by Boulez, either. Attending the premiere of *Le Soleil des eaux*, three settings of poems by René Char, he could not help but thinking that what he heard was "old-fashioned, artificial, [full of] outmoded formulas from Weimar-era Central Europe... What is the range of emotions that such a trick can create?... People have to be disintegrated themselves in order to admire [this] musical fabric that turns into powder when it touches the ear."¹⁵³ In contrast to Helm, though,

¹⁵⁰ Boulez, "Stravinsky Remains" [1951] and "Schoenberg Is Dead" [February 1952], in Boulez, *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*, trans. Stephen Walsh (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 107–8 and 209–14.

¹⁵¹ One exception was Virgil Thomson, who was among the first to give Boulez press coverage, describing him in 1946 as "the most brilliant of all the Paris under-twenty-fives." Thomson, "Atonality in France," *New York Herald Tribune*, October 27, 1946, repr. in Thomson, *The Art of Judging Music*, 233.

¹⁵² Everett Helm, "Current Chronicle," *The Musical Quarterly* 38/ 1 (1952): 143.

¹⁵³ Nabokoff to Boulanger (in French), July 21, 1950, Boulanger Papers, NLA-90, Folio 204. Nabokov does not name the title of the composition he commented on, but it must have been *Le soleil des eaux* (second version), which Roger Désormière premiered with the Orchestra National on 18 July 1950. In his correspondence with Stravinsky, Nabokov also qualified Boulez as a composer "who writes notes, not music." Nabokov to Stravinsky, December 23, 1950 and March 23, 1956, in *Stravinsky: Selected Correspondence*, vol. 2, 367fn11, 392.

Nabokov conveyed this honest impression in a private letter to Nadia Boulanger; in print he remained journalistic, describing the young Boulez as controversial but too salient to ignore.¹⁵⁴ Accordingly, the composer was given the opportunity to publish his theorem of integral serialism, “Éventuellement...,” in the Festival issue of *La Revue musicale* (No. 212, April 1952), and to premiere, together with Messiaen, its ultimate realization, *Structures* (1a), in the Festival’s chamber music program (May 7). The performance did not pass without incident:

Hardly a minute had gone by before the majority of the audience was in a humorous mood. When the performers [Boulez and Messiaen] turned their pages back to the beginning and a repeat was about half-way through, a woman in an orchestra seat, unable to contain herself any longer, timidly cried ‘Bravo!’ Instantly a husky youth in the back row leaped over several rows of seats and bore down menacingly upon the frightened woman. A section of the audience rose to its feet, and a policeman apprehended the youth, who received a blow from the woman’s bag as he was being led out. The audience commented upon the incident excitedly while the two performers, unperturbed, continued their counting and hammering.¹⁵⁵

A few weeks later, a similar kerfuffle disrupted the second *Oedipus Rex* performance, this time wrought about—unsurprisingly—by students who launched a hissing and booing campaign at the first sight of the masks and the “grotesque chichi” of Cocteau’s tableaux vivants.¹⁵⁶ Although denying to have been among the detractors at this occasion, Boulez explained later in life that he indeed felt that Stravinsky’s neoclassical period was “a dead-end street, a waste of time.”¹⁵⁷ He did not give names, but in his view of things at the time, Stravinsky and Nabokov surely belonged to the category of

...those libertarians who are in principle unfrightened by technical investigation [and] make [its] discoveries their own, but, in the name of *liberty*, forbid themselves to be *prisoners* of the system. They want *music* before all things, or at any rate what they claim as music; they do not wish to lose sight of *lyricism*...Their main preoccupation is rather encyclopedic. They would like to embrace the whole of history since monody, and thereby create for themselves the illusion of being vast and imponderable.

Boulez obviously had no patience for such half-hearted pursuance of the innovative trends that had been set off by the early dodecaphonists and Stravinsky, concluding boldly—and notoriously—that “any musician who

¹⁵⁴ Nabokov, “Performers and Composers,” 102–3.

¹⁵⁵ Edmund J. Pendleton, “The Paris Festival,” *Musical America* 72/9 (July 1952): 20.

¹⁵⁶ Downes, “Students in Paris Hiss Fete Concert,” May 21, 1952, 22.

¹⁵⁷ Boulez in an interview with Peter Culshaw, *Telegraph*, December 10, 2008.

has not truly experienced the necessity of dodecapronic language is *useless*.”¹⁵⁸

Several authors have found themselves puzzled at how a cutting-edge modernist like Boulez could slip into the program of a “festival of such partisan politics” overseen by someone with such “conservative taste.”¹⁵⁹ I would suggest that perhaps Nabokov was not concerned at all with warding off exponents of political persuasions (excerpt bull-headed Communism) and aesthetic schools that were not his own. He surely would have seen the propaganda value of a generational clash—something that was, after all, denied to postwar generations in the Soviet-controlled realm of the world. Indeed, nowhere have I found a single piece of evidence to prove that Nabokov was concerned with promoting for or against any particular current in the contemporary music of his time. What truly concerned him was the ever-widening rift between audiences and contemporary music wrought by the relentless specialization of musical idioms, on the one hand, and the unprecedented demand for music from bygone eras, on the other.¹⁶⁰ The next musical project Nabokov was to sink his teeth into, therefore, was meant to convene a conclave of composers, performers, and music critics committed to the state of contemporary music—not in an obscure city in the middle of (almost) nowhere like Darmstadt, but in a major European capital. Had the Paris Festival been concerned with the recapitulation of what had happened in the first half of the century, this follow-up convention was to “serve the cause of music and musicians of today.”¹⁶¹

Antidote against Provincialism: The Rome Convention of Contemporary Music

Having been authorized by the CCF Executive Committee to consolidate an arts program, Nabokov set out to arrange for a counterpart to the Soviet award system, and installed an annual prize for the best achievements in the fields of music, drama, and painting.¹⁶² Already by December 1952, he had gained the funds from the Farfield Foundation (that is, the CIA) for a music

¹⁵⁸ Boulez, “Possibly...,” in *Stocktakings from an Apprenticeship*, 112–3. Boulez’s emphasis. See also Ben Parsons, “Sets and the City: Serial Analysis, Parisian Reception, and Pierre Boulez’s *Structures 1a*,” *Current Musicology* 76 (Fall 2003): 53–79; and Leslie Sprout, “The 1945 Stravinsky Debates: Nigg, Messiaen, and the Early Cold War in France,” *Journal of Musicology* 26/1 (2009): 85–131.

¹⁵⁹ Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe*, 2; Parsons, “Sets and the City,” 57.

¹⁶⁰ Nabokov, “Pendant que se préparent les Festivals 1953,” *Contrepoints* 8 (1953): 43–8.

¹⁶¹ Jay S. Harrison, “Forum of World’s Music: Nabokov Says ’54 Symposium Will Give Young Composers Chance of Lifetime,” *New York Herald Tribune*, February 8, 1953, CCF, III-6-8; Nabokov to Downes, December 29, 1953, Downes Papers, II-43-10.

¹⁶² The visual arts component resulted in an International Exhibition of Young Painters, which in the spring of 1955 exposed 165 canvasses of 44 American, Belgian, Dutch, English, French, German, Italian, and Swiss artists in the Galleria Nazionale d’Arte Moderna in Rome, the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Musée d’Art Moderne in Paris, and the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London respectively.

competition, which he planned to integrate within the framework of an international conference of composers, performers, and music critics that he had been asked to organize by Denis de Rougemont's European Center of Culture (Centre Européen de la Culture) in Geneva, an exponent of the CIA-sponsored European Movement that aimed to warm Europe's intellectual communities for the idea of a united Europe closely allied to the United States.¹⁶³ Nabokov also had a promise in his pocket from the Italian Broadcasting Company (RAI) to take on all the expenses connected with the performance and broadcasting of the concerts, including the fees of soloists and conductors. By April 1953, an advisory committee presided by Stravinsky had invited twelve composers from eight countries (Great Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Switzerland, Israel, Brazil, and the United States) to submit works in one of the three contest categories: a violin concerto, a short symphonic work, or a work for voice and chamber ensemble comprising no more than six instruments.¹⁶⁴ In addition to a fully paid trip to Rome, the contest participants, all of whom were well-known in their own countries but hardly enjoyed international fame, would have their works published and performed, and, if awarded a prize by a jury that was to be democratically elected during the assembly's inaugural session, they would be assured of subsequent performances by three major orchestras in Europe and three in America (including the BSO) as well as a recording by a major company (which became Columbia Records).¹⁶⁵

Although other locations have been considered, the choice for Rome as the scene of the CCF's second major operation in the field of music seems obvious from a political vantage point.¹⁶⁶ With the Italian Communist Party significantly outnumbering its French counterpart, Italy proved to be an even larger liability than France. The CCF did have an affiliate in Rome, but it failed to be a factor of influence. Already by September 1951, its director, Ignazio Silone, seemed to have more or less retreated from the Roman office, and attempts by the Paris office to dispel this "Silonesque lethargy," as Nabokov called it, had proven unsuccessful. If the French CCF affiliate (*Les Amis de la Liberté*) sometimes required some "Vaseline" to work

¹⁶³ De Rougemont to Nabokov, November 19, 1952, CCF, III-6-5.

¹⁶⁴ For the names of the candidates, see Appendix B2.

¹⁶⁵ Nabokov, "Plan for a Limited Prize Winning Competition in Music Sponsored by the CCF," November 21, 1952, CCF, III-6-7; "12 Composers to Vie for \$6,200 in Prizes," *New York Times*, March 23, 1953, 27.

¹⁶⁶ From an early memorandum prepared by the European Center of Culture, dated October 27, 1952, it appears that the plan for this musical convention, which was originally scheduled for the first week of September 1953, goes back to the spring of 1952, and that the governments of Belgium and West Germany had offered to host it. Nabokov and Markevitch, the CEC's consultant on musical matters, were opposed to accepting either one of the invitations, and explored the possibilities in Switzerland, France and Northern Italy before arriving at Rome. CCF, III-6-5.

smoothly, Nabokov sighed, “our Italian ‘apparatus’” needed “pure Carter oil” to get into operation.¹⁶⁷ Well aware that Silone’s aloofness was inspired by rumors of US governmental involvement in the CCF project, and drawing lessons from the failures of his publicity strategy employed in connection with the Paris Festival, Nabokov deliberately played down the political angle of the CCF’s newest enterprise. The primary aims of the conference and competition, Nabokov explained, were (1) to give young composers an opportunity of having their works played and appreciated internationally, (2) to enlarge international repertoires by the addition of new names and works, and (3) to create a meeting place where composers, performers and critics may find the same kind of opportunity and stimulus that have been enjoyed for many years by the exponents of other arts. In applications for funding, too, Nabokov now adopted the tone of an impresario rather than a Cold Warrior, explaining that Rome would be an excellent choice for the kind of undertaking he had in mind due to its historic and artistic attractions and its mild climate in spring.¹⁶⁸

Indeed, the ideological motivation given for the Rome Conference was devoid of the defensive and divisive rhetoric by which the Paris Festival had been pitched. The problem the Conference organizers sought to address was the state of isolation to which young generations of music professionals found themselves confined in the aftermath of World War II. In contrast to the interwar period, post-1945 conditions were such that works by young composers were only sporadically performed in the country of their residence, let alone internationally. As a result, most young performers hardly knew about the work of their coevals, and even if they knew, the “slow evolution of public taste” prevented them from it. This forced young composers to “place too great reliance on traditions and techniques established by their immediate predecessors,” a situation that, of course, hampered the restoration of a “healthy life” for contemporary music. By the same vicious circle, critics, deprived from possibilities to hear the works of, and exchange views with, the younger generation of composers, generally failed to interpret new musical idioms for an audience that had greater access to art music than ever before (through radio, festival tourism, educational programs, etc.). This state of affairs, Denis de Rougemont and Nabokov argued, tended to create “a spirit of parochialism” which the Rome convention was to dissipate.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁷ Nabokov to Brown, September 3, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-16.

¹⁶⁸ Nabokov to John Marshall, Rockefeller Foundation, February 3, 1953, CCF, III-6-5. To Thomson, Nabokov also advanced that there seemed to be “a strong psychological attraction for a ‘Prix de Rome’ international with the *Œuvre du XXe siècle* in a city where there are so many ‘Prix de Rome’.” Nabokov to Thomson, November 17, 1952, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

¹⁶⁹ De Rougemont, “Une nouvelle initiative du C.E.C.: Conférence de compositeurs, critiques musicaux et exécutants,” *Bulletin du Centre Européen de la Culture* 8 (1953): 8-11;

Rome might have seemed to be the ideal location for the convention from afar, but Nabokov, operating from the American Academy in Rome where he lived for an exceptional two year period as Composer-in-Residence (1953-55), would come to hate the Eternal City for its internecine political and organizational inefficiency. “In Rome,” he wrote, “only the following things are organized: ruins, churches, diplomatic corpses, and the Communist party.”¹⁷⁰ The Italian government had promised Nabokov a subsidy of 2.5 million lire, but he never saw a single centesimo of it. Troubles increased when the musicologist Alberto Pironti questioned the credibility of the Festival organization because “the famous fascist” Mario Labroca was on the Executive Committee.¹⁷¹ Labroca indeed had continued to build his career throughout the Mussolini era, and had been, as an appointee in a leading post within the Ministry of Culture, actively involved in propaganda programs aimed at convincing foreign elites that fascism cared about culture.¹⁷² Had Italy been “de-fascist-ized” according to American standards, Labroca might have been blacklisted. The reality was, however, that he was currently the chief of the RAI’s music section, the largest partner in the Rome Festival, so Nabokov—whether he was aware of his history or not—could only express his confidence in Labroca.¹⁷³

Nabokov badly needed Labroca, all the more so because his second foray into the festival business had—unsurprisingly—swollen to dazzling proportions. Had it originally been intended to complement the conference and competition with a modest program of three symphonic and three chamber music concerts, by early 1954 it had grown to two operas, six symphonic and seven chamber music concerts—most of them performed by the RAI’s resources.¹⁷⁴ The Farfield Foundation was not intent on funding the passage and living expenses of anyone except the twelve contest

memorandum “Music in the Twentieth Century,” undated but probably around April 1953, CCF, III-6-7. Less formally, the idea behind the Convention was to “get the younger generation of European musicians out of the parochial swamp in which most of them operate,” as well as to “produce something alive in place of the defunct ISCM.” Nabokov to Slonimsky, August 9, 1952, Slonimsky Collection, 153-2. See Appendix C2 for a promotion text of the Convention.

¹⁷⁰ Nabokov to Ira Hirschmann, September 9, 1954, CCF, II-244-2.

¹⁷¹ Pironti to Nabokov, January 22, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-69-17.

¹⁷² In 1933, Labroca wrote that “[w]e do propaganda work not only when we export our ideas abroad, but also when we invite foreigners here so they can come into contact with our lifestyle and our way of thinking.” Labroca, “Per la conoscenza dell’Italia nel mondo,” *Critica fascista*, February 1, 1933. At the time, Labroca was head of the Corporation for New Music (Corporazione delle Nuove Musiche), and became chief of the music section of the General Directorate of Entertainment (Direzione Generale dello Spettacolo) of the Ministry of Press and Propaganda in 1935. See Ruth Ben-Ghiat, *Fascist Modernities: Italy, 1922–1945* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), 17–45.

¹⁷³ Nabokov to Pironti, January 26, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-69-17.

¹⁷⁴ Memorandum “Conference of Composers, Music Critics, and Performers: Tentative Budget,” November 3, 1952, CCF, III-6-5.

entrants and the jury members, though, and efforts to seduce philanthropic organizations turned out to be only partly successful (American participants were lodged at the American Academy in Rome, whereas the Rockefeller Foundation endowed a sum of \$10,000 towards their travel and subsistence costs).¹⁷⁵ Subsequently, Nabokov pleaded with the cultural relations agencies of every participating country to sponsor the trip of their delegates—an experience he never wished to go through again (“To raise money in Europe is not only humiliating; it is the most distressing business I have ever had to go through.”¹⁷⁶) In the end, Nabokov managed to collect subsidies from a variety of sources, including wealthy friends such as Alix de Rothschild, Hansi Lambert, Arthur Sachs Letizia Boncompagni, and Count Cecil Pecci-Blunt, as well as UNESCO’s International Music Council, which paid the transatlantic round trip for Samuel Barber. Apart from the performers, no less than about one hundred guests (over 90% from Europe, and a small number from the Americas and Israel) found their travel and lodging reimbursed.¹⁷⁷

The Rome convention started with a concert that included works drawn from a moment in history marked by modern music historiography as a moment of experimentation and innovation: the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, represented by one of Giovanni Gabrieli’s polychoral compositions, *In Ecclesiis* and Claudio Monteverdi’s *Magnificat*. All other programs were—as an early prospectus reads—worked out in “the spirit of a non-parochial, synoptic approach to the music of the twentieth century,” focusing on (1) works by the younger generation of European and American composers, (2) works of the older generation that had been rarely performed, and (3) works that had been unduly neglected.¹⁷⁸ Noting the

¹⁷⁵ Nabokov to De Rougemont, February 3, 1953, CCF, III-6-5. Fleischmann’s unwillingness to open “his” wallet again might have to do with Nabokov having disregarded his suggestion to expand the competition to thirty-six entries drawn from a global, rather than a transatlantic, range of composers. Nabokov replied that within the given budget, only twelve compositions could be performed, and disagreed with Fleischmann’s idea of including “Orientals who write in a Western manner” on the slate, as modernist music-writing was so new to the East that its composers would by definition be at a disadvantage. It is unclear whether Fleischmann could have produced extra money, but probably he underestimated the costs of the competition per capita. Fleischmann to Nabokov, October 10, 1952; Nabokov to Fleischmann, October 16, 1952, CCF, II-101-10.

¹⁷⁶ Nabokov to Thomson, September 16, November 10, December 15 and 29, 1953, January 23, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16+17.

¹⁷⁷ The financial records of the ACCF/CCF show that both Sachs and Boncompagni donated \$1,000 and Pecci-Blunt \$1,300. All contributions were remitted through the CCF’s Chase National Bank account at Basle. Pierre Bolomey, CCF Treasurer, to Sol Stein, ACCF Executive Director, February 16, 1954, ACCF, 6-15. The governments of Italy, France, West Germany, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Great Britain conceded with Nabokov’s request to cover the expenses of representatives from their respective countries.

¹⁷⁸ This prospectus is included in the Thomson Papers, 29-39-23. For the full program, see Appendix B2.

strong emphasis on Stravinsky and Parisian composers in general, Michael Steinberg, the *New York Times* critic who covered the proceedings of the Rome convention, was not convinced by this claim to inclusiveness, and neither were the attendants who did not find their countries represented in the music programs. Many commentators acknowledged, however, the efforts the organizers had taken not to favor any particular trends or trends, and either appreciated or critiqued what one of them called the “eclectic anthology” approach.¹⁷⁹

Two notable absences were occasionally observed, though: exponents of the young musical avant-garde, on the one hand, and of music life from behind the Iron Curtain, on the other.¹⁸⁰ It was not for want of trying that Nabokov’s team failed to acquire a more adequate representation of these two groups in Rome. To start with the latter: Shostakovich, Prokofiev, and Zoltán Kodály were considered for being invited to participate in the music contest, and, in addition to these three, Dmitry Kabalevsky, Aram Khachaturian, David Oistrakh, László Lajtha, and Andrzej Panufnik received an invitation to attend the convention. Nabokov also suggested inviting Leonid Kogan, the Soviet violinist who won the 1951 edition of the Queen Elisabeth Competition. (By September 1953, Hanns Eisler was listed as well, but his name is not on the list of invitees of February 1954.) Not surprisingly, none of them accepted, or were allowed to accept. Panufnik expressed his thanks for the invitation but had to decline on account of being too swamped with work. Kabalevsky explicitly declined in the name of the Composer’s Union, obviously following the official Soviet view of the CCF as an instrument of Washington’s “managers of psychological warfare” bent on discrediting “the great idea of a fight for peace with demagogic fictions about ‘cultural freedom’.”¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹ Michael Steinberg, “Contemporary Conference in Rome in April,” *New York Times*, January 17, 1954, X7. Steinberg quotes from; Wouter Paap, “Internationaal muziekcongres te Rome,” *Mens en Melodie* 9/5 (1954): 135; Fedele d’Amico, “Current Chronicle: Rome Festival,” *The Musical Quarterly* 40 (1954): 588.

¹⁸⁰ D’Amico, “Current Chronicle,” 588; unattributed clipping “Le festival de Rome,” *Musique, Radio, Danse, Variété*, April 20, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-54-6; Reginald Smith Brindle, “Notes from Abroad,” *The Musical Times* 95 (June 1954): 328.

¹⁸¹ Lists of composers to be represented and/or invited, January 13 and September 6, 1953, CCF, III-6-7; Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Rome Conference, April 18, 1953, CCF, III-6-7; Memorandum “Music in the Twentieth Century: International Conference of Composers, Performers and Music Critics,” undated, CCF, III-6-5; Invitation list as of February 4, 1954, CCF, III-5-9; “Musical ‘Olympics’ To Be Held in Rome,” *The Stars and Stripes* [US Army], March 30, 1954, 5; “Note of Discord at World Music Parley,” *The Daily Gleaner*, April 5, 1954, 9; W. A. Pitchugin, “Under Cover of Defending ‘Cultural Freedom,’” *Voprosy Filosofii* [Problems of Philosophy; Institute of Philosophy of the Soviet Academy of Sciences] (May 1954). Pitchugin identified the “managers of psychological warfare as the “fascist sociologist” James Burnham, the “philosopher-slanderer” Sidney Hook, the representative of “a clique of bought union leaders” Irving Brown, and the “author of horrible anti-Soviet books” Arthur Koestler. A translation of his article is included in the Records of the ACCF, 1-6.

Although excuses and rejections were to be expected, it is worth noting that the choice of these invitees was not arbitrary: all of them had an affinity with music from the West, and several of them had held positions in international music associations like the ISCM or the ICM before their governments forbade them to. In other words, they were the souls that reasonably could be expected to be saved, and now that Stalin had died and a few faint signs of slackening control could be sensed from the Soviet press,¹⁸² Nabokov seized his chance and addressed himself to those whom he expected to be pleased with the current state of affairs: Shostakovich, who does not need a comment (as well as Prokofiev, who would have been contacted had he not passed away); Kabalevsky, a member of the presidium of the Soviet Union of Composers (but not its president, Tikhon Khrennikov); Khachaturian, who had not been rehabilitated yet from his 1948 fall from grace; Lajtha, who in 1948 had been ousted from his leading posts at the Hungarian Radio, the Museum of Ethnography and the Budapest National Conservatory (in addition to his passport being confiscated) for having stayed too long in the West; and Panufnik, who was soon to flee from the clutches of the Polish regime to London with Nabokov's assistance.

Of the devoted dodecaphonists/serialists, Leibowitz, Boulez, Stockhausen, Nono, Henze, and Pousseur were invited to participate in the convention; of the American avant-garde, Elliott Carter (Nabokov's former colleague at St John's College) and John Cage.¹⁸³ Cage declined as he was already to travel to Europe for a tour in the autumn of 1954; Stockhausen, Nono, Henze and Carter accepted, and the latter three were represented in the musical program with the *Epitaph for García Lorca* (No. 2), *Boulevard Solitude*, and the String Quartet No. 1 respectively. (It is unclear why a performance of one of Stockhausen's works did not materialize.) Leibowitz and Pousseur did not respond. Boulez did. The hot-tempered young composer was invited to present his *Polyphonie* (earlier on, *Le soleil des eaux*, the piece Nabokov had commented upon to Boulanger, was considered) and to participate in the panel discussion about "The Composer and the Press." Boulez declined. Mustering all the words he could find to express his contempt, he gave Nabokov to understand that he was foolish to think that

¹⁸² Evaluating Soviet music life in the wake of Stalin's death, Nabokov observed that the range of the permitted repertory had been slightly extended as to include some works of Debussy, Ravel, de Falla and Richard Strauss, whereas the pages of music and artistic journals like *Sovetskaya Muzyka* and *Sovetskoye Isskustvo* were less and less dominated by dreary exegeses of the 1948 Party resolutions on music. Nabokov, "No Cantatas for Stalin?" *Encounter* 1/1 (October 1953): 49–52.

¹⁸³ Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Rome Conference, April 18 and September 6–7, 1953, CCF, III-6-7; Invitation list as of February 4, 1954, CCF, III-5-9. Nono proposed Nabokov to invite Wolfgang Steinecke, the artistic leader of the Darmstadt Holiday Courses, as well, but this advice was—for unknown reasons—not followed. Nono to Nabokov, March 18, 1954, CCF, III-6-5.

anything could be improved in the conditions of a composer by “muddy waffling” and “prefabricated contests” presided over by a jury whose quality was to be questioned. His invitation was to be sent to “a lover of carnivals” and Nabokov was advised to organize his next congress on the condom in the twentieth century, a subject Boulez deemed of similar taste.¹⁸⁴

For a self-defined avant-gardist such as Boulez, Nabokov’s sin consisted in imposing a bureaucracy on a domain he considered to be his, a bureaucracy that could only blunt the cutting-edge quality of the music he stood for and result in mediocrity. (“But then, of course, some of us have to make our living from bureaucracy, don’t we?” Boulez biliously remarked to Nabokov.) *The New Statesman and Nation*, always critical of the CCF, likewise expected that nothing could be gained from debates about aesthetics, and even went as far as to raise the question why a convention that is “evidently designed as a demonstration of the Western world’s cultural superiority to that of the Communist world” should follow the Soviet assumption that “debate and mutual accusation and public linen-washing are the best way to bring about an improvement in musical composition, performance and criticism.”¹⁸⁵ For his part, Nabokov (as well as De Rougemont) saw in Boulez’s philippic the kind of sectarianism he wished his Convention to rise above.¹⁸⁶ After all, the Roman conclave’s purpose was not (as has been argued) “to place the CCF firmly on the map as part of the vanguard in musical experiment.”¹⁸⁷ Rather, it was to provide a forum on which the

¹⁸⁴ Boulez to Nabokov, undated but probably August/September 1953, CCF, as cited and translated by Ian Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 124. To Cage, Boulez wrote that he had refused Nabokov’s invitation by writing him a letter in which he put “[this] corrupt valet” [i.e., Nabokov] in his place. Boulez to Cage, undated but probably September 1953, in *Pierre Boulez–John Cage: Correspondance et Documents*, ed. Jean-Jacques Nattiez, revised ed. Robert Pienkowski (Mainz: Schott, 2002), 237.

¹⁸⁵ Desmond Shawe-Taylor, “A Summons from Rome,” *The New Statesman and Nation*, March 13, 1954. It should be added that Shawe-Taylor was appreciative of the “generosity and broad-minded approach” that was evident from the musical component of the Convention.

¹⁸⁶ Nabokov returned Boulez’s letter (but kept a copy), accompanying it with a curt note to the effect that he believed it “demonstrates a sectarian spirit, pretentious and out of date, characteristics one would hope not to have found in a man of your generation.” Nabokov to Boulez, September 14, 1953, as cited and translated by Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 124. In the aftermath of the Convention, De Rougemont wrote an article criticizing the hostility towards tradition of “many young theorists” (Boulez and—rather incorrectly—Cage are mentioned by name): “One senses that they are a good deal more animated by the resistance they foresee than by joy in their discoveries. They make these discoveries *against* their opponents, whom they are quick to treat as imbeciles, or even suspect of bad faith. That is because they place and see themselves in History. Their principal concern seems to be to integrate themselves into a historical evolution which they declare to be ‘necessary’ by no one knows what Hegelian logic.” De Rougemont, “There Is No ‘Modern Music,’” *Encounter* 3/2 (August 1954): 51.

¹⁸⁷ Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 221. Two pages further Saunders even goes as far as speculating that “[f]or Nabokov, there was a clear political message to be imparted by promoting music which announced itself as doing away with natural hierarchies, as a liberation from previous laws about music’s inner logic.” Nabokov would surely have smiled upon reading such Adornesque logic.

contemporary currents and problems in the field of music could be discussed at an international level, with a wider aim to change a kind of mentality (invariably described by words as “provincial,” “parochial,” “sectarian,” “chauvinist,” etc.) that, from the CCF’s perspective, was detrimental to the project of cementing an international “front” of intellectuals united by common purpose and confidence in the values of parliamentary democracy, free enterprise, and independent thought.

Reading through the various reports written after its closure, many attendants seemed to have thought the Convention achieved its aims, particularly with respect to the debate on the merits of the twelve-tone method which at the time set the tone in all quarters of the Western world.¹⁸⁸ “In the old days,” the British music critic William Glock recalled, “every ISCM festival was a meeting of the clans, an exciting and necessary clash of principles and techniques.” But now that such partisanship had outlived its usefulness, “it was invigorating to find [at the Rome Convention] so many critics and composers adopting a liberal attitude towards the various schools of thought in contemporary music.” One could meet “twelve-tone composers who maintain that Hindemith is partly right” alongside “Hindemithians who do not think twelve-tone music a disease.” Allen Hughes, although critical of the award procedure, concurred with Glock that the concerts “demonstrated rather conclusively that the sharp lines of demarcation between the tonal and atonal camps are definitely

Carroll (*Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe*, 166–7) follows Saunders in drawing a parallel between the CIA’s championing of the musical avant-garde via the Rome Convention and the Abstract Expressionism campaign of a few years earlier (when the CIA funds were piggy-backed through the Rockefeller Foundation, which was now also sponsoring the Rome Convention). This comparison does not hold: the Rome Convention was not designed to promote one particular style, and its programs and attendance represented many who would not define themselves as “avant-garde” in the sense as, for instance, Boulez did. Instead, its focus was on contemporary composition at large, and as by this time dodecaphony had grown into a significant trend, twelve-tone composition naturally occupied a substantial part (about one third) in the program and proceedings. As such, I fully concur with Wellens that there is not a single piece of evidence that the CIA was invested in promoting “cutting edge” modernism. Wellens, *Music on the Frontline*, 122. The State Department, on the other (overt) side, was developing at the time a program for promoting the American musical avant-garde (Cage, Cunningham, Carter, etc.). See Danielle Fosler-Lussier, “American Cultural Diplomacy and the Mediation of Avant-Garde Music,” in *Sound Commitments: Avant-garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 223–53.

¹⁸⁸ An evaluation report of the Convention lists 320 press items from 15 countries, of which 187 from Italy (136 from Rome), 40 from Germany, 25 from France, and 28 from the United States. The report gives quotes from a wide cross-section of reviews—both favorable and unfavorable—but the original clippings do not seem to have ended up in the archives. Needless to say, even if one would concentrate on the 190 of the 320 items that are full page columns, it is impractical to trace them all. As a consequence, I mainly focused on post-Conference reviews, as they are most likely to include in-depth discussions, and after having read them, I think that a rate of 90% for “neutral and favorable” reviews (the percentage given in the report) is reasonable. “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 39, CCF, III-6-10.

disappearing.” Jacques de Menasce likewise thought it “gratifying” that so many of the younger dodecaphonists did not lose themselves in “clamor for *Zukunftsmusik*,” and seriously tried to take the listener along with them on the path of innovation.¹⁸⁹

Indeed, both the music programs and the contest pieces showed a variety of serialist applications, from the strict, ‘atonal’ treatment in the works of Schoenberg, Webern and Nono to the quasi-improvisational, ‘tonal’ (or tone-centric) treatment in the works of Dallapiccola, Nielsen, Harrison, and—awaited with much anticipation—Stravinsky’s *Septet*, with which the old antipode of the Second Viennese School introduced his idiosyncratic adaptation of its legacy, Webern’s in particular. To be sure, there was no lack of skepticism about this latter trend: in some works, including Stravinsky’s *Septet*, the serial procedure was handled so freely or tentatively that one could discern the same operations as easily anywhere in the score of *Il Trovatore*, *The Musical Quarterly* critic, Fedele d’Amico, remarked sarcastically. His *Musical Times* colleague, Reginald Smith Brindle, spoke of “crimes committed in the name of dodecaphony.”¹⁹⁰ If this was the judgment of a professional, the judgment of the Roman audience for Hans Werner Henze’s *Boulevard Solitude* was merciless in showing its disapproval of the composer’s treatment of a subject (Manon Lescaut) which it was so familiar with: name-calling, hoots, hissing, whistling, mock applause, deliberate coughing, and laughter of ridicule dominated the hall after the first two and half scenes.¹⁹¹ It is telling that the compositions that, judging from the reviews, stood out most from the program—in a positive sense—were devoid of the serialist trend: Elliott Carter’s *First String Quartet*, the composition which had arguably established the American composer’s name and his signature technique of metric modulation in the international music

¹⁸⁹ Glock, “Music Festival in Rome,” *Encounter*, 2/6 (June 1954), 60, 62; Hughes, “Rome Conference Selects Prize Scores,” *Musical America* (1954): 20; De Menasce, “Thoughts after a Festival,” *The Juilliard Review* 1/3 (1954): 40–1. Steinberg left Rome with another impression, however, reporting that there had been “a general tendency to indulge in devitalizing discussion on the subject ‘twelve-tone or not’, which was the more saddening because the concerts showed daily that good music comes from good composers, and not from the use or eschewal of this or that system or technique.” “Conference of Musicians in Rome,” *New York Times*, May 2, 1954, X7.

¹⁹⁰ D’Amico, “Current Chronicle,” 593–4; Smith Brindle, “Notes from Abroad,” 328.

¹⁹¹ Almost all the surveys of the Convention mention the incident, and although not appreciative of the audience’s noise concert, all agree that the opera was weak in conception and execution. One critic, Michael Steinberg, contended that the protesters had been paid by enemies of the Rome Opera management’s exploration of modernist opera. “Music Festival in Rome,” 63; Hughes, “Rome Conference Selects Prize Scores,” 21; Steinberg, “Rome Music Fete Upset By Turmoil,” *New York Times*, April 9, 1954, 19; Steinberg, “Henzes *Boulevard Solitude* in Rom,” *Melos* 21/5 (May 1954): 152–3. The operas, incidentally, were the only elements of the musical program open to the general public; the concerts were for Conference participants and music professionals only.

world, and Carlos Chávez's Fifth Symphony, the "sheer vitality and full-blooded power" of which made other works seem anemic by comparison.¹⁹²

As to the composition contest, most critics appreciated the effort but were disappointed with the results—no one seemed to have heard a "master piece." Some deplored the awarding procedure and the decision to split two of the three prizes, which to Hughes's opinion was "a transparent but clumsy attempt to protect the pride of as many nationalities and individuals as possible."¹⁹³ If most were forgiving of the flaws in the procedure (including the selection of the contestants and the jury, all of whom had been elected from a slate prepared by the Conference's Executive Committee), those who did not believe in the good faith of the organizers openly searched for "hidden motives" behind the whole operation. Thus, unsurprisingly, the Italian Communist and neutralist presses drew their readers' attention to the "formalist" convictions of its initiators, and boomeranged their claim of going beyond provincialism right back, arguing that the Convention, since it was co-organized by the CCF, was itself an example of provincialism. What the Conference organizers were defending when they talked about "contemporary music," Mario Zafred, the music critic of *L'Unità* (the daily newspaper of the Italian Communist Party), explained, were some "wandering children of our century who specialize in shedding warm tears on the difficult fate of the musicians of 'certain countries', i.e., the USSR and other people's democracies." Nothing in the Convention justified the "above-politics" attitude which its organizers flaunted—it had to be seen as a partisan assembly of all sorts.¹⁹⁴

The Rightist *Giornale d'Italia*, too, was suspicious of the true intentions of this "foreign" conference. Adriano Lualdi, a composer and conductor who never hid his admiration for Mussolini, asked Nabokov in an open letter to explain what Italian or international group had commissioned and financed the Convention and to assure the reader that the criteria on which the Convention's committees, programs, delegates, and contestants had been selected were not "of a partisan, sectarian spirit and of a limited scope, [chosen] to favor and shamefully advertise an Art which is anti-social, atheistic, disintegrating, and negative in its relation to human and social values." Nabokov replied by referring to the publications which explained the Convention's objectives and procedures, and played dumb as to the second part of the letter ("I cannot answer this question because I do not know what kind of Art you are describing. I know only that terms like that were in vogue during the recent past, under regimes which were not

¹⁹² Smith Brindle, "Notes from Abroad," 329; De Menasce, "Thoughts after a Festival," 42.

¹⁹³ Hughes, "Rome Conference Selects Prize Scores," 3.

¹⁹⁴ Zafred, "The Sacrifices of the Twentieth Century," *L'Unità*, April 20, 1954, cited in "International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954]," 51.

democratic in any way, regimes during which persons having little theory or practice succeed in gaining control over all cultural things”). Nabokov’s cool reply detonated Lualdi’s pent-up anger, which he unleashed in words exuding the residues of *fascismo* in postwar Italy. To cite but one element from his reply: given that so much of Nabokov’s “little ‘family’ Conference” had taken place at the Italian taxpayer’s expense, it was a shame that the music presented was so “entirely foreign to...our taste and sensibilities and our Italian and Latin spirit,” and that the official language used throughout the Convention had been most of the time “Ostrogoth, *not* Italian.”¹⁹⁵

The conference part, consisting of six panel discussions on the aesthetics, poetics and politics of contemporary music, as well as its relation to amateur and professional audiences (see Appendix B2), seemed to have confirmed the misgivings of Boulez and *The New Statesman and Nation* critic. “Bad organization, muddled thinking, and lack of preparation were only too evident,” Smith Brindle wrote. The simultaneous translations were inadequate, with regular scenes of Babylonian confusion as a result. As Hughes reported, there had been “some articulate expressions of time-honored principles and theories, expositions of a few bizarre theories, and occasional sprinklings of wit, but none of these concealed the fact that musicians tend to be less impressive on the speaker’s rostrum than in their natural habitats.”¹⁹⁶ The organizers recognized the technical defects, but defended themselves against those who criticized the symposia for lack of direction, objectives and concrete results, stating that it had never been the intention to come to a majority agreement on any point of view or action, and that deliberately no formal resolutions were drawn up and placed before the group for adoption or rejection. Instead, the debates were meant to stimulate dialogue among professionals—who otherwise rarely, if ever, met—on shared problems.

Unsurprisingly, the pivotal issue around which all six debates revolved was the same which had concerned the participants to the 1948 Prague Congress: the ever-widening rift between the producers and consumers of contemporary music and opera. Of course, this problem was not unique to the musical discipline or present times, the French critic-composer Roland-Manuel remarked in his opening paper, but the twentieth century had seen a diversification and acceleration of innovation in terms of musical language

¹⁹⁵ *Mondo Operaio* [Rome], March 20, 1954; *Paese* [Rome], April 16, 1954; Adriano Lualdi, “Open Letter to Mr. Nicolas Nabokov,” *Giornale d’Italia*, April 9, 1954; “Mr. Nabokov’s Reply to Mr. Lualdi’s Open Letter” as well as Lualdi’s reply, *Giornale d’Italia*, April 20, 1954; all cited in “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 48–51. The original *Giornale d’Italia* correspondence is located in CCF, III-3-2.

¹⁹⁶ Smith Brindle, “Notes from Abroad,” 328; Hughes, “Rome Conference Selects Prize Scores,” 20. Other reviews qualified the discussions as “academic,” “diffuse,” and “a little tame.” “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 46–7.

that was certainly to be classified as unprecedented, and it was clear that most members of the equally rapidly expanding listenership were not able or willing to catch up with this trend. How was society to respond? Should it facilitate “laboratories”—or, for that matter, “ivory towers”—for musical experimentation, expecting that the results will one day serve the common good like experiments in the field of technology and medical sciences do? How were composers to relate themselves to tradition? Should they keep acting on the modernist demand for progress, even if that alienated them ever more from the public? Should they simply face their “tragic duty” of having to refuse to society what it asks of them, precisely so as not to “betray his duty towards this same society”? Or should they try to find a common denominator in order to reach a larger group which would not need technical knowledge to find pleasure in listening to contemporary music (of course, without sacrificing their artistic ideals or “selling out” to commerce)? Or should the young listeners of today simply be trusted for their ability to appreciate the bold and new of yesterday? (A reference was made here to “children today who can be heard to whistle a passage from *Le Sacre du printemps* without any consciousness of its technique or style.”) What is the role of performers in a society “where the organization of its music shows a tendency toward standardization, counter-balanced by the fetish of ‘adoration of stars’?” Should they make themselves fully subservient to composers, presenting their works in the way “they were intended”? Or should they offer new interpretations of the standard repertory? Should they perform more music by their contemporaries, even though that involved a risk in terms of their success? And what role could music critics play in tackling the “comprehensibility” problem of modernist music? Should they pose as educators of music appreciation or as mediators between composer and the audience?¹⁹⁷

The most “sanguineous” discussion took place at the “Music and Politics” panel. “Today is a day of ideologies,” the British expert of French music Rollo Myers observed, “a time when people who hold strong views about how to live, think, and serve the State want to apply these views to every branch of human thought and activities, including the arts.” As far as Myers was concerned, artists do not have a higher obligation to society but their own ideals. This does not mean that they should be indifferent to the problems of their society, but they should be left free to decide how best they can contribute towards the solution of these problems. As was to be expected, Myers’s argument was taken as an attack by one of the panel

¹⁹⁷ Erwin Stein, “Music Conference at Rome,” *The New Statesman and Nation* (May 1, 1954): 562. Abstracts of the papers and minutes of the ensuing discussions are included in the aforementioned evaluation report, “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 7-19. Copies of the papers presented can be found in the Virgil Thomson Papers, 29-54-6.

members, the aforementioned music critic of *L'Unità*, Mario Zafred. Unsurprisingly, Zafred did not see any harm, aesthetic or otherwise, in mingling patriotism with music (or with any other art). If the cause of music was to be served, it must be served by tolerance and understanding, and that was what in his eyes was seriously lacking at the Convention which excluded composers from Communist countries and where all were not free to say what they believed. Those from so-called “free” countries, he added, should not think that their arts were truly free from politics; they, too, were subject to ‘guidance’, albeit it of a kind that served a reactionary rather than a progressive cause. (Zafred referred specifically to the dismissals of artists with Communist associations in the United States. Without knowing it, he had a point: Leonard Bernstein intended to come to Rome, but his passport was denied him for being under scrutiny of “subversive,” i.e., Communist, allegiances.¹⁹⁸) At this moment Nabokov, who chaired the session, intervened, reminding Zafred that invitations had been sent out to Communist countries, and that the Executive Committee regretted that these invitations had not been accepted. He also recalled that Soviet Russia had not communicated musically with the rest of the world for a long time, whereas the United States and Western Europe had continued to play music from the Soviet states. (What he did not mention is that the works played did not conform to Stalinist poetics.) Being alone in defending the Communist view of things, Zafred obviously could not hold his own against the consensus among the conferees that—as Nabokov concluded at the end of the session—“there can be no toleration of any authority over art on the part of the State.”¹⁹⁹

As such, the Rome Convention was the Prague Congress in reverse: both assemblies recognized similar tendencies—expanding audiences due to technological developments and the concomitant rise of power of the “culture industry” as well as the increasing isolation of contemporary concert music—but both reached a different consensus on the questions if or how the state should interfere; if or how the composer, performer, and critic had a responsibility to bear; and if or how the “masses” were to be elevated to the level of the works produced by the cultural elite or vice versa. Also, both diverged in their view about the purpose and results of their professional conclaves: the Prague Congress aimed to forge a (preconceived) consensus and to draw up a (preconceived) program, whereas the Rome Convention aimed to take stock of shared problems in the contemporary

¹⁹⁸ Barry Seldes, *Leonard Bernstein: The Political Life of an American Musician* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2009), 75–6.

¹⁹⁹ Nabokov, Report “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 13–5. For another eye-witness account of this episode, see Karl Heinz Ruppel, “Musik im 20. Jahrhundert: Bericht über den internationalen Kongreß in Rom,” *Melos* 21/5 (May 1954): 149–50.

music scene of the trans-Atlantic Alliance without proposing a remedy more concrete than that cooperation should be sought and artists be enabled to “serve” their society in a way that corresponds to their conscience and respects their “inner freedom.” But the most conspicuous similarity between the two assemblies was that both represented a discourse that was by the very outlook of their organizers and sponsors a slanted discourse. Nothing could have prevented Nabokov to conclude from the Convention proceedings that “the problems and difficulties which face the musicians of our time are the same everywhere,” and that therefore, the solutions, which must be “universal in their comprehension by people everywhere throughout the field of music,” could be found only on an international plane. Likewise, it was written in the stars that Nabokov would assure all those attending the closing ceremony of the Convention that the Congress for Cultural Freedom would continue to assist artists in fulfilling their creative calling against the constraints that their politico-economical environment might impose upon them.²⁰⁰

And this is what Nabokov did, unaffected as he remained by the discouraging moments in his enterprises.²⁰¹ At the request of the European Center of Culture he would set up, with a view of “propagating the European cultural idea,” annual touring expositions of works by young European painters, a stipend program for young European composers, an “inter-European” competition of young musicians, and a concert series drawn up from a European, transnational perspective.²⁰² “Freedom-loving” souls from across the Iron Curtain could also count on his attention. Soon after the Rome Festival, when Andrzej Panufnik looked for an escape from

²⁰⁰ Cited from Nabokov’s closing speech, April 15, 1954, paraphrased in “International Conference of Contemporary Music [Rome 1954],” 32–4. Incidentally, the exact formulation betrays Nabokov’s Christian, Maritain-inspired outlook: “Musical creation is an infinitely secret process which unfolds through an inner conviction to say the truth such as the conscience conceives it. For this state of being, the life of the creator must be in harmonious relationship with the life of the society which maintains him, helps him, and needs him. It is above all necessary for him to have absolute inner liberty—a freedom governed only by his sense of responsibility toward what he is doing and by his own conscience before God.”

²⁰¹ Nabokov remained unaffected by negative criticism if it came from the press, but was hurt when it came from a friend such as Thomson, who apparently, at an unguarded moment, had slipped some criticism of the Roman Convention in the presence of Nabokov. “I don’t want to hide from you as an old friend the fact that I was hurt by your argumentation during the last supper we had together in Rome. First of all, quite objectively, I don’t believe you were just to what has been done here; secondly, your attitude that evening was so entirely negative to the Festival that it made me feel as if all this work I have been carrying on has been absolutely useless. If I had the opportunity of seeing you soon I would confront you with the series of facts and figures to prove to you that: a) a larger percentage than you think of works was well performed, b) that a larger percentage of works than you seem to remember was worthy of international interest and attention, c) that the ‘extreme left’ was *not omitted* although perhaps insufficiently represented.” Nabokov to Thomson, April 30, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-69-17.

²⁰² Nabokov to De Rougemont, untitled memorandum, October 3, 1955, CCF, II-244-8.

the Polish regime, Nabokov helped him with the paperwork and arranged for him a yearly fellowship of \$2,000 “in order to assist you in continuing your work as a creative artist.”²⁰³ Two years later, in the wake of the Hungarian uprising, he would assemble an orchestra of Hungarian refugees (the Philharmonia Hungarica), which, in spite of the logistical and financial nightmare it was, was perhaps the only CCF activity that drew praise from those who otherwise mistrusted the CCF’s “cultural” approach. But for now, in the brief window between Stalin’s death and the collapse of the hopes inspired by Khrushchev’s “de-Stalinization” speech, the CCF adjusted its geographical focus. After all, by this time Western Europe could be considered sufficiently immunized from the perceived threat from the East, and the locus of the Cold War had shifted to what recently had been dubbed the “Third World.” Josselson had been talking about the need of the CCF to intensify its efforts in the direction of Latin America and Asia since August 1953 already. Nabokov agreed and told Josselson at the time that “I would readily go to Asia but for God’s sake not this year.”²⁰⁴ With the Roman affair behind him, nothing impeded him any longer from taking the temperature on the other side of the Eurasian continent.

²⁰³ There were no strings attached to this fellowship, although he hoped that “in the future, you will remain [the CCF’s] friend [and] give us your advice and assistance to the overall work of the Congress in its fight for the defense and the propagation of cultural freedom.” Panufnik was very grateful to the CCF for “enabl[ing] me to start composing again after the last fifty difficult years,” and promised to be always at its disposal. Nabokov to Grace W. Pierce, Houghton Mifflin Company, August 4, 1954; Nabokov to Panufnik, October 14, 1954; Panufnik to Nabokov, October 17, 1954, CCF, II-244-2+3. One of the first services Panufnik performed is to furnish *Encounter* with a sobering analysis of musical life under a Communist regime—“a nightmare approaching Orwell’s *1984*.” Panufnik, “Composers and Commissars,” *Encounter* 4/3 (March 1955): 3–8. He remained silent about his connection to the CCF in his autobiography, *Composing Myself* (London: Methuen, 1987). Another musical recipient of a monthly CCF stipendium was Yehudi Menuhin’s Romanian teacher, George Enescu, who since World War II lived in exile in Paris. Nabokov also tried to meet the request from Boris Blacher for supplementary subsidies to enable the Berlin Hochschule für Musik to grant more stipends to students from the Eastern Sector of Berlin and the Eastern Zone of Germany, but I could not establish whether he succeeded. Blacher to Nabokov, April 24, 1953; Nabokov to Josselson, June 13, 1953, Thomson Papers, 29-25-28 and 29-69-16.

²⁰⁴ Josselson to Nabokov, August 18, 1953; Nabokov to Josselson, undated, CCF, II-243-9.

Confronting the East with the West

Nabokov's "East-West Music Encounters" (1954–61)

There are hundreds of unofficial and official international conferences yearly—in Asia and elsewhere—in which influential Asians, Americans and others participate....A great many of these have information impact, and all provide opportunities for influence. In many cases Americans and Asians meet formally and informally with colleagues in fields of mutual interest in a climate productive of good relations.¹

The President's Committee on Information Activities Abroad (1960)

The suggestions I made the other day were towards a wider bringing together of the musicians of the world, musicians representing as many of the high musical civilizations as possible. I think of instrumentalists, instrument-makers, singers...I think in musicology how much we would gain from agreement about notation. All this, I think, must be to the good. There is, I think too, a testing possible as to which are the eligible musical civilizations.²

Lou Harrison (1954)

I take this occasion to warn India to stay away from the fate to which the people of Russia have been subjected and are still being subjected. I am sorry to speak here in this way after other people have spoken here in another way. I speak out of my conscience. I cannot speak otherwise.³

Nicolas Nabokov (1955)

Certainly any plan that serves as a basis for bringing closer harmony between the peoples of the East and West, especially where the magic of music is the bond, is worthy of the support of our best citizens.⁴

Ira Hirschmann (1957)

New York City, Belmont Plaza Hotel, April 24, 1957, early in the morning. Nicolas Nabokov must have had better mornings to wake up to, and that was not only due to the aftermath of the slightly inebriated state

¹ The President's Committee on Information Activities Abroad (PCIAA), report "Asia," July 11, 1960, 17, PCIAA Records (DDEL), 23, "PCIAA No. 30."

² Lou Harrison to Nicolas Nabokov, June 8, 1954, CCF, II-248-9.

³ Nabokov, "Our Dedication," inaugural speech delivered at the Third Annual General Meeting of the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom in Bombay, December 17–18, 1955, in *Freedom First* [ICCF] (February 1956): 4–5.

⁴ Ira Hirschmann to Julius Fleischmann, April 25, 1957, CCF, III-37-6.

in which he reached his bed the previous night after having attended a “huge party” by “Junkie” [Julius Fleischmann], heir to Fleischmann’s Yeast and one of the CCF’s wealthiest patrons. Down below in the hotel lobby, a colorful bunch of important-looking people convened on his behalf for a weeklong pilot meeting. They were waiting to be checked in, only to be confronted with what is the nightmare of every conference organizer, i.e., booking errors, which left three of them in limbo as to whether they would have a place to spend the night. Thanks to an intercession by Fleischmann, the CCF’s wealthy patron, Nabokov managed to put his bedless guests up in the Blackstone Hotel suites at a discount rate. Relieved the crisis had been subdued, he cabled his colleagues at the Paris CCF secretariat, Michael Josselson and Pierre Bolomey, to transfer at once a sum of \$1,000 through the Farfield Foundation to cover the unforeseen expenditures. One can imagine his annoyance later that day upon finding a cable from Paris telling him that the budget for the meeting had already been exceeded, and that therefore he could only have \$500. He had gone through quite some trouble and pains to get these people around the same table, and the last thing he needed was his CCF colleagues being difficult over a few extra dollars to solve an emergency. What other alternative could he have arranged at such a short notice in New York during Easter week? “I am not inventing expenses of being lavish,” he wrote Josselson in a peevish manner. On the contrary, *his* only luxury was to have himself accommodation at \$25/night “in this g.d. horrible hotel where nothing functions” that according to his standards did not deserve to be called a “suite” at all, and which during the day had to serve as office for the secretaries of the meeting’s delegates. The chaos created by Murphy’s Law reactivated his cardiac arrhythmia and left him quite exhausted. What kept him going was the thought that the meeting, despite all adversities, was going “*very* well.”⁵

The subject of the pilot meeting was Nabokov’s newest plan for the music world. Now that he had grown experienced in organizing international assemblies, he endeavored to raise his festival-conference format to a global level, involving East/South/Southeast Asia in particular. By 1954, as the CCF—and, for that matter, the CIA—considered Western Europe to be sufficiently immunized from the perceived threat from the East, its attention shifted to what had become known as the “Third World.” It was there, in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where Nikita Khrushchey, Stalin’s successor to the pinnacle of Soviet power, had begun to capitalize on

⁵ Nabokov to Josselson, April 24, 1957, CCF, II-245-4; Nabokov to Josselson (cable), April 24, 1957, CCF, III-14-7; Nabokov to Bolomey, April 24, 1957, CCF, III-14-6; Josselson to Nabokov (cable), April 25, 1957, CCF, III-14-6; Bolomey to Nabokov, April 25, 1957, CCF, III-14-7; Nabokov to Josselson, April 25, 1957, CCF, II-245-4; Bolomey to Nabokov, April 27, 1957, CCF, III-14-6. A series of balance sheets pertaining to this pilot meeting, attesting to Nabokov’s bookkeeping troubles, is preserved in the CCF Records, III-14-9.

the political turmoil and the vacuums of power that emerged from the ongoing wave of decolonization. Consequently, it was there where the West was to launch its next cultural counteroffensive.⁶

The first concern of the CCF headquarters in Paris was India, where local efforts to establish a presence of the CCF stagnated while the need to dissuade Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru from his non-alignment course was urgent. The first section of this chapter follows Nabokov's endeavors at securing Nehru's recognition of CCF aims and activities in India and the Southeast Asian region, an ambition that proved to be quite a challenge as the Prime Minister issued contradictory signals with respect to his stance towards the CCF. One of the activities for which Nabokov tried to secure Indian participation was a large-scale music festival and conference, orchestrated after the Paris and Rome example, which was to convene musicians, composers, and musicologists from the United States, Western Europe, and various parts of the Asian continent in Tokyo, a "free world" city close to the non-aligned countries that needed to be contained from Soviet and Chinese encroachments. Advancing a dialogue between "East" and "West" might have been the stated intention behind the East-West Music Encounter (EWME), but, as the second and third section of this chapter will show, the path towards its realization attested to anything but an exercise in mutual understanding. The number of failures and delays due to a range of cultural miscommunications and institutional changes added up to about six years to the gestation period of the whole project, including two postponements. Worse, preparations of the Encounter became entangled in the political unrest that stirred Japan, and Tokyo in particular, at the time when the ratification of the revised US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty (May 20, 1960) was impending. In fact, the Encounter found itself to be the sitting duck for vigorous anti-American protests from a wide coalition of Tokyo's leftist music organizations which harped on the CCF's American provenance. The last section of this chapter reinterprets the seemingly apolitical rationale behind the EWME—the protection of music traditions against "bad" forms of "hybridization"—as a political strategy to offset the Western against the Soviet treatment of artistic traditions.

⁶ On the Soviet Third World policy under Khrushchev, see, for instance, Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 66–72; Roger E. Kanet, "The Soviet Union and the Third World from Khrushchev to Gorbachev: The Place of the Third World in Evolving Soviet Global Strategy," in *The Soviet Union, Eastern Europe and the Third World*, ed. Roger E. Kanet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 3–22; and Alvan Z. Rubinstein, *Moscow's Third World Strategy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 19–38.

The Encounter That Did Not Take Place: Tightroping in India

The CCF already had a base in East/South/Southeast Asia since the first months of its foundation, when Indian and Japanese intellectuals congenial to its objectives spontaneously offered to extend its program to the Indian subcontinent and the Japanese archipelago.⁷ Burnham, in particular, had been highly thrilled with the prospect of venturing into Asia and urged his OPC/CIA clients and the CCF to support the Indian and Japanese initiatives by all means.⁸ Not surprisingly, however, the priority went to India, which for its size and strategic location was of the utmost importance to both American and Soviet interests. Ever since her independence in August 1947, both superpowers wooed the Land of the Tiger for her favor, but never knew for sure to which side she was inclined. Resolved not to be pulled into a potential World War III by subordinating his foreign policy to the interests of an extraneous power, Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru famously hewed an independent (“non-alignment”) course for his country, a course that, from the vantage point of Moscow, proved how much India was still shackled by her former colonizers, and, from the vantage point of Washington, how much it had been affected by the same ailment from which so many non-Communist Europeans seemed to suffer: “neutralism.”⁹

⁷ Pakistan and Ceylon followed suit; efforts at establishing offices in Burma (Myanmar), Thailand, Hong Kong and South Korea fell through, but the CCF could count on the support of some authoritative individuals there. In Burma, the CCF enjoyed the support of Justice Chan Htoon, drafter of the constitution of Burma which was in effect from independence (1948) till the 1962 military coup d'état; in Thailand of the highly popular aristocrat, politician, and founder of the influential Thai newspaper *Siam Rath*, Prince Kukrit Pramoj; and in Hong Kong of the President of the Asia Press, Chang Kuo-sin. As for South Korea, an affiliated organization, the Korea Society (*Chun Chu Ho*), materialized in April 1961.

⁸ Late 1950, the editors of the Indian anticommunist *Thought* magazine (S. H. Vatsyayan and Ram Singh) issued a call for an Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom, which eventually would meet in Bombay, March 28–31, 1951. Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.302, “*Thought*,” December 26, 1950, Burnham Papers, 11-3. The Japanese initiative came from Asahi Okura, union leader and co-founder of the Japanese Socialist Labor Party, who felt it his duty to mobilize Japanese intellectuals against “Soviet totalitarianism,” i.e., “the purest form of totalitarianism, purer and more perfect than Hitler’s Nazism, Mussolini’s Fascism, Falangism and Peronism.” Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.332, “Anti-Communist Initiative in Japan,” January 24, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-4.

⁹ For the Kremlin’s perception of the Indian independence and its aftermath, see Gene D. Overstreet and Marshall Windmiller, *Communism in India* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1959), 281–4. As to Washington’s perception, a briefing paper prepared by the State Department’s Bureau of Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs for a meeting with the Foreign Ministers of the United States, the United Kingdom and France, September 10–14, 1951, is exemplary. Titled “Means to Combat India’s Policy of Neutralism,” the paper stated the US objective as to “convince India that neutralism is a danger to India’s existence as an independent country, and hinders progress toward a free world order based on law and the peaceful settlement of international disputes; and that collective security and closer association with the non-Soviet countries, far from increasing the possibility of India’s becoming involved in war, are the best assurances that it will not.” *Foreign Relations of the United States (FRUS)*, 1951, vol. 6, part 2, 2172–4.

Only the more perceptive among the West-oriented observers saw that there was no need to fear that Nehru, as aghast as any non-Communist Indian at the Communists' fierce contempt for religion and the legacy of Mahatma Gandhi, would tilt toward the Soviet side, and that what Washington analysts understood as India's unwillingness to choose for the "free world" should not be confused with neutrality or non-alignment as a state policy aimed at staying out of a politico-military conflict. During his October 1949 tour of Canada and the United States, the prime minister clearly condemned the repression of individual freedom under what he called "the Soviet system" (which he construed as the extreme outcome of the "white nations' tendency to centralize") while conceding that "a world government must come sometime or other."¹⁰ He also came close to giving the correct answer when Nabokov was present at a private reception for the prime minister at Dorothy Norman's place, and asked him whether or not Stalin's word could be trusted—"Normally not."¹¹ But what he, and many Indian intellectuals with him, did not tolerate and even considered to be "a dangerous error," was the lack of understanding in the West of the importance of India, and Asia in general, in facing the true predicament of the time. More specifically, he resented the failure of Western governments to see that this predicament was not constituted by a clash between capitalism and communism and therefore was not to be dispelled by setting up military bulwarks against the Soviet Union, but by the glaring gap between prosperity and poverty that occasioned a revolutionary climate which in turn invited Soviet intervention.¹²

Indeed, "what does cultural freedom mean to men without bread?," several conferees, including prime spokesman of the Indian Socialist Party, Jayaprakash Narayan, asked their Western colleagues at the inaugural meeting of the Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom (March 28–31, 1951). India was suffering from acute food shortage due to drought, but the only offers for rice and wheat came from Moscow and Beijing. Why did not the "free world" do more to obviate the main reason why so many people in the world felt attracted to Communism, i.e., an empty stomach?¹³ The American CCF delegation acknowledged the question by sending an urgent appeal to

¹⁰ Nehru cited in "Text of Nehru's Forum Message" and "Nehru Says Soviets Sacrifice Freedom," *New York Herald Tribune* [US edition], October 27, 1949, 21.

¹¹ Nabokov and Nehru cited by Louis Fischer to Edgar Snow, October 26, 1949, Fischer Papers, 8–31.

¹² "Nehru Relates Peace to Free and Richer Asia," *New York Herald Tribune* [USA edition], October 25, 1949, 3.

¹³ See the proceedings of this conference, published under the title *Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom, March 28 to 31, 1951* (Bombay: Kanada Press, 1951), 26–9, 36–9, 52–3. Among the Western participants were W. H. Auden, James Burnham, Salvador de Madariaga, Julius Margolin, Hermann J. Muller, Denis de Rougemont, Stephen Spender, Norman Thomas, and Max Yergan.

the US Congress to effectuate a prompt and positive outcome of its protracted debate about wheat loans to India, lest an important chance were lost to “change the moral climate here.”¹⁴ But acknowledging the question was not the same as accepting the premise on which it was based. As far as Burnham was concerned, it was deceptive to conceive communism as a product of poverty rather than as a “highly sophisticated doctrine imposed from outside.” After all, the countries with the largest Communist constituencies (like Czechoslovakia, France, Italy, Argentina, etc.) were relatively rich. Leaving statistics aside, Burnham argued, the most dangerous aspect of the communism-grows-out-of-poverty thesis was its implication of cultural freedom being the privilege of those with a full stomach. Yet freedom of thought, Burnham insisted, should never be seen as a luxury, since “totalitarian tyranny” deprives those who may not enjoy it now from the *possibility* of enjoying it in the future. Therefore, “[n]o attitude of neutrality is for any length of time possible; we must either surrender to Bolshevism or defeat it.”¹⁵

Nehru’s non-alignment policy might not have been identical to the type of reasoning the CCF so strongly opposed, the Congress organizers argued, but the line separating neutrality from neutralism was at times barely noticeable in his actions and public statements. In the wake of its founding in 1950, the prime minister had informed the CCF by mouth of his ambassador to France, Hardit Singh Malik, that the Government of India considered a national CCF committee “very desirable,” and that it “would do its utmost in order to stimulate it.”¹⁶ Yet, merely days before the inaugural meeting of the Indian CCF, the prime minister’s secretariat advised to shift the venue from New Delhi to Bombay (Mumbai), the reason being cited that allowing the Congress to take place in Delhi would not be consistent with an earlier decision that denied permission for a pro-Communist All India Peace Conference in the capital in the same month.¹⁷

¹⁴ “Wheat For India Urged By Thomas,” *New York Times*, May 12, 1951, 2; Hook, communiqué on behalf of the ACCF about this appeal, April 3, 1951, ACCF, 12-8. For more on the legislation process that ultimately led to the adoption of the Emergency Indian Wheat Bill on June 15, 1951, see Dennis Merrill, *Bread and the Ballot: The United States and India’s Economic Development, 1947–1963* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 47–74.

¹⁵ Quoted from Burnham’s address to the ICCF, proceedings *Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom*, 85–92. It seems that Burnham rewrote his prepared speech in order to respond to Narayan’s question. His original remarks focused on Bolshevism’s “intrinsic intolerance” for alternative points of view. Burnham Papers, 2-19.

¹⁶ Memorandum “International Contacts,” undated and unattributed, but probably by the hand of CCF consultant Louis Gibarti, who was well connected to Nehru since the late 1920s, when both were active in the League against Imperialism, a Comintern front designed to unite and mobilize support for independence and secessionist movements around the world. Burnham Papers, 8-7.

¹⁷ “India Forces Moving of Anti-Red Parley,” *New York Times*, March 21, 1951, 2. One of the Congress organizers insisted that Nehru’s decision had been prompted by pressure from the Soviet and Chinese embassies and rumors (which were not entirely unfounded) that two of the

Needless to say, the Congress conveners thought this reason to be disingenuous, and criticized Nehru for not recognizing the fundamental differences between a Communist “peace” conference and a meeting of private intellectuals of various political persuasions. By not speaking out against the Soviet Union in unequivocal terms—Minocher R. Masani (“Minoo” Masani), a Lower House member of the Indian Parliament and one of Nehru’s most persistent antagonists, argued—the Indian government committed the “dangerous error” of creating the impression among its people that both power blocs were just two sides of the same coin, thereby furthering the case of the Communists and “putting cultural freedom in jeopardy.”¹⁸

Moreover, Nehru’s critics maintained, the idea that the spread of communism could be halted by filling empty stomachs was fallacious. With a view to prepare *coups d’état* like the one that had taken place in Czechoslovakia, the postwar focus of the Communist movement had shifted from the impoverished workers and peasants to the intelligentsia. Thus, in January 1950, the Cominform instructed the Indian Communist Party to pursue the path of their Chinese brethren and create a united front against the “Anglo-American imperialists” and their “hirelings” (i.e., the Nehru government and other “reactionary elements” in Indian society) along the same lines as their French and Italian counterparts had been urged to do in

Western delegates, Burnham and Koestler (who had been originally scheduled to participate) were advocates of nuclear warfare against Russia and China. It should be noted that the Indian government did not refuse visas to foreign CCF delegates as it did for those invited to the abortive pro-Communist gathering. “Anti-Russian Rally Barred In New Delhi,” *Bangkok Post*, March 22, 1951, Burnham Papers, 8-8. There might also have been another reason for Nehru’s fickleness with respect to the CCF. At the time of the second CCF meeting in Brussels, November 1950, the Prime Minister—on invitation of Gibarti, who had taken great pains to win Nehru’s sympathy for the CCF—had an official delegate sent by Nehru to observe the proceedings found himself excluded from the daily sessions. Technically, this was correct, for the objective of the meeting was first of all for the members of the International Committee to determine the course of the nascent CCF; only the opening and closing sessions were public. Diplomatically, this was a *faux pas*, and Gibarti was not amused, to say the least, that the Paris secretariat had handled this matter so carelessly. “Today I feel that the Indian possibilities are neglected,” he wrote Burnham, urging him to take matters in his own hand and “help me to act here for the best of the organization as well as the cause which it is serving.” Gibarti to Burnham, February 1, 1951, Burnham Papers, 6-32.

¹⁸ Proceedings *Indian Congress for Cultural Freedom*, 53–4. Four years later, at a general assembly of the CCF International Executive Committee, Masani recalled that that the Prime Minister’s “advice” had been accompanied with a threat of police action if the Congress organization should fail to move to another location. Proceedings of a meeting of the CCF International Executive Committee, January 24–25, 1955, 99, 120, ACCF, 1-5. In his address delivered at the opening session, CCF President De Rougemont, who in private qualified Nehru’s last-minute order to shift venues as a “hostile gesture,” emphatically denied that the Congress was a political manifestation. It was only being driven by a widely felt concern over the “danger threatening culture today, a danger without precedent in the whole of human history, [i.e.,] that tomorrow we may lose our freedom of thinking.” *Ibid.*, 15-16; De Rougemont, report “Congrès de Bombay,” April 11, 1951, Brown Papers, 13-8.

1947.¹⁹ In furtherance of the revolution, India was being flooded with literature, journals and films from Soviet Russia and Communist China in a quantity and quality that was barely matched by the American influx of the same.²⁰ The United States, then, was to seriously develop a foreign policy that addressed Indian concerns, whereas the Nehru government was not to let its resentment over the colonial past overshadow the sheer urgency of containing the spread of communism in a concerted effort with the West.²¹

But Nehru saw little reason to entertain warmer feelings for the Americans than the Soviets. He condemned President Truman's decision to end World War II by nuclear overkill; he never forgave the US government for having paid no more than lip service to India's call for self-determination; he could see nothing but hypocrisy in the way Washington posed as a champion of decolonization while neglecting the issue of racial segregation within US borders; he despised generalizing abstractions about the "free" vs. the "totalitarian" worlds that formed the core of American propaganda; and in February 1954, the Eisenhower administration forfeited all its credit in his eyes by signing, as part of its containment strategy, a security agreement with India's archenemy Pakistan—the cornerstone of what soon would become the South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO). But above all, he did not trust the US information outlets and organizations in his domain an inch, suspecting them—correctly—of being

¹⁹ "Mighty Advance of the National Liberation Movement in Colonial and Dependent Countries!" *For a Lasting Peace, For a People's Democracy* [Cominform], January 27, 1950, 1.

²⁰ The Bengal author Sita Ram Goel, for instance, briefed Burnham about how the 1950 Soviet film festivals in New Delhi and Calcutta had been products of the Communist Party's "machine of sabotage" designed to "paralyze this country from within as soon as Nehru and our other peace mongers sit up and think afresh." Burnham, OPC memorandum 02.313, "The Soviet Cine-Art Festival in Calcutta," January 12, 1951, Burnham Papers, 11-4. In March 1952, the Kremlin treated New Delhi to a large exhibition of Soviet paintings, and later that year, it trumped the United States in the number of entries to India's first International Film Festival in 1952. Robert Trumbull, "Propaganda and Pictures at Indian Festival," *New York Times*, February 17, 1952, 93. The claim about Soviet ubiquity in India's cultural realm was heavily disputed by the neutralist press, which held that US "propaganda agencies" outnumbered those of any other foreign power by "a hundred times," including those of the Indian government. "If, with all this, the American viewpoint *still* fails to be appreciated by the people, press and politicians of India," one editorial reasoned, "there must be something wrong with that point of view." "India Refuses To Be A Cultural Parasite," *Blitz Newsmagazine* [Bombay], April 7, 1951, 24, Burnham Papers, 8-8. The truth is that the Soviet administration had been maintaining and upscaling its public diplomacy activities in India whereas its American counterpart had been downscaling them significantly in response to Congressional demands for demobilizing the Office of War Information. For a comparison of US and Soviet information programs in post-Independence India, see Eric D. Pullin, "Noise and Flutter: India, Propaganda, and Global Conflict, 1942-1963," PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2009, 64-88.

²¹ For the ICCF criticism of Nehru and the United States, see Minoos Masani's 1951 articles: "India at the Crossroads," *The New Leader* (April 30, 1951): 21-4; "India: Dos and Don'ts for Americans," *Foreign Affairs: An American Quarterly Review* 30/1 (1951): 412-25; and "The Communist Party in India," *Pacific Affairs* 24/1 (1951): 18-38.

accessories of the US administration in order to foment domestic opposition to his neutrality position.²² A particular object of Nehru's mistrust was the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom (ICCF), as the local CCF branch was called.²³ The prime minister had reason to question the independence of the ICCF—and to conflate it with the overtly US-sponsored Asia Foundation—as it was run by the same Masani who operated the Democratic Research Service (DRS), an organization set up in early 1951 to spotlight every move of the Communist Party and to expose the dangers of neutralism.²⁴ Nehru considered both units as two instruments of a single concerted campaign against his non-alignment course. Four thousand miles west from Delhi, in Paris, CCF headquarters watched the political controversy their Indian affiliate created with great disquiet. If Nehru's hostility towards the ICCF was not quickly being neutralized to the level of benevolent tolerance, Josselson wrote Masani, it could jeopardize the activities of the CCF in the whole region.²⁵

²² Although by the end of the Korean War the Truman administration no longer intended to make India join a Western alliance, if only because there was “virtually no likelihood of India’s doing so,” the main objective of US information activities in India remained to “arouse Indian people to the peril to Indian independence of Red Chinese aggression in Southeast Asia, and identify US opposition thereto with Indian national interests.” Operations Coordinating Board (OCB), “Evaluation of U.S. Operating Programs Relating to India,” September 23, 1954, 35–42, 77–79, White House Office, National Security Council (DDEL), OCB Central File, 37, OCB 091 (India File No. 1), file 3. For an in-depth analysis of US assessments of Nehru’s nonalignment position from Independence to 1960, see H. W. Brands, *The Specter of Neutralism: The United States and the Emergence of the Third World, 1947–1960* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989), 13–138.

²³ Nehru to Secretary General, memorandum “Increasing American Activities,” March 4, 1954, in *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, eds. H. Y. Sharada Prasad and A. K. Damadoran, Second Series, vol. 25 (Delhi: Teen Murti House/Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund, 1999), 489. For a detailed discussion of Nehru’s perception of US propaganda in general, and the ICCF in particular, see Eric D. Pullin, “Money Does Not Make Any Difference to the Opinions That We Hold: India, the CIA, and the Congress for Cultural Freedom, 1951–58,” *Intelligence and National Security* 26/ 2–3 (2011): 377–98.

²⁴ For the public eye, the Asia Foundation (until October 1954 known as the Committee for Free Asia) was a “non-political, non-profit organization” set up in March 1951 for the stated purposes of (1) making “private American support available to individuals and groups in Asia who are working for the attainment of peace, independence, personal liberty, and social progress;” (2) encouraging and strengthening “active cooperation, founded on mutual respect and understanding, among voluntary organizations—Asian, American, and international—with similar aims and ideals;” and (3) working for “a better understanding in the United States of the peoples of Asia, their histories, cultures, and values.” Cited from a brochure, titled *The Asia Foundation* and published in 1954, C. D. Jackson Papers, 29-Asia Foundation. In reality, it was part of the array of OPC/CIA fronts designed to promote US foreign policy objectives. The ICCF, incidentally, received CIA funding through the ACCF for its founding Congress in Bombay, but decided in December 1953 that “it would not be desirable to receive any assistance from the Congress secretariat in Paris as the Indian Committee could do without it.” Since then the Committee entirely relied upon funds raised in India, Bombay in particular. ICCF, “Report of Activities; September 1953–December 1954,” ACCF, 1–5.

²⁵ Josselson to Masani, July 16, 1954, CCF, II-226-1. The CCF’s efforts not to act as a bull in the china shop of Indian politics were not helped by India’s cultural sector. In May 1956, Victor J. F. Kulanday, director of the Delhi-branch of the National Theatre Arts Society, proudly reported to

Indeed, the United States, and, for that matter, the CCF, could not afford to fail in South and South East Asia. As Nabokov put it: “In more than one way, India is our last chance in Asia. If India falls prey to Communism, free culture, free institutions will disappear in Asia.”²⁶ The pressure of failure reached unbearable levels in late April 1954, when Nehru concluded a Five Principles of Coexistence Treaty with Mao’s regime (the Panchsheel Treaty, signed April 29, 1954) and exchanged state visits with PRC Prime Minister-cum-Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai before the eye of the world. Although neither an act of appeasement nor a formalization of a political alliance, from the CCF’s perspective this was a move in the wrong direction. Nor was Nehru’s participation in the Asian-African Conference in Bandung, April 18–24, 1955, a good sign.²⁷ In other words, there was no time to be lost in promoting the CCF in the region. The idea for an “all-Asian Congress [for Cultural Freedom],” distinct from the ICCF, goes back to a report of an Asian tour that Masani and François Bondy (representative of the Paris secretariat) undertook in October 1952, and was to be launched late 1953 or early 1954.²⁸ Yet, by early 1954, nothing concrete had materialized. In short, intervention was badly needed, and it was up to Nabokov to plot and execute it.

Thus, in late November 1954, Nabokov made a “bloody somersault” to India, on a mission he did not have much faith in. As he wrote—with much tongue-in-cheek—to the poet Allen Tate, whom he had met at the American Academy in Rome:

I must do a hopeless public-relations job, i.e., appease an appeaser (Mr. Nehru), who is apparently molto anti-Congress, *per ch  il congresso dispiace a Sr.*

Nabokov how he and his association (which he introduced as “one of the few cultural organizations in the capital which is prepared to openly do things that irritate both the Communists and the neutralists”) singlehandedly boosted the ticket sales for the “very inadequately publicized” concerts to be given by Leontyne Price and her accompanist David Garvey. While “other musical and cultural groups in the city, including the very few who have still escaped Communist influence, were conspicuous by their absence,” Kulanday’s organization had awaited “the talented lady” at the Delhi airport “with oriental felicitations, garlands and camphor.” Nabokov did grant the “blessings for our efforts to fight the Communist cultural circus in India” Kulanday asked for, but he must have felt that such conspicuous anti-Communist initiatives were obviously not conducive to winning Nehru’s confidence. Kulanday to Nabokov, May 9, 1956; Nabokov to Kulanday, May 23, 1956, CCF, II-245-2.

²⁶ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to India, November 20–December 1, 1954,” 24, CCF, II-249-2.

²⁷ The initiative for this conference was Indonesia’s. When the Indonesian Prime Minister first presented the idea to his colleagues from the other four Colombo Powers—Burma, Ceylon, India and Pakistan—Nehru was skeptical of the feasibility and value of holding such a conference. Nevertheless, he let himself be persuaded to give his full approval to Indonesia’s idea, and became a leading supporter when his proposal for inviting the PRC was accepted. George McTurnan Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference, Bandung, Indonesia, April 1955* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1956), 2–3.

²⁸ Masani and Bondy, “Report on Far Eastern Trip, October 26–December 4, 1952,” December 10, 1952, Brown Papers, 13-8.

Nehru in ragione [because the Congress is profoundly displeasing to him], thinks it is all made up of Burn-hams, Sidney Gooks, Arthurs Hitlerovitch's Koestlers *e tutti quanti*...I have to prove a) that it is not so (which is easy, because Burr-n-ham and Koestler resigned from the Congress and Gook is an unexportable Brooklyn cheese, whom I like personally, but who is *not* the best form of "import" to Europe and has not, when imported, played a leading role in our councils; b) that the Congress is not a red-(herring)-baiting McCart[h]y'ite organization, which murders intellectuals at sight, whose nose or ears are even the slightest pinkish... But even if I prove all this, Rev. father (Maotze) Nehru will not believe me and...I will have travelled to India midout [*sic*] any result.²⁹

Nabokov's presentiments seemed to be justified by the delay with which a visa was issued to him. "India seems to be terribly afraid of [a] notorious anti-Bolshevik who has a Russian name and [an] American passport," he wrote a friend (adding a few invectives that are not suited for citation).³⁰ His audience with Nehru, however, turned out much better than he expected—or at least, thus it seemed. The prime minister received him "most graciously" for a luncheon in the garden of his residence in the companionship of his family, including his daughter Indira Gandhi. Nabokov was clearly impressed by Nehru's ability to make him feel immediately at ease: his manner, "so natural and ingratiating," and his conversations, so "interesting yet unpretentious," were qualities "rare [to be seen] in persons holding high public office." The prime minister seemed to have "mellowed with age," which might mean—Nabokov cautiously suggested—that "he has become less uncompromising and more open to other peoples' point of view, perhaps even...ready to accept a certain amount of criticism, provided it comes from a friendly quarter." Much of the time Nehru spoke of his recent visit to Beijing, arguing that "only in keeping the doors open can one hope to exercise any kind of influence upon China." As an example he told how he had persuaded Zhou Enlai during his Indian visit to ride through the crowded streets of Delhi with him, standing

²⁹ Nabokov to Tate, October 17, 1954, Tate Papers, 32-1. The spelling of "Gook" instead of "Hook" is obviously intended, "gook" being a derogatory term for East Asians used by US Marines serving in the Philippines in the early twentieth century (and which would regain wide currency during the Vietnam War). The parenthetical "Maotze" is a reference to Mao Zedong (at the time transliterated as "Tse-Tung" or "Tze-Tung"). Burnham followed Koestler in resigning from the ACCF in September 1954, as he felt that the Committee had manifested itself as "a narrow and partisan clique" in the position it took vis-à-vis Senator Joseph McCarthy. (One faction rejected McCarthy in principle for being the figurehead of a trend threatening American cultural and civil liberties ["McCarthyism"], whereas another faction, including Burnham, thought each of McCarthy's steps had to be judged separately. Burnham to Robert Gorham Davis, Chairman ACCF, September 15, 1954, ACCF, 1-6.

³⁰ Nabokov to Laurance P. Roberts, November 12, 1954, CCF, II-244-4. Roberts was an Asian arts expert and director of the American Academy in Rome at the time of Nabokov's residency in 1953-55.

up in an open car, an honor that Zhou had to return during Nehru's visit to China, thereby giving the Chinese people an unprecedentedly close glimpse of one of their own top leaders.³¹

In his report of the conversation, Nabokov soon ventured into the realm of wishful thinking, suggesting that he had the "curious feeling that the P.M. is worried about his own foreign policy." From the way the other luncheon attendants listened to the conversations, "it was clear that they had been hearing this sort of thing over and over again." Nehru's daughter seemed to Nabokov "much more aware of the true nature of the Chinese Communist government." When asked about the purpose of his visit to India, Nabokov outlined the plans for the start of a literary magazine in India (*Quest*) and the project of the inter-Asian Congress scheduled to take place in Rangoon, Burma, in February 1955, explicitly mentioning that the initiative for this enterprise had come from the Burmese Society for the Extension of Democratic Ideals (not entirely true).³² Further, he expressed his personal interest in exploring the possibilities of "a kind of confrontation of Eastern and Western traditions in the various arts," as part of a larger effort to establish "closer relations between the cultural life of the East and the West." All his deliberations about these "cultural" projects finally brought him to the most sensitive point, being that his mission was to "dispel certain false impressions entertained by a number of people about the nature and the ideals of the Congress for Cultural Freedom." Referring to the most common accusation addressed towards his organization, he emphatically denied its bias: "We do take a firm position in our ideological fight for the defense of cultural freedom, from whatever side it may be threatened, but we do not take sides in the Cold War." Anxious for Nehru's reaction, Nabokov chose his terms tactfully, quoting verbatim from the prime

³¹ Nabokov, "Report on My Trip to India, November 20–December 1, 1954," 16–22, CCF, II-249–2. All citations in the following paragraph are from this report. Nabokov's obituary of Nehru reminisces about his meetings with the Prime Minister, exclusively focusing on his character, not his politics. Nabokov, "Remembering Nehru," *Congress News* [CCF] (Spring 1964): 1–2.

³² The Rangoon Conference took place on February 17–20, 1955, convening about thirty-five representatives from—besides Burma—India, Pakistan, Ceylon, Thailand, Indonesia, the Philippines (including the composer/ethnomusicologist José Maceda), and Japan. The reports and discussions were particularly concerned with the role of religion in Asian societies, the problems of economic planning, and the challenges to individual freedoms in recently decolonized countries. The Conference was generally considered to be a success and—as one official at the Southeast Asia Department of the British Foreign Office observed—"[t]he ideas it put forward may be useful background for the Afro-Asian Conference," i.e., the upcoming Afro-Asian Conference in Bandung, April 18–24, 1955. The only blemish on the event seemed to have been that it was "fairly widely known" that American backing was involved, "which somewhat spoil[ed] the effect." Note on a memorandum from the Chancery Rangoon to the Southeast Asia Department, Foreign Office, "Conference on Cultural Freedom in Asia," March 4, 1955, Records of the Foreign Office (INA), FO 371/117086; Masani to Paris secretariat, February 23, 1955, Brown Papers, 13–17. The Conference proceedings have been published under the title *Cultural Freedom in Asia* (Rutland, VT/Tokyo: Charles E. Tuttle, 1956).

minister's own public statements. Nabokov left the luncheon with the "distinct feeling that the P.M. understood me very well; he listened carefully but did not comment at all; in fact, he never mentioned either the Congress for Cultural Freedom or the Indian Committee for Cultural Freedom." In particular, he had the impression that Indira Gandhi considered him and Stephen Spender (who had accompanied Nabokov) to be not just "merely visiting intellectuals, but actually good if not intimate friends."

Nabokov's hope that his visit might have softened up the Indian prime minister for the CCF in particular, and the Western view of things in general, vanished into nothing when a few months later, Nehru reaffirmed repeatedly at the Bandung Conference that "I belong to neither [of the major blocs] and I propose to belong to neither whatever happens in the world."³³ Although certainly not all of them underscored the "whatever happens" clause, the Conference delegates felt with Nehru that time had come for those who did not wish to be pawns in the US-USSR struggle to claim a position of their own on the global political arena. More disturbingly from the American perspective, PRC Prime Minister Zhou Enlai succeeded—despite efforts of the State Department to prevent him from doing so—in persuading the delegates into considering the PRC a stabilizing force in the Southeast Asian region seeking good relations with its neighbors and operating independently from Moscow as long as its main interests were not threatened.³⁴ (Most concretely, Zhou offered to negotiate with the US about the Taiwan Strait crisis, which at the time of the Bandung Conference had reached its boiling point.) CCF representatives understood the claim to independence of formerly colonized nations, but it goes without saying that it was unforgivable to them that some of the Bandung conferees overlooked the PRC government's encroachments on the human rights of its own citizens.³⁵ It became even more difficult to take Nehru's commitment to

³³ Jawaharlal Nehru, speech before the Political Committee of the Bandung Conference, April 22, 1955, in Kahin, *The Asian-African Conference*, 64.

³⁴ Fearing that it would turn out as an international forum for anti-American sentiments playing to the advantage of Moscow and Beijing, the State Department sought to manipulate the Bandung Conference through preemptive public statements negating anticipated criticisms of America's foreign policy and domestic racism as well as through the "coaching" of pro-Western delegations (from Pakistan, Ceylon, Thailand, Philippines, Turkey and Iraq) to clarify US positions and to thwart Nehru's ambition to establish non-alignment as an alternative to US global leadership. As it turned out, the Eisenhower administration's concerns about the Conference proved unwarranted: neither did it end on an anti-Western note, nor did it display third force harmony, and Nehru certainly did not appear as the assembly's conductor. For a detailed discussion of how the United States, the Soviet Union, and India twisted the Bandung Conference to serve their interests, see Pullin, "India, Propaganda, and Global Conflict," 215–35.

³⁵ At its general assembly during the "Future of Freedom" conference a few months later, the CCF condemned the campaign of persecution against the writer and literary theorist Hu Feng, who had dared to criticize the implementation of the tenets of socialist realism as expounded in Mao's famous 1942 Yan'an *Lectures on Literature and Art* for having lost touch with the everyday experiences of the peasants and workers. Hu, together with his relatives, acquaintances and all

non-alignment at face value when he accepted—in no small part motivated by a desire to offset the US alliance with Pakistan—an invitation from Stalin’s successor, Nikita Khrushchev, for a sixteen-day state visit to the Soviet Union (June 7–22, 1955) as part of a larger *détente* strategy. All this was reason enough for a second intervention.

Nabokov was again cordially received by Nehru on November 11, 1955, shortly before Khrushchev and his prime minister, Nikolay Bulganin, were to arrive in New Delhi to start an extended speaking tour of India, Burma and Afghanistan (November 18–December 19, 1955). This time Nabokov entirely refrained from speaking about politics, and sounded out the prime minister’s reaction to the project of bringing a travelling exhibition of one to two hundred “masterpieces of world art” in reproduction, under CCF auspices and the curatorship of André Malraux (author of *Le Musée Imaginaire*), to the Southeast Asian region. “Mr. Nehru appeared intensely interested in this idea and promised all the assistance he could give to the realization of this project.” Subsequently, Nabokov dropped the idea of a similar project in the field of music, i.e., “an encounter between the Western and Eastern traditions in music.” Nehru admitted that he did not know enough about music to see how such a project could be done in India, but he nonetheless welcomed the idea of “a kind of limited ‘world music festival’.” It was good to hear these expressions of support from the prime minister, but Nabokov was cautious not to read too much hope into them as he did the previous year. “Since last year, there has been a considerable change in the photographic paraphernalia adorning his [Nehru’s] desk,” he observed. “To the photographs of Mao and Chou En Lai [Zhou Enlai] have been added quite a few silver-framed portraits of Soviet leaders and on top of the staircase...stood a hideous ‘troika’ carved out of white wood and driven by a huge bear.” When Nabokov jokingly asked whether this was the way the Soviet leaders [Khrushchev and Bulganin] would arrive in New Delhi, the prime minister, “equally jokingly but somewhat coolly,” replied that “this was not the way to cross the Himalayas but that the ‘beautiful carving’ (sic) had been given to him by ‘chairman’ Voroshilov.”³⁶

Khrushchev and Bulganin would indeed not enter Delhi in a bear-driven troika. But the pomp and circumstance with which they were received, as

who did not denounce him unequivocally, was arrested in 1955 on charge of “counter-revolutionary activities” and convicted to imprisonment, only to be released in 1979 as a broken man. Hu’s case stood at the beginning of what was a massive purge among the Chinese intelligentsia that continued throughout the Cultural Revolution. Resolution adopted by the CCF General Assembly, September 18, 1955, ACCF, 2-1.

³⁶ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to Southeast Asia and Japan, November 8–December 21, 1955,” 6, CCF, II-249-2. The troika represented Nikita Khrushchev, then first secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Nikolay Bulganin, then prime minister of the Soviet Union, and Kliment Voroshilov, then chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

well as the ease with which so many Indians swallowed their “peaceful coexistence” rhetoric, praises for India’s claim to independence from colonialism, and promises for economic assistance were enough to bring Nabokov into a despondent mood.³⁷ So did the International Industries Fair which coincided with his visit to Delhi. “Masses of people” were drawn to the pavilions that obviously aroused the most interest, those of Soviet Russia, Czechoslovakia, Poland, the GDR, and the PRC. “For Western eyes,” Nabokov remarked, both the Russian and Chinese pavilions were of “the utmost gaudiness,” incomparable to “the elegant American pavilion.” Yet, while the US exhibit consisted mainly of photographs, the Communist ones impressed with concrete objects, ranging from various canned foods to heavy machinery, tractor combines, and all kinds of motorized vehicles. “In a concrete and tangible way,” Nabokov concluded, “the Fair proved to Indian visitors that China in barely five years *has* built up an important industrial plant of its own, and that the Soviet Union has become one of the world’s greatest industrial powers.” The United States, on the other hand, appeared with its photographic exhibit “as remote and intangible as a travelogue film on the South Sea Islands.”³⁸ Nabokov’s gloomy conclusion was only partly compensated by his impression that the CCF’s standing had slightly improved in the cities he visited (Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Mysore, and Bombay), if only because quite a number of intellectuals were left perturbed at witnessing “the great wave of unreasoned sympathy towards Russia and China produced by Communist propaganda and enhanced by the visit of the Soviet commissars.” But the challenge had become tougher than ever: the efforts of Moscow and Beijing to present themselves as better and more willing champions of the Indian peoples’ interests and needs had been more than successful. Time was running very short to seize the initiative, Nabokov concluded, and a “serious and urgent

³⁷ The US Ambassador to India likewise expected that the Khrushchev-Bulganin visit would “probably score impressive propaganda gain” for the USSR government because “they are presenting themselves to India as dynamic, cheerful, friendly, robustly self-confident, while Indians are beginning to wonder whether Washington is inconsistent, cool, and wavering.” John Sherman Cooper to the Department of State (telegram), November 25, 1955, in *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1955–1957*, vol. 8, 298–300.

³⁸ Officers of the Indian section of the United States Information Service (USIS) who were responsible for organizing the American exhibit arrived at the same conclusion as Nabokov. Despite all their efforts to demonstrate the “overwhelming capacity of [the United States] to produce plentifully for peace under democratic systems,” it soon appeared that the Sino-Soviet bloc spent nearly six times more than the United States on advertising for their exhibits and entertainment for their visitors. About eighty percent of respondents to USIS surveys conducted among visitors indicated that the US exhibit had not changed their opinions of the United States. For more on this fair, see Pullin, “India, Propaganda, and Global Conflict,” 265–73.

effort” to gain the support and cooperation of India’s academic, political and artistic circles “should be made” at once.³⁹

Winning the favor of India’s non-aligned intelligentsia seemed a mission impossible for both the Indian Government and the CCF in the face of two overlapping key moments in the Cold War that were soon to erupt: the Suez Crisis (October 29–November 7, 1956) and the Hungarian Uprising (October 23–November 10, 1956). Nehru was quick to take the side of Egypt’s freshly installed President Gamal Abdel Nasser in his confrontation with a British-French-Israeli coalition over the nationalization of the Suez Canal, and condemned the latter group when it resorted to violent means of persuasion. Yet, when large segments of the Hungarian people cried out for better living standards, less controls and greater independence from Moscow, he failed to express his support until the Kremlin tried to pressure him into supporting its decision to strike down the insurgency (by hinting that the Soviet support India enjoyed in her dispute with Pakistan over Kashmir could be withdrawn). To everyone’s surprise, just days after his condemnation of the Soviet military action, Nehru’s ambassador to the United Nations, Krishna Menon, abstained from endorsing the UN resolution calling on Moscow to withdraw its troops, citing as reason that, apart from the “fact” that the Hungarian crisis was a domestic affair, condemnation of any government would reduce the chances of an agreement. Nehru, who apparently himself had been surprised by Menon’s move, remonstrated with Menon privately, but nonetheless supported him in public, declaring that he had arrived at the conclusion (whispered into his ear by Prime Minister Bulganin from whom he had asked a report on the situation) that what happened in Hungary was a civil conflict in the course of which one faction ousted those seated in power, at which point the latter “invited Soviet forces to come and quell the disturbances.” He also refrained from supporting another UN resolution asking Moscow to permit UN observers in the Hungarian elections, as foreigners overseeing elections would set a “bad precedent” (which India would have to follow in Kashmir).⁴⁰

³⁹ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to Southeast Asia and Japan,” 7–8. Nabokov concluded the same for Burma, whose capital he visited a few days before Khrushchev and Bulganin. “My first and last impression of Rangoon was one of disorder and despondency in every conceivable area. Most of our friends were nervous about the forthcoming visit of the Soviet commissars, anxious to find out in what mood Prime Minister U Nu had returned from his ‘triumphant’ visit to the Soviet Union and weary of the presence in Rangoon of half a dozen Iron Curtain economic and ‘Kultur’ missions.” Given the economic crisis that held the country in its grip, partly due to the inability of the Burmese government to compete on the world rice market, Bulganin’s offer to buy large quantities of Burmese rice promised to generate plenty of political capital for the Soviet government. The need for the CCF to embark upon “some kind of tangible activity in Burma” was, therefore, more than acute. *Ibid.*, 16–18.

⁴⁰ For more on Nehru’s position-taking in the Suez and Hungarian crises, see Sarvepalli Gopal, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography, Volume Two, 1947–1956* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press,

With his reluctance, if not refusal, to equate the Hungarian and Suez crises, Nehru triggered a wave of criticism from the ICCF for engaging in double standards. But due to a course that deviated from the ICCF's, the international CCF faced a similar accusation for applying two different yardsticks, albeit in favor of its Western partners. Before and while the Soviet tanks rolled over the streets of Budapest, it sent three SOS messages urging Prime Minister Nehru (in addition to President Eisenhower and UN Secretary General Dag Hammarskjöld) to "use your moral authority to save the Hungarian people from savage repression" and mobilized all its ranks to give maximum response to an anguished appeal from the Federation of Hungarian Writers issued minutes before Russian forces removed Free Kossuth Radio from the ether.⁴¹ Conversely, it remained silent during the British-French-Israeli invasion of Egypt, despite appeals from Asian CCF members, including leading representatives of the ICCF, that the Paris secretariat should adopt an equally unequivocal stand on this issue as it took against the Soviet action in Hungary.⁴²

When the dust had settled, Nabokov discussed the matter with the CCF Standing Committee in Paris, the conclusion of which was sensible but unsatisfactory to many. The CCF's domain was culture, not politics, Nabokov explained. The case of Hungary involved the CCF directly because what took place there was "an unlimited action by a foreign totalitarian power for the specific purpose of re-imposing a system of total control, and directed against a movement for national independence and internal democracy that had started as a demand for intellectual freedom on the part of writers and students." The action in Egypt, on the other hand, had been a case of "a specific and limited conflict of interests between a young nationalism and a senescent imperialism," and had been settled through the Franco-British acceptance of a UN intervention whereas the Kremlin vehemently refused such a move. As "utterly reprehensible and disgusting" as the Anglo-French maneuver may have been, it had not been the purpose of either Great Britain or France to "impose a kind of thought-control on Egypt, or to force a single party and a compulsory ideology on Egyptian thinkers," and as such a response of the CCF had been uncalled for.⁴³

1979), 272–99; Escott Reid, *Hungary and Suez, 1956: A View from New Delhi* (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press Publishers, 1986); or Sankar Ghose, *Jawaharlal Nehru: A Biography* (New Delhi: Allied Publishers, 1993), 278–82.

⁴¹ "Soviet Rape of Hungary Shocks World Conscience," *News* [CCF Office for Asian Affairs], November 1956; Nabokov, communiqué "Congress Answers Hungarian Writers' Appeal," November 5, 1956, ACCF, 2-4.

⁴² V. B. Karnik, ICCF Honorary Secretary, to Nabokov, December 24, 1956; Masani to Nabokov, December 29, 1956, CCF, II-226-4.

⁴³ Nabokov to Prabhakar Padhye, CCF Office for Asian Affairs, undated but written in late November or early December 1956, ACCF, 2-4.

In the end, Nehru yielded—not because of international pressure, but because of domestic pressure—and publicly condemned the Soviet invasion of Hungary nine days after the uprising had been crushed. Although this was a victory for the prime minister’s critics, Nabokov realized that any opportunity for a real change in Nehru’s attitude towards both the international and domestic CCF had been lost.⁴⁴ Indeed, in the weeks following his tactical defeat, Nehru lashed out in the Indian parliament against the ICCF and related associations, denouncing them as a mere cultural façade for purely political and propagandist purposes. Nabokov obviously could not leave this insinuation without a reply, and wrote a letter to the prime minister expressing his grief over “the disparaging nature of your remarks.” In particular he entered into Nehru’s complaint about the CCF’s “interference” in the Hungarian episode, explaining once again that this “interference” had been a response to the urgent and repeated appeals from the Federation of Hungarian Writers for “our help and action in order to stop the brutal action of the Soviet armed forces,” and that “we felt it was our duty and privilege to relay this appeal to you in the hope that you, as the disciple of Gandhi, would bring to bear your moral influence in order to see that the legitimate aspirations of the Hungarian intellectuals and people in their national struggle for freedom were not strangled.” Should this action be seen as an “uncalled-for ‘interference’ on our part?” Likewise, to Nehru’s charge that the CCF had made itself party to a political maneuver to divert public attention from developments in the Middle East to those in Eastern Europe, Nabokov retorted that no appeal had been made by Egyptian intellectuals, “whose freedom of expression appears to us to be menaced by nothing so much as by the dictatorship of Col. Nasser himself.” Finally, Nabokov remonstrated against Nehru’s accusation that “our purpose is propagandist rather than a search for truth or even a passion for freedom or democracy,” pointing to the CCF’s track record which “gives ample evidence for the fact that the [CCF] is above all else concerned with the search for truth and is whole[hearted]ly dedicated to the principles of freedom and democracy.”⁴⁵

Nabokov received a reply from the prime minister’s secretariat “written in most general philosophical terms,” and as such, “very unsatisfactory.”⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Nabokov to Masani, December 14, 1956, CCF, II-226-4.

⁴⁵ Nabokov to Prime Minister Nehru, January 15, 1957, CCF, II-243-6.

⁴⁶ The actual letter does not seem to have been filed in the CCF archives, but Nabokov reports about it in a conversation with Chadbourne Gilpatric, Assistant Director of the Rockefeller Foundation’s Humanities Division. Nabokov had learned from hearsay that Nehru’s new Home Minister, Govind Ballabh Pant (“clearly a xenophobe and suspicious of most foreign motivations as they are applied to programs in India”), was highly influential in persuading the prime minister and government officials in blocking and controlling activities of foreign organizations in India. Minutes of an interview of Gilpatric with Nabokov and Passin, April 23, 1957, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1957/100, 2-18.

Nevertheless, Nehru does not seem to have incriminated the CCF or ICCF ever since, perhaps because he was soon to see that the living conditions of the Hungarian people under János Kádár—the cadre leader who had been placed into power by the Soviets to replace the deposed (and later executed) Imre Nagy as Hungary’s prime minister—were more repressive than before. (When the writers József Gáli and Gyula Obersovszky were sentenced to death for their role in the uprising, Nehru joined the international chorus of objection which resulted in a change of the verdict to lifelong imprisonment.) Yet, it soon transpired that the prime minister’s about-face should not be mistaken for an embracement of the CCF. When the sociologist and CCF member Edward Shils visited him to sound out his interest in a projected seminar on “Self-Government and Public Liberties in the New States,” Nehru, although considering the topic a “worthwhile one to explore,” kindly suggested not holding it in India.⁴⁷ Thus, even though the CCF Executive Committee had invited the ICCF as early as the last day of the 1952 Paris Festival to assemble a planning committee for a festival in India⁴⁸ and Nehru had given his blessing for it, by now it was fully clear to Nabokov that India would not be the place to pull off a large-scale arts festival along the Paris model.

In fact, as far as his festival proposal was concerned, Nabokov’s attention had already long shifted to a location less embroiled in a quagmire of political sensibilities but nonetheless close enough to the area on which the project was targeted: Tokyo. In 1952, Nabokov had to tell the Japanese CCF, which had already announced to the domestic press that Japan would participate in the Paris Festival’s art exhibition, that this turned out to be unfeasible financially.⁴⁹ Needless to say, this message had caused quite some consternation with the Japanese CCF, and when the CCF’s Japanese partners expressed their eagerness to have the Paris secretariat to sponsor “some sort of music conference which would bring them into contact with Western musicians,” Nabokov could not ignore it, even though from the CCF/Eisenhower administration’s perspective, Japan was by far not the country of the greatest concern in the Far Eastern corner of the Eurasian continent. Thus, sometime in 1954, the choice of Tokyo as the site for his newest music festival was made.⁵⁰ Yet, he had been slightly too optimistic

⁴⁷ Nabokov to Nehru, December 31, 1957, CCF, II-243-6.

⁴⁸ Minutes CCF Executive Committee meeting, May 31, 1952, Brown Papers, 13-16.

⁴⁹ In the end, the costs of a Japanese exhibition outside CCF auspices were taken on by the Musée d’Art Moderne. Burnham brought the issue to the attention of the OPC/CIA, but it is not clear whether action was undertaken. Asahi Okura, Secretary Japanese Committee for Cultural Freedom, to Nabokov, January 10 and 15, 1952, Burnham Papers, 8-6; OPC memorandum 02.560, “Japanese Committee for Cultural Freedom,” January 24, 1952, Burnham Papers, 11-7.

⁵⁰ The choice for the Japanese city was against the advice of Lou Harrison, who upon hearing that Tokyo was considered as the staging place of the proposed music festival felt the need to warn

when he wrote in 1954 to his close “partner in crime” Virgil Thomson that, by the time he would return from his Asian tour, “I may have already all the threads of that adventure in my hands.”⁵¹

On the contrary, it would take Nabokov another two years to assemble an operative team consisting of first-class representatives of music life from the United States, Western Europe, India and Japan, which met for the first time at the Belmont Plaza Hotel in April 1957.⁵² But then, finally, after a week of deliberations and calculations, he could announce to the world that an “East-West Music Encounter” was to be held in Tokyo in the spring of 1959, to which composers, soloists, performing ensembles, and musicologists from all over the world would be invited. This festival-conference was “not conceived as an Asian counterpart of the innumerable ‘festivals’ held in the West,” Nabokov cared to emphasize, but as “a musical meeting of East and West,” in which outstanding artists of each hemisphere and culture would perform their traditional musics, offer each other glimpses of the latest developments at home, and profit from direct personal contact with each other. As for the musical program, the Organizing Committee had nothing less in mind than “Spanish guitar music, Balinese gamelan, Siamese dancers, Chinese opera, Japanese Noh and Kabuki theatre, Indian music, and dancing and solo music from the Middle East, as well as Western symphonic music, chamber music, opera and ballet, and jazz,” whereas the conference program was to be composed of “lectures by eminent experts from the East and the West, forum discussions, and laboratory demonstrations of instrumental, vocal and electronic techniques.”⁵³ Nabokov would eventually have to seriously downscale the scope of this “adventure.” In fact, trouble started already from the very day he had gone public with it.

Nabokov that “Tokyo would be awful” as findings of the Japanese Acoustical Society had pointed out that “Tokyo is rated the noisiest city in the world,” where people have “nervous breakdowns by the group from the noise.” Since “we should meet in a quiet place so that we can hear,” Harrison counseled that “an index of noise rates for likely places” better be consulted. Harrison to Nabokov, October 28, 1954, CCF, II-248-9.

⁵¹ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to Southeast Asia and Japan,” 26. Already before his 1954 visit to India, Nabokov guessed that the EWME Festival (which, like the Paris Festival, was not to be limited to music) was probably to take place in Japan in 1956 or 1957. Nabokov to Gottfried von Einem, August 17, 1954, CCF, II-244-2; Nabokov to Thomson, September 11, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-69-17; Nabokov to Robert Craft, October 28, 1954, CCF, II-244-1.

⁵² For an overview of the members of the pilot meeting and a vision statement about the EWME project, see Appendix C3.

⁵³ Press release, “East-West Music Encounter Planned for Tokyo in Spring of 1959,” April 30, 1957, CCF, III-14-6. Largely published as “Tokyo to be Host to ’59 Music Fete,” *New York Times*, April 30, 1957, 25. For an overview of the suggestions made at the pilot meeting, see Appendix B4.

Before the Twain Shall Meet: Arranging the East-West Music Encounter

“Incredible.” Thus was the response from the Japanese Broadcasting Company (NHK), under whose auspices the East-West Music Encounter (EWME) was to be organized, when approached for a reaction on the plans which Nabokov had released to the public. The broadcasting network had ordered its New York representative to attend the planning meeting with the explicit instruction to listen and report only, *not* to commit to any proposal, and now there seemed to have been made decisions “without asking our consent,” the network’s spokesman complained.⁵⁴ It was up to Virgil Thomson, a member of the planning committee, to shush NHK’s anxiety. The Japanese network was not expected to bear the expense of bringing foreign artists and performing groups to Tokyo. Instead, as it had been the case with the Paris and Rome Festivals, it was hoped that the governments of the countries represented at the EWME Festival and Conference would sponsor the trips of their own artists and savants, and that foundations and private benefactors would chip in when such sponsorship would fail to materialize (adequately).

This type of confusion is characteristic for the seven years it took for Nabokov’s East-West project to come into being. While in Japan during his 1955 tour of East/South/Southeast Asia, Nabokov introduced the idea of “an encounter of Eastern and Western traditions” to then NHK director Tetsurō Furukaki, who “seemed very much interested in the idea.”⁵⁵ Nabokov left Furukaki with the understanding that his proposal would be discussed by the NHK directorate, and that he would be informed of its official position as soon as possible. Four months later, despite having sent out more than one reminder wrapped in the language of Japanese formality, Nabokov had not received any official confirmation from Japan, something he needed in order to enter into negotiations with American foundations. He did learn, however, from Sadao Bekku, one of the Japanese composers who had committed themselves to the organization of the EWME, that Furukaki’s New Year’s speech announced NHK’s intention to undertake “some sort of music conference in the spring of 1958.” Of course, Nabokov was anxious to know what to make of this message, but Bekku could not be of assistance in an exegesis, counseling Nabokov to get used to this kind of faulty communication instead. (“This is the way things go here; the Japanese are, as far as I am concerned, not a logical people.”⁵⁶) The problem—as Herbert Passin, anthropologist, Japan expert, and CCF member who

⁵⁴ “Music Fete Plans Held ‘Incredible,’” *New York Times*, May 1, 1957, 40.

⁵⁵ Nabokov, “Report on My Trip to Southeast Asia and Japan,” 26.

⁵⁶ Sadao Bekku to Nabokov, Christmas card, December 1955; Nabokov to Bekku, January 14, 1956; Nabokov to Marcel Grilli, music critic of *The Japan Times* and Nabokov’s connection to NHK, January 14, 1956; Bekku to Nabokov, undated but probably early February 1956, CCF, III-37-1.

represented Nabokov in Tokyo, could explain—was that Furukaki was running at the time for the Japanese Senate, which meant that no expeditious action could be expected from him until after the elections (July 8, 1956). Unfortunately, there was no way of circumventing the NHK director, since the festival would need the cooperation of the NHK Symphony Orchestra. Adding to the complexity was this orchestra's secretary-general, Daigorō Arima, who among Japan's CCF-aligned composers had the reputation of being a "deep and devious character" bent on obtaining a monopoly over musical events in Japan. "If he feels that our plan threatens him, then he will oppose it," Passin had been told. In other words, tact was required.⁵⁷

Not being able to postpone his fundraising campaign any longer, Nabokov went on to sound out John D. Rockefeller III's interest in his project. The philanthropist, who was about to establish the Asia Society for the purpose of promoting understanding of (East/Southeast) Asia in the United States, thought the idea "certainly appealing," but wondered whether the costs would be justified on a one-country basis given that the EWME's "primary impact would of course be in Japan." In his reply, Nabokov showed his skills in tickling away any sense of apprehension. In a move to ensure the feasibility of the project, he explained that he more and more had come to envision the festival as "something much more limited in size, i.e., not involving the participation of large groups of people (orchestras, choruses, ballets, etc.) but rather of outstanding solo performers and small chamber music ensembles." Such a formation of easy transportable entities could be sent on a tour through various Asian capital cities, and ensure the geographical impact which Rockefeller was so concerned about. "In other words"—Nabokov summarized his thoughts in a language that must have appealed to Rockefeller's humanitarian aspirations—rather than as an Asian version of the Paris Festival, the East/West project was to be "a kind of peripatetic venture," the main aim of which would be "to bring to the conscience of East and West the idea that nowadays we must approach the problem of art in a broadly inclusive and less parochial sense, that is, as an emanation of human unity and of a world civilization in which all of mankind has a stake."⁵⁸

Nabokov's soothing strategy worked: Rockefeller's Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, a body created in 1953 to stimulate and support international economic and related activities with a focus on Asia, allocated a grant of \$10,000 towards funding the pilot meeting, albeit on the understanding that this grant in no way obliged the Council to future

⁵⁷ Passin to Nabokov, March 29, 1956, CCF, III-39-1.

⁵⁸ John Rockefeller III to Nabokov, March 8, 1956; Nabokov to Rockefeller III, April 9, 1956, CCF, III-37-3.

investments in the project. (This precautionary remark was obviously inspired by the figure of \$500,000 that Nabokov had dropped somewhere down the road by way of indicating the estimated total costs of the Tokyo manifestation.) Again Nabokov put his diplomatic skills to work, expressing his sympathy with the Council's concerns over the financial feasibility of the project while assuring that he had never imagined any of Rockefeller's foundations to take on the full expenses of the venture. Indeed, he considered it "imperative from a psychological point of view that [the Tokyo Encounter] have solid *international* backing so that it would not be a purely American enterprise," and based on his experiences with the Paris and Rome festivals, he felt confident that most of the travel expenses of participating musicians and musicologists would be assumed by their governments.⁵⁹

With the Rockefeller grant in his pocket, Nabokov could start organizing the aforementioned pilot meeting which he scheduled for November 18–21, 1956—the first chapter of a long history that proceeded anything but smoothly. Benjamin Britten, whose British Opera Company Nabokov hoped to contract for the Encounter, excused himself as he was in the midst of the preparations for the premiere of his ballet *The Prince of the Pagodas*; Lincoln Kirstein, the director of the New York City Ballet, also declined the invitation as he conceived of himself as "neither a speaker nor a thinker" but "a practical worker in the theatre"; and Ravi Shankar, the famous sitar player who at the time was music director of the Delhi branch of All India Radio (AIR), failed to respond. As an alternative to the latter, Nabokov chose to invite the music director of AIR's Madras branch, Narayana Menon, who soon experienced difficulties with obtaining the necessary leave of absence from the Indian Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. Then, on the very day Nabokov managed to obtain leave of absence for Menon, an unexpected affirmative response of Shankar arrived, which made it impossible for Nabokov to pay for the visit of the British opera expert George Harewood (George Lascelles, the Seventh Earl of Harewood), whom he had asked to substitute for Britten.⁶⁰

If this imbroglio of minor glitches would eventually resolve itself, Passin met in Tokyo with a potentially more serious problem. Mid-September the

⁵⁹ Nabokov to Rockefeller III, June 19, 1956; Donald H. McLean, Jr., Secretary of the Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, to Nabokov, July 25, 1956; Nabokov to McLean, August 1, 1956, CCF, III-14-8. Rockefeller III's interest in East/South/Southeast Asia had been aroused during his work for the 1951 peace mission to Japan. Since then he had been engaged in various activities aimed at enhancing cultural understanding and cooperation between this region and the US.

⁶⁰ Nabokov to Britten, August 27, 1956; Kirstein to Nabokov, August 15, 1956; Nabokov to Daniélou, August 27, 1956; Nabokov to B. V. Keskar, Minister of Information and Broadcasting (Delhi), September 7, 1956; Nabokov to Menon, September 7, 1956; Menon to Nabokov, September 15, 1956; Nabokov to John Coast, Ravi Shankar's American agent, September 7, 1956; Nabokov to Harewood, September 7 and 21, and October 5, 1956, CCF, III-37-1+4.

Asahi Evening News announced the plans for an international music festival in Osaka around the same time as the EWME was to take place. (This was the first edition of the still-running Osaka International Festival, which started in 1958 at the initiative of the influential Murayama family, owner of the Asahi publishing concern.)⁶¹ Apart from this looming competitor, NHK began to prove itself to be anything but a reliable partner. NHK president Kiyoshi Nagata, the successor to Furukaki who went to France as the Ambassador of Japan, cancelled his visit to New York at only two weeks' notice without stating a reason, thereby rendering the meeting rather pointless. In his reply Nabokov obviously found it difficult to remain diplomatic, but he managed to excuse Nagata with the assumption that "you were perhaps motivated by the same anxiety over world developments as we have all been here these days in Europe," i.e., the Hungarian Uprising, which made it inopportune for Nabokov to leave his post in Paris anyway.⁶² The meeting was postponed to April 24–28, 1957 (this time with a hard promise of attendance from NHK⁶³), the end result of which was a firm declaration of commitment from Nagata to stage in Tokyo in the spring of 1959—in the NHK president's phrasing—a "large-scale world festival [which] will contribute immensely to the cultural development of the world."⁶⁴ Nabokov called Chadbourne Gilpatric, his contact at the Rockefeller Foundation, in an elated mood and full of plans for small preparatory conferences in India, Persia, or Burma.⁶⁵

⁶¹ Passin to Nagata, September 24, 1956, CCF, III-37-3; "Japan Plans Arts Festival for Spring of 1958 at Osaka," *Pacific Stars and Stripes* [US Army, Tokyo], September 16, 1958, 5. Nabokov wrote the Osaka Festival's artistic director, Michi Murayama, informing her of the EWME plans and sounding out her interest to join forces, but his letter remained unanswered. Nabokov to Murayama, November 13, 1956, Nabokov Papers, 2-4.

⁶² Nagata to Nabokov (cable), November 2, 1956; Nabokov to Nagata, November 10, 1956, CCF, II-243-5; Nabokov to Rockefeller, November 6, 1956, CCF, III-37-3.

⁶³ Nabokov to Passin, March 19, 1957, CCF, III-37-8. The success was Passin's, whom Nabokov congratulated for "pressing some juice out of the Japanese," although he still wondered whether "the juice will remain in an ectoplasmic state or whether it will really take on human form and appear in New York!" As to the Indian participation, Narayana Menon again had to report to Nabokov that the Nehru administration was "not at all happy at the idea of my official participation," so he decided to come on a personal title. Menon to Nabokov, April 8, 1957, CCF, III-37-7.

⁶⁴ Nagata to Nabokov, September 25, 1957, CCF, III-37-3.

⁶⁵ Gilpatric, memorandum of conversation, May 13, 1957, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398. Gilpatric scribbled in handwriting that "this appears terribly ambitious and pretentious; I have serious doubts about the overall plan, and about RF support." His doubts were shared by his colleagues. When asked formally by Nabokov for the chances of a grant application for a reconnaissance trip along "Iran, Pakistan, India, and possibly Indonesia, Burma, Laos, Thailand, and the Philippines" with the aim of furnishing support for the EWME from local scholars, Donald McLean, Jr., secretary of Rockefeller's Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs, replied that "there would be some reluctance on the part of the Board to take favorable action if such a request were presented today in view of the fact that they have already made two grants in support of the planning for the Encounter." Nabokov to McLean, August 11, 1959; McLean to Nabokov, September 8, 1959, CCF, III-37-4.

The victory was short-lived: a few weeks later Nagata passed away, taking the hard-won commitment with him to his grave. Due to bureaucratic controversy, it would take more than two months for a successor, Hideo Nomura, to be appointed, and until that time, as far as the EWME project was concerned, silence and misunderstanding ruled.⁶⁶

After two months of silence on the part of Japan, suddenly word came from NHK's interim director, Michio Inaba, informing Nabokov that plans for the Asian component of the festival were already cooking and asking him to come to for Tokyo to discuss the state of affairs of the Western component. Overwhelmed by the sudden feeling of precipitation that spoke from the letter (he had been awaiting an answer from NHK since November as to whether, and when, it would be suitable to have someone come to Tokyo and discuss the plans), Nabokov replied that his planning committee had already come to the conclusion that, given the time that had been lost, it would be nearly impossible to bring leading artists and ensembles from Europe and the United States to Japan by the spring of 1959, and wondered whether it would be possible for NHK to defer the project by one year. In addition, he suggested expanding the sponsorship of the EWME with UNESCO's International Music Council (IMC), which had shown interest in the project. (Nabokov had in the meantime become a member of the IMC Executive Committee.) NHK turned out to be flatly opposed to the idea of a broadened sponsorship, the unstated reason being that it wished to have the exclusive rights to the performances of visiting artists, so that, according to common practice in Japan at the time, it could sell or barter those rights to third parties. Although Inaba left the possibility of a postponement open, he subtly made it known that he wished to see hard assurances regarding the feasibility of the festival's Western component. Nabokov swallowed his displeasure and consented to fly over at the end of May in order to attend a meeting of the NHK committee in charge of the organization of the Asian part of the Encounter, and managed to wiggle another grant of \$2,500 towards covering his travel and accommodation expenses out of Rockefeller's Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs.⁶⁷

Two weeks before this meeting, however, Nabokov still had not received any details about the meeting at NHK. On May 4, 1958, Erle Broadus, Nabokov's representative in Japan announced that a message from Japan

⁶⁶ For details on the controversy around Nagata's succession, see Ellis S. Krauss, *Broadcasting Politics in Japan: NHK and Television News* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 124–7.

⁶⁷ Nabokov to Inaba, November 20, 1957; Broadus Erle, concert master of the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra and Nabokov's representative in Tokyo after Passin had returned to the United States, to Nabokov, March 1, 1958; Nabokov to Erle, April 10, 1958; memorandum "Application for a Grant to Enable Mr. Nicolas Nabokov to Travel to Tokyo at the Invitation of the NHK during May 1958," April 10, 1958, CCF, III-37-4+5+7.

was impending, adding that it would “probably discourage you”: NHK seemed to have decided not to postpone the Encounter to 1960. Indeed, a week later Inaba cabled Nabokov that a rescheduling of the Asian festival was unlikely, the reasons for which would be explained in a letter that never arrived. Nabokov, running out of patience with this umpteenth instance of procrastination from the Japanese side, cancelled his trip, assuming that NHK probably had lost interest in a joint project.⁶⁸ He entertained good hope, though, that other partners inside and outside Japan could be found to pull off the event as he imagined it. Fleischmann, apart from being the president of the Fairfield Foundation also a member of the US delegation to UNESCO, had already successfully proposed the US National Commission of the International Music Council (IMC) to ask the IMC Executive Committee, which was to convene in Paris in late October 1958 under the theme of “The Universe of Music and its Various Cultures,” to cooperate in the organization of the EWME.⁶⁹ In Japan, Passin and Erle found an enthusiastic partner in the Society for International Cultural Exchange (*Kokusai Bunka Kokan Kyōkai*, KBK), a “nonpartisan organization” backed by the wealthy art patron Kanichiro Ishibashi, son of Shōjirō Ishibashi, founder of one of the world’s largest producers of tires, the Bridgestone Corporation. KBK enjoyed the “moral and physical support” of various political and corporate organizations from Japan’s public life, including NHK, whose newly appointed president, Hideo Nomura, was willing to abandon his predecessor’s desire for a monopoly on the project for a promise to participate in it through KBK.⁷⁰

“Nonpartisan” is not entirely an apposite adjective to use in connection with the KBK. In fact, in one of its brochures, the organization did not hide its political stance. In the sixteen years that had elapsed since the end of World War II, the brochure’s introduction explains, progress in Japan’s cultural and artistic fields had been “remarkable and satisfying.” Yet, the

⁶⁸ Erle to Nabokov (cable), May 4, 1958; Nabokov to Erle, May 12, 1958, CCF, III-37-5.

⁶⁹ John Thompson, Executive Director, Fairfield Foundation, to Nabokov, May 27, 1958; Nabokov to Thompson, June 10, 1958, CCF, III-37-9. Although limited to technical aspects of music (scales, harmonies, rhythms, instruments, use of voice, etc.), this IMC General Assembly (October 24–30, 1958) in many respects anticipated the comparative format that Nabokov had in mind for Tokyo. The Assembly coincided with the inauguration of the new UNESCO permanent headquarters building as well as the *Semaines Musicales Internationales de Paris* (October 12–November 18, 1958), a festival devoted to promoting contemporary music in the broadest sense. Highlight of this festival was a concert given on the occasion of United Nations Day (October 24), which featured performances by Ravi Shankar (sitar), Shinichi Yuize (koto), and a highly symbolical duo interpretation of J. S. Bach’s Double Violin Concerto (BWV 1043) by David Oistrakh and Yehudi Menuhin with the chamber orchestra of the French Broadcasting Network (RTF). Jack Bornoff, “The Paris Music Weeks,” *The World of Music* [IMC], no. 6 (1959): 1–3.

⁷⁰ Erle to Nabokov (cable), October 27, 1958, CCF, III-37-5; Katsujirō Bandō, KBK Secretary General, October 27, 1958; Nabokov to Bandō, November 6, 1958; Bandō to Nabokov, November 26, 1958, CCF, III-37-10.

downside to this cultural prosperity was that it found itself under “constant threat” by the “totalitarians” who, in the name of culture and art, had been “secretly expanding their political power in all parts of the nation’s life.” The KBK, then, set itself the task to promote “mutual understanding and friendly relations with foreign countries through the interchange of traditional cultures.”⁷¹ As it appears, the organization was a product of the Eisenhower administration’s determination to intensify its cultural presence in Japan after the Soviet top violinist David Oistrakh had left an all too favorable impression on Japanese audiences during a twenty-five-day tour in February–March 1955. In preparation of dispatching the New York-based Symphony of the Air to a seven-week mission to East/Southeast Asia in May–June 1955, the American Embassy called the KBK into existence to deal with the problems pertaining to large-scale exchange projects (and to put a stop to the practice whereby artists were brought to Japan at the expense of foreign governments and subsequently exploited for promotion and publicity purposes by Japanese commercial concerns, chiefly the large newspaper trusts).⁷² When the KBK Board of Directors learned of the plans for the EWME, it expressed a unanimous desire to have it realized, although there were some reservations. It entertained, for instance, “a slight feeling of trepidation” over the suggestion to engage the North German Radio Symphony Orchestra (Hamburg): with a view of the tremendous success the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra had harvested at the 1958 Osaka Music Festival, outshining the New York City Ballet that represented the United States, would not an orchestra of the caliber of the Concertgebouw, Philadelphia or Boston Orchestra be more appropriate?⁷³

⁷¹ Brochure “The Society for International Cultural Exchange” (1961): 1. Cowell Papers, 131-6.

⁷² Erle to Nabokov, November 15, 1958, CCF, III-37-5. The Symphony of the Air, an ensemble compiled of musicians from Toscanini’s disbanded NBC Symphony Orchestra, toured Japan, and Southeast Asia under the sponsorship of ANTA’s International Exchange Program, a five-million dollar initiative approved by US Congress in 1954 to confront the Soviet Union in the field of the performing arts. Despite the overwhelming success of the tour, a second tour planned for the following year, this time bringing the orchestra to much of the Balkan, Near and Middle East, and South Asia, was cancelled when Democratic Congress members tried to capitalize on a FBI informant’s claim that several orchestra members had been spreading “red propaganda” during the Asian tour. This decision incited the ACCF to file a protest with the State Department, asking “[h]ow absurd and fearful such cancellations attributable to unsound political judgment seem to persons in other countries who see the American behemoth quake in the face of such ‘dangers’ to our national security.” Robert Trumbull, “Symphony of [the] Air Cheered in Tokyo,” *New York Times*, May 4, 1955, 31; Fisher, “U.S. Learns It Sent Band on a \$267,000 Red Toot,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, March 24, 1956, 3; Harold C. Schonberg, “Symphony Plans to Fight Tour Ban,” *New York Times*, March 25, 1956, 3; James T. Farrell, ACCF chair to John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, March 30, 1956, ACCF, 11-14.

⁷³ Erle to Nabokov, March 5, 1959, CCF, III-37-5; “Soviet Orchestra a Hit: Leningrad Philharmonic Is Cheered at Osaka Fete,” *New York Times*, April 16, 1958, 40; Eloise Cunningham, “To Further Goodwill,” *New York Times*, May 18, 1958, X9.

As will be discussed below, the problem of the participation of a Western major orchestra eventually would resolve itself. What did not resolve itself was the inertia in decision-making on the Japanese side. This time the gubernatorial elections for the Tokyo Metropolitan Government (April 23, 1959) were the delaying factor: given the politically conservative make-up of the KBK, its ability to support the EWME depended on whether or not the Liberal Democratic candidate Ryōtarō Azuma would win the governorship. Azuma did win, but it took two months for the ensuing reshuffling of positions within the Tokyo government to conclude, leaving a final decision regarding the EWME pending till mid-June. But when it came, it was favorable: KBK accepted Nabokov's Festival-Conference proposal (which, incidentally, in Japan went by the name of "Tokyo World Music Festival" [*Tōkyō Sekai Ongakusai ni tsuite*]), and agreed to assume all the costs incurred within Japan (internal transportation, per diem payments, artists' fees, etc.), whereas the travel expenses to and from Japan were to be covered by the official governmental cultural organizations of the countries of residence of the participating artists or ensembles. In case such funds were not available (as was to be expected of several Asian countries), grants would be solicited from philanthropic associations such as the Rockefeller, Ford, Gulbenkian, Farfield and Asia Foundations (the latter two being CIA fronts).⁷⁴

If Nabokov thought that things would proceed more smoothly on the Japanese side once the green light had been given, he quickly found out that that was wishful thinking. Early July, KBK Secretary-General Katsujirō Bandō sent Nabokov a five-page blueprint of the organizational framework that, in his view, had to be set up, a framework that amounted to a mammoth bureaucratic apparatus more equipped for an international political summit than a music festival. Apart from an Honorary Committee composed of members of no lesser standing than the Crown Prince of Japan, the Queen of England, and President Eisenhower, Bandō outlined an organizational tree involving an Administrative Committee composed of representatives from all Japanese and Western governmental bodies and sponsoring parties involved, a Steering Committee to oversee the daily proceedings, and a Clerical Office, which in itself was to be subdivided in a Finance Committee, Programming Committee, a Conference Committee, and a Publicity and Advertisement Committee.⁷⁵ Nabokov learned from

⁷⁴ "East West Music Encounter: Decisions of the Former Committee and Present State of Planning," undated but probably May 1959, CCF, III-39-1; Minutes of the Music Committee Meeting Held in Venice on September 17, 1959, CCF, III-39-3; Nabokov to John Hunt, Deputy Executive Secretary, April 22, 1959, CCF, II-245-6; Bandō to Nabokov, May 27, 1959; Bandō to Nabokov (cable), June 21, 1959, CCF, III-37-10.

⁷⁵ Nabokov to Bandō, June 24, 1959; Bandō to Nabokov, July 6, 1959, CCF, III-37-10. It should be noted that originally, the 1957 EWME Planning Committee also proposed that royal and aristocratic persons "interested in the growth of the art of music and in cultural exchanges in general" be approached and requested to join the Honorary Committee, but by the fall of 1959 it

Herbert Passin that there was no way of doing without such an intricate organizational structure in which every local (Japanese) institution is represented according to its status and degree of involvement (*in casu* the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and NHK), especially if subsidies were to be expected from these institutions. Nevertheless, a sense of despair obviously seized Nabokov: how could he make the Japanese understand that the soliciting of musical engagements really could not be postponed any longer lest the chance of attracting top artists and ensembles from the United States and Europe would be forfeited? Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, for instance, whom Nabokov had been eager to get for the Festival, already turned out to be completely booked for 1961.⁷⁶

Nabokov recaptured his patience and wrote a nine-page reply, explaining with all the tact he could muster on what points he thought Bandō's proposal was not recommendable. While perfectly agreeing that the Crown Prince of Japan should be asked to act as chairman of the Honorary Committee (Nabokov stressed this four times), he advised against the inclusion of heads of state from other countries on the ground that the EWME was not a governmental, i.e., a political, event and that if the British Queen and US President were invited, other heads of state of participating countries would expect to be invited as well. For the same reason, Nabokov considered it to be more appropriate to draft into the Administrative Committee music experts and personalities associated with radio, opera, and symphony orchestras rather than representatives of governmental institutions and diplomatic missions outside of Japan. Subsequently, Nabokov reported to Bandō on all the lobbying activities he had undertaken in Washington to secure the participation of a prestigious American orchestra, urging KBK to throw in its weight as the inviting party as soon as possible.⁷⁷ Much to his frustration, however, Nabokov's Japanese partners appeared not to consider getting into business before the organizational framework had been consolidated—a process that only reached a conclusion by mid-September, by which time this framework had crystallized into a bureaucratic edifice consisting of a five-member Honorary Committee, a forty-five member Executive Committee, a twenty-two member Standing Committee, an eighteen-member Advisory Committee, and a nine-member Executive Office.⁷⁸

was obviously too late to be concerned with this. "A Plan for a Conference-Festival of World Music to be Held in Tokyo, Japan, in April 1959," Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398.

⁷⁶ Passin to Nabokov, notes on Bandō's letter of July 6, 1959, CCF, III-37-10.

⁷⁷ Nabokov to Bandō, July 29, 1959, CCF, III-37-10.

⁷⁸ Much of the early paperwork produced by the Japanese EWME Committee (which is stored in the Library of the Metropolitan Festival Hall in Tokyo) involves the organizational setup,

As mentioned before, the road towards the EWME was covered with many such misunderstandings, which were mainly due to language (Bandō's English was quite deficient), differences in organizational concepts, and oblique expectations on both sides. As it transpired in the weeks that followed, KBK seemed to have approved the project on the understanding that the visit of an American orchestra and British ballet company was beyond doubt. In reality, KBK's formalized commitment was only the beginning of negotiations with Western agencies, which surely would have failed without such an assurance. As KBK started to show signs of retreating, things again lingered up in the air, thereby once more stoking Nabokov's worries over the quality, not to mention the feasibility, of the Festival. Had it been possible for the EWME to take place in spring 1960, it could have profited from the coincidence that the Boston Symphony Orchestra (BSO) was slated to tour Southeast Asia under ANTA auspices at that time. As the prospect of ANTA sending another top American orchestra in 1961 seemed unlikely, Nabokov prepared Bandō for the scenario that an orchestra would probably have to be sought in Europe, a scenario that would bring in another financial complication, as European ensembles, in contrast to American and Soviet ones, never came free of charge. Both Fleischmann and Nabokov urged Robert H. Thayer, Special Assistant to the State Department's Secretary for the Coordination of International Educational and Cultural Relations, to either postpone the trip of the BSO to 1961 or to send another orchestra, preferably the New York Philharmonic (which had recently performed to much acclaim in Moscow, Leningrad, and Kiev with a program featuring Stravinsky's *Le Sacre du printemps* and Concerto for Piano and Wind Orchestra as well as Charles Ives's *The Unanswered Question*),⁷⁹ but there was little that the statesman could do. All divisions within the State Department and the US Embassy in Tokyo agreed that the CCF's request was "worthy of consideration," if only because the EWME—in contrast to the Osaka Festival—would "exclude communist orbit attractions."⁸⁰ The timing of the request, however, could not have been worse: not only were the preparations for the 1960 Asian tour

appointment of committee members, statutory matters, and task descriptions. EWME Papers, doc. 10, 11, and 13.

⁷⁹ Nabokov had been plotting a strategy with Leonard Bernstein to persuade the State Department to send the NYPO for his festival at least since the summer of 1959. Nabokov to Bernstein, June 25 and September 16, 1959, Nabokov Papers, 3-1; Nabokov to Bernstein, July 31, 1959, CCF, III-37-11.

⁸⁰ From the beginning, Michi Murayama, Executive Director of the Osaka International Festival, was concerned to convene musical groups from both sides of the Iron Curtain. For the Festival's first edition in 1958, she even tried to make Metropolitan Opera tenor Jan Peerce perform with the Leningrad Philharmonic Orchestra, but this proposal was turned down by the Russians for the reason that their "artistic conscience" would not allow a joint appearance with an American musician. "Want Russ, Peerce Concert," *Pacific Stars and Stripes* [US Army, Tokyo], 9.

of the BSO too advanced for a postponement, but it was also felt that an American orchestra should be in Japan in 1960 to mark the centennial of US-Japan diplomatic relations. That Congress would approve expenditure for sending out two orchestras to the same area two years in succession was, needless to say, highly improbable. In fact, at the time the State Department considered Nabokov's request the Bureau of the Budget announced a cut of \$500,000 off the Cultural Presentations Program for 1960, precisely the sum which Thayer had been hoping to assign to the EWME. He suggested the New York City Opera as an alternative for an orchestra, but this was unacceptable for KBK, which rather postponed or called off the Encounter than to try and go through with the plans without a major American orchestra. Likewise, the Japanese did not accept the Jerome Robbins Ballet as a substitute for the much more expensive Royal Ballet (for which a sum of £16,000 had to be raised in order to secure its participation).⁸¹

At this time Nabokov considered writing off Japan and shifting his attention back to India, in the hope that he could pull off there an Encounter on the limited scale he initially proposed to John D. Rockefeller III. He left the choice to KBK whether it wished to hold the Festival in 1961 without an American orchestra or the Royal Ballet, to consider postponement until 1962, or to cancel the project altogether.⁸² Bandō reaffirmed KBK's commitment, but emphasized that the success of its fundraising efforts at home hinged on having at least one prestigious ensemble from the West. Thus the situation remained in limbo for another two months, but then, finally, the EWME project was hit by a stroke of luck: Ian Hunter, the impresario hired by the CCF to coordinate the festival program, managed to secure the participation of the Royal Ballet (part of the travel costs were paid for by one of Nabokov's wealthy friends, Hong Kong business tycoon Harold Lee). In addition, the prospect of having the New York Philharmonic Orchestra (NYPO) in Japan seemingly improved thanks to a twin-city agreement between New York and Tokyo established in early March 1960. It soon appeared, however, that this agreement did not yield a

⁸¹ Robert Schnitzer, General Manager of ANTA's International Exchange Program, to Ian Hunter, September 22, 1959; Hunter to Nabokov, September 24, 1959; Bandō to Nabokov, October 22, 1959; Nabokov to Bandō, October 26, 1959; Fleischmann to Nabokov, November 10, 1959; Nabokov to Fleischmann, December 4, 1959; John Thompson, Executive Director, Fairfield Foundation, Minutes of a meeting between Bandō, Thompson, Thayer and other representatives from the State Department, December 7, 1959; Nabokov to Bandō, December 18, 1959, CCF, III-37-5+6+9+10; Thayer to Fleischmann, November 6, 1959; James F. Magdanz, Chief, Cultural Presentations Staff, to Thayer, November 13, 1959; Frank P. Lockhart, Jr., Public Affairs Officer, Bureau of Far Eastern Affairs, to J. Graham Parsons, Assistant Secretary of State for Far Eastern Affairs, November 17, 1959, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, A1 5072, 3-East-West Music Encounter.

⁸² Nabokov to Bandō, December 18, 1959, CCF, III-37-10.

single penny for the projected NYPO tour. As time progressed, both KBK and NYPO managed to solicit a subsidy of \$100,000 each (NYPO from the Columbia Broadcasting System, KBK from various business corporations in Tokyo), reducing the sum required to turn the NYPO tour into reality to a mere \$50,000. Again Fleischmann and the NYPO knocked at the door of the State Department, but still Thayer saw no opportunity to justify even this much support to another orchestra so soon after the BSO tour. Thereupon the NYPO management decided to take the risk, assuming that its Board of Directors would be prepared to cover the deficit. In the end, several sponsors including John D. Rockefeller III chipped in. Last but not least, the CIA, too, seemed to have put its oar in when its agent stationed at the CCF Paris secretariat, the novelist John C. Hunt (who took over the administrative control after Josselson suffered a severe heart attack), informed NYPO that the CCF was “prepared to pay \$20,000 directly to the Philharmonic.”⁸³ As if there was no end to this generous turn of fortune which suddenly befell the EWME project, the Rockefeller Foundation honored Nabokov’s application for a grant to enable five scholars concerned with “the problems of music of Southern Asia” (cited in the grant allocation as “the mutual impact of Western and Oriental composition, the changing significance of music for the individual listener and for education, religion, and entertainment within a particular culture, and the host of dangers and opportunities brought on by the modernization and hybridization of music in most countries today”) not only to participate in the EWME Conference, but also to extend their stay in the region to carry out research for a period of at least two months in the line of their particular interest.⁸⁴

⁸³ Bandō to Judd, February 16, 1960, NYPO Archives, Record Group “Executive—Carlos Moseley,” file “Tour of Japan et al. 1961”; Nabokov to Josselson, March 6, 1960, CCF, II-245-6; Hunter to George Judd, Jr., NYPO General Manager, May 11, 1960; Judd to Hunter, June 6, 1960; Hunter to Judd, June 24, 1960, NYPO Archives, Record Group “Executive—George E. Judd, Jr.,” file “Spring Tour 1961: Japan Operations Correspondence”; David M. Keiser, NYPO President, to Thayer, July 15, 1960; Thayer to Keiser, July 21, 1960; Keiser to Judd, July 29, 1960, NYPO Archives, Record Group “Executive—George E. Judd, Jr.,” file “Spring Tour 1961: State Department Correspondence”; Thayer to Fleischmann, August 18, 1960, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, A1 5072, 3-EWME; Nabokov to Bernstein, November 9, 1960, Bernstein Papers, 41-22; Jean Losee to Carlos Moseley, note of a telephone conversation with Nabokov, February 14, 1961, Record Group “Executive—Carlos Moseley,” file “Tour of Japan et al. 1961”; Judd, memorandum “Contribution-Rockefeller-Japan Tour,” March 9, 1961, NYPO Archives, Record Group “Executive-George E. Judd, Jr.,” file “Spring Tour 1961: Finances and Budget.”

⁸⁴ The Rockefeller Foundation had at the time a particular interest in promoting comparative music scholarship as part of a larger program aimed at facilitating intercultural understanding through art and education. Boyd R. Compton, RF Assistant Director, memorandum “East-West Music Encounter,” September 21, 1960; Grant Allocation No. 60192, October 21, 1960, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398. Recipients of such a grant (\$3,500) were Peter Crossley-Holland, Alain Daniélou, Virgil Thomson, Trần Văn Khê, and Lou Harrison. Crossley-Holland chose to study the traditional music of Lamaist and Tibetan communities living outside of Tibet; Daniélou early musical exchanges between Japan and

To be sure, not all was plain sailing henceforward. Although the State Department did sponsor the visits of the Juilliard Quartet, the Modern Jazz Quartet, the violinist Isaac Stern and the Metropolitan Opera soprano Zinka Milanov, no funding had been secured for the American participants to the EWME Conference: Elliott Carter, Henry Cowell, Robert Garfias, Mantle Hood, Colin McPhee, and Roger Sessions (the latter of whom cancelled his participation due to lack of time and was subsequently replaced by the San Francisco-based music critic Alfred V. Frankenstein). In addition, the sponsor of Israeli participation to the Conference suddenly backed out, obliging the CCF to look for an alternative. Nabokov travelled to the US East Coast in January 1961 to see if money would flow more easily under the newly installed Kennedy administration. It did: he left the State Department (after first having paid a visit to the presidential couple in the White House who asked him for his ideas on how to raise the cultural prestige of the US capital city⁸⁵) with grants for the American conference participants, and found a new sponsor for the Israelis in the person of Philadelphia businessman Frederick R. Mann.⁸⁶ The most pressing problems

Southeast Asia (Thailand, Cambodia, and Indonesia); Thomson the musical infrastructure of Japan and the Japanese composer's relation to Japanese and Western musical traditions; Văn Khê the methods of teaching traditional music in China (Hong Kong), Japan, and Vietnam; Harrison the modal relationships between the "serious" musics of Southeast Asia which he planned to record. (Upon Nabokov's advice to limit his study to a smaller area than all the way "down the coast of Asia from Japan to Indonesia," Harrison decided to focus on Indonesia. Yet, when he figured out that "the Indonesians no longer in serious music tune their music so that the whole matter seems a 'performed fossil' to me," he shifted his focus to Thailand, only to become during his stay in Tokyo so enamored of Korean music that he decided at the last minute to spend his two months of research time in Seoul to study Korean ceremonial music at the National Classical Music Institute.) Crossley-Holland to Nabokov, December 29, 1960; Daniélou to Nabokov, November 18, 1960; Harrison to Nabokov, December 19, 1960; Nabokov to Harrison, December 28, 1960; Thomson to Nabokov, December 1, 1960; Trần to Nabokov, December 14, 1960, CCF, III-38-3+5+10 and 39-6; Harrison to Compton, April 16, 1961; Interview Charles Burton Fahs with Harrison, April 26, 1961, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398+399.

⁸⁵ Nabokov to Jacqueline Kennedy, February 23, 1961, Arthur Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf. Nabokov advised the First Lady that she "could best help the President and the United States by increasing the feeling among artists and intellectuals all over the world that the White House is a cultural center concerned with the life of the mind and with arts, and that in fact it is their home where they are appreciated, invited, and honored." Practically, he suggested what would become the famous series of informal receptions at the White House for "outstanding leaders of the intellectual and artistic community all over the world," among whom Pablo Casals, Henry and Sidney Cowell, Eugene Ormandy, Roy Harris, and Igor Stravinsky.

⁸⁶ Nabokov to Josselson and Hunt, February 15, 1961, CCF, II-245-7. Mann's grant did not suffice to enable all Israeli delegates who had originally been selected to travel to Japan. The grants went to the composers Paul Ben-Haim and Josef Tal and, much to the dismay of the musicologist Peter Gradenwitz, to the program director of the Israel Broadcasting Service, Y. Spira, "a radio man who counts nothing." Gradenwitz had reason to be indignant—he had already been working for more than a decade on what would become his classic study of East/West musical exchanges, *Musik zwischen Orient und Okzident: Eine Kulturgeschichte der Wechselbeziehungen* (Wilhelmshaven: Heinrichshofen, 1977)—but Spira was allocated a grant because his sponsor was interested in his

might have been solved, but Nabokov's patience kept being tested up to the opening moment of the Encounter. He had to cancel a planned performance of Henry Cowell's *Ongaku* when it was pointed out to him that the Japanese considered the piece "condescending" (it was replaced by Toshirō Mayuzumi's *Bacchanale*).⁸⁷ KBK's last-minute tinkering with the Conference program drove him mad;⁸⁸ projected contributions from Ceylon, Burma, Laos, Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Chinese territories⁸⁹ failed to materialize, as a result of which the Asian part of the Festival program was limited to India, Thailand, and Japan; the FRG Foreign Office in Bonn was being difficult about an earlier promise to pay the travel and sojourn of baritone Hermann Prey;⁹⁰ the Belgian Foreign Office refused to pay the cost of sending Safford Cape's *Pro Musica Antiqua* since the bill restoring Belgian-Japanese relations had not yet been ratified⁹¹; and the soprano Helga Pilarczyk displayed stereotypical diva behavior when asked to travel tourist class: she could not feel more offended and insisted on singing Schoenberg's *Erwartung* under Leonard Bernstein instead of Webern's *Songs*, Op. 13 and 14, under Bruno Maderna. (Angry to be bothered with "this Pilarczyk business," Nabokov snarled he could not care less if the prima donna "sings, whistles, dances, drowns or goes to bed with an elephant."⁹²) Most of these major and minor incidents turned out all right. His worst concern, however, did not disappear until well after the East-West Music Encounter had opened.

plans to organize an East/West Festival in Tel Aviv in 1962. Nabokov to Gradenwitz, February 27, 1961; Gradenwitz to d'Arschot, April 24, 1961, CCF, III-38-4.

⁸⁷ Nabokov to Bernstein (cable), March 26, 1961; Moseley to Nabokov, April 3, 1961, NYPO Archives, Record Group "Executive—Carlos Moseley/Tour of Japan et al. 1961."

⁸⁸ KBK, "Adaptation of the Conference Plan Proposed by the Japanese Advisory Committee," undated but late December 1960, CCF, III-39-8; Nabokov to Thomson, January 1, 1961, Thomson Papers, 29-69-17. The Western Committee did accept KBK's revisions, but Nabokov's assistant, Ruby d'Arschot, suggested that if the Japanese would come with another set of "suggestions," Nabokov and Hunter should "go and commit hara-kiri on the KBK doorstep, [which] would give them to understand they have gone too far." Ruby d'Arschot to Ian Hunter, January 23, 1961, CCF, III-38-5.

⁸⁹ The Japanese Organization Committee was committed to engaging a Chinese opera troupe, preferably from the PRC. The reasons for this preference are not clearly stated. Perhaps it was to deflect criticism as to the political rationale of the EWME, but it might also have had to do with purely artistic reasons. When the PRC government (for obvious reasons) refused to lend its cooperation, attempts were made to obtain a troupe from Taiwan or Hong Kong, but it was apparently difficult to find a qualitatively good troupe.

⁹⁰ Franz Offermanns to Hunter, March 11, 1961, CCF, III-38-7.

⁹¹ D'Arschot to Nabokov, April 6, 1961, CCF, III-38-7.

⁹² Nabokov to d'Arschot, February 14, 1961, CCF, III-38-7.

When the Twain Meet: Political Imbrolio at the Encounter's Reception

All the bumps and potholes on the road towards the Encounter did not measure up against the most strenuous backlash which the EWME organization found itself confronted with on the Japanese scene: the nationwide protest against the revised and extended US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty (Anpo), initiated in 1957 by the conservative cabinet of Nobusuke Kishi (Liberal Democratic Party) and signed in Washington on January 19, 1960. When Nabokov visited Japan in March of that year, he found a society intensely divided over the revamped pact. In fact, the dust over Japan's entry into a military partnership with the United States nearly a decade ago (September 8, 1951) had barely settled, and by 1960 Japan's political arena was permeated with strong anti-establishment sentiments. To be sure, this resistance was only to a very limited extent driven by wholehearted Communists; the majority of the Kishi cabinet's critics were motivated by—as one devoted anti-Communist explained to the Eisenhower administration—“a mixture of antipathy towards some conservative party politicians, naïve acceptance of communist propaganda concerning the absolute military superiority of Soviet Russia and Communist China, unreasoning fear of war, and anti-American feeling caused by the preceding factors.”⁹³

In the cultural domain, the Young Japan Association (*Wakai Nihon no Kai*)—an interdisciplinary body of young and politically engaged artists established in 1958 to protest the Kishi government's proposal to confer more power to the police to intervene in the public arena in the name of public safety—strongly advised the Japanese Diet against ratification of the treaty. In the musical field, numerous organizations cried out their indignation, including the Japanese branch of the International Society for Contemporary Music (*Nihon Gendai Ongaku Kyōkai* [Gen-On]) and the Young Musicians [Union] (*Seinen Ongakuka Gikai*), the latter of which included the composers Toshirō Mayuzumi, Makoto Moroi, and Tōru Takemitsu. Of the multiple music associations that Japan knew at the time, those further on the leftwing of the political spectrum started to identify the EWME plans with the security treaty, and—purportedly supported by the local Yen earnings of visiting artists from the Soviet Union—launched a campaign denouncing both in one breath. Thus, in spite of itself, the EWME was dragged mercilessly into a bitter controversy and precipitated what Nabokov described to the CCF's newest ally, J. Robert Oppenheimer, as a “great game of nerves.”⁹⁴

⁹³ Response by Tetsuzo Watanabe, President, Free Asia Association (Tokyo) to a request for advice from the President's Committee on Overseas Information Programs and Policies, April 1960, U.S. President's Committee on Information Activities Abroad (DDEL), 9-Asia, No. 30 (5).

⁹⁴ “Japanese Protests Reported Financed By Russian Artists,” *New York Times*, June 18, 1960, 4. Nabokov to J. Robert Oppenheimer, July 4, 1961, Oppenheimer Papers, 52-4. One would expect

The first signs of this “game of nerves” became manifest at the press conference concluding Nabokov’s March 1960 visit during which KBK announced to the public the plans for a grand-scale music festival that was to mark both the opening of the newly-built Metropolitan Festival Hall in Ueno Park (the *Bunka Kaikan*, designed by Kunio Maekawa) and the quincennial of the City of Tokyo (Edo). Many of the questions the battalion of reporters fired at Bandō and KBK President Kōgorō Uemura sought to establish the EWME as a “purely anti-communist propaganda show” by virtue of its government-aligned consortium of organizers and sponsors. The situation escalated when Prime Minister Kishi rushed the ratification of the security treaty through the Diet in May of that year (May 20) by a snap vote, igniting a new and more intense wave of protests, demonstrations, and strikes from virtually all sectors of Japanese society. In the musical field, various associations bundled their powers to call for Kishi’s resignation and new elections in the name of the newly-formed Association of Musicians to Defend Democracy (*Minsbushugi o Mamoru Ongakuka no Kai*). Many involved in this intricate maze of protest groups participated in the mass demonstrations which kept the capital city in its grip for weeks, forcing the Kishi government to request of the White House a postponement of President Eisenhower’s impending visit to the Land of the Rising Sun and to comply with the wish of the people to resign. During the most violent demonstration before the Diet building on June 15, 1960, hundreds of students and policemen got injured, and one student found her death. Nevertheless, the Japanese House of Representatives passed the bill on June 19.⁹⁵

As the anti-Anpo attacks grew uglier by the day, the attacks on the EWME intensified as well. Indeed, incited by Soviet and Chinese assurances that Japan’s “true friends” would never ask her to commit to “an insecurity

that the Japanese detractors of the EWME would have capitalized on the fact that Oppenheimer was one of the chief architects of the atomic bomb of which Hiroshima and Nagasaki had felt the impact. As far as I can determine, however, no such links were made in the anti-EWME press. For the CCF, Oppenheimer, whose postwar advocacy of international control of nuclear power (including the Soviet Union) and opposition to plans for developing the hydrogen bomb provoked the ire of the political establishment in Washington to such an extent that he had his license to government-sponsored plants revoked, was an important asset for the CCF in order to defuse the widely spread impression that the CCF was a mouthpiece of the US government.

⁹⁵ Nabokov to John Hunt, March 1, 1960; Nabokov to Josselson, March 13, 1961, CCF, II-245-6+7. For an extensive account of the Anpo demonstrations from the perspective of a US diplomat, see George R. Packard III, *Protest in Tokyo: The Security Treaty Crisis of 1960* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966). For more on the involvement of visual and performing artists in the protests, see Thomas R. H. Havens, *Radicals and Realists in the Japanese Nonverbal Arts: The Avant-Garde Rejection of Modernism* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2006), 126–31; and Yayoi Uno Everett, “Scream against the Sky’: Japanese Avant-garde Music in the Sixties,” in *Sound Commitments: Avant-garde Music and the Sixties*, ed. Robert Adlington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 187–208.

treaty” that would involve her in a nuclear war which the United States was surely bent on launching, the progressive/neutralist wing of the anti-Anpo movement pulled out all registers to defame the EWME. The Tokyo branch of the Workers’ Music Association (*Tōkyō Kinrōsha Ongaku Kyōgikai* [Ro-On]), at the time one of the most powerful organizations in Japan’s musical life, issued a lengthy statement expressing “our fear that the proposed Music Festival in Tokyo, far from being intended for free and democratic cultural exchange, may import a ‘cold war’ into the sphere of cultural exchange.” In less restrained terms, an action group with the straightforward name Society for Criticizing the Tokyo World Music Festival (established within the headquarters of the People’s Cultural Congress of the Japanese General Council of Trade Unions [*Nihon Rōdō Kumiai Sōhyōgikai*, short, *Sōhyō*]) discredited the projected Tokyo Festival as a “musical counterpart of the Security Pact” set up by the “sinister agent” of an organization that “strongly smells of anti-Communism.”⁹⁶

The tentacles of the anti-EWME lobby reached deep into Japan’s musicological establishment as well: although a few of its members attended as observers, officially both the Japan Musicological Society (*Nippon Ongaku Gakkai*) and the East Asian Music Society (*Tōyō Ongaku Gakkai*) refused to affiliate themselves with the Encounter because of its imputed political underpinnings. Neither would the Japanese National Commission at IMC lend its cooperation, because—as its Executive Secretary, Shūkichi Mitsukuri, informed the IMC headquarters in Paris—“the principles of the CCF and the IMC are different.”⁹⁷ This move came unexpectedly. Not only had the IMC wholeheartedly expressed its support for the EWME, but also the National Commission’s president, Yoshiyuki Katō, earlier told Bandō that he considered the EWME project to be of “special value” and asked Mitsukuri to set up a meeting with Bandō to discuss how the Commission could be of assistance. Mitsukuri promised to put the issue on the agenda of the next Commission meeting, which the KBK secretary would be invited to attend as an observer. This invitation never came, however, and without ever having consulted Bandō, the result of this meeting as to the Commission’s support of the EWME was negative, stating as reasons that the Commission was already too much involved in other IMC activities, that it was too late for the Commission to make arrangements for the EWME, that the Commission was understaffed and underfunded, and that the Commission had not received any instructions from its mother organization.

⁹⁶ Kiyooki Murata, “Moscow’s Drive in 1961: Stresses Dangers of Security Pact, Asks People to Be Neutral,” *The Japan Times*, February 2, 1961, 8; Eloise Cunningham, “‘Music Encounter’ in Japan,” undated clipping from probably *The Japan Times*, Colin McPhee Collection, 13-161; Nabokov to d’Arschot, March 12, 1961, CCF, III-38-7.

⁹⁷ Mitsukuri, Executive Secretary of the Japanese National Music Committee, to Jack Bornoff, General Secretary of the International Music Council, June 20, 1960, EWME Papers, doc. 28.

Thereupon both Nabokov and the IMC secretariat painstakingly conveyed the IMC position regarding the Encounter and pointed out that all means would be put at the disposal of the National Commission to lend its cooperation to the KBK in organizing it. To no avail: as far as the Commission was concerned, Mitsukuri had acted according to its decision that it would not consider cooperation as long as KBK did not break off all relations with the CCF.⁹⁸

The National Commission, which apparently bypassed its president's stance regarding the EWME, was quite disingenuous in citing bureaucratic formalities as the reason for its intransigent attitude. As it appeared, Mitsukuri had allowed himself to be swayed by those who insisted that the EWME was a sheer "political anti-Communist action" led by "a leader of the Cold War" and as such should be prevented from taking place. Not only did he maneuver the National Commission into adopting this position, he even warned other branches of the IMC of the EWME's alleged political taint, telling them that the festival and conference programs had been unilaterally decided upon by the CCF and advising against collaboration. Needless to say, Nabokov scowled at Mitsukuri's solitary obstruction and asked IMC Executive Secretary Jack Bornoff to arrange a meeting with the Japanese representative for UNESCO in Paris, Kunio Toda, to clear up the matter. There was little that Toda could do to contain the damage, though: the grip of the Workers' Music Association on Japanese musical life was powerful, he told Nabokov.⁹⁹

The situation worsened when other rivalries, unrelated to the Cold War, came into play. As it appeared, the Murayama family, the founders and patrons of the Osaka Festival, had already expressed in the autumn of 1959 their desire to have the New York Philharmonic Orchestra (NYPO) on their program for 1961 and offered a considerable sum towards underwriting the cost of a Japanese tour. The NYPO management had to decline the offer after it had come up against a brick wall in the State Department, which felt that the limited budget for its Cultural Representations Program only

⁹⁸ Bandō, "1961-nen Tōkyō Sekai Ongakusai ni tsuite" [About the 1961 Tokyo World Music Festival], a report written by KBK about what it had done to refute the criticism on the EWME. EWME Papers, doc. 18; John Evarts, IMC Associate Executive Secretary, to Mitsukuri, March 28, 1960, EWME Papers, doc. 26; Yoshiyuki Katō, President, Japanese National Music Commission for the IMC, to Mario Labroca, IMC President, October 18, 1960, EWME Papers, doc. 30; Nabokov, "Report on the East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo," 11, CCF, III-40-3.

⁹⁹ Eloise Cunningham, "Music of the Hemispheres: Special Report on the East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo," *Musical America* 81/7 (July 1961): 23; Nabokov to Bandō, October 6, 1960, CCF, III-38-2; Toda to Bandō, December 29, 1960, reproduced in KBK's report on the EWME, EWME Papers, doc. 18. Since its establishment in Osaka in 1949, the Workers' Music Association, or Ro-On, had rapidly expanded its membership, counting into the six hundred thousands by 1960.

justified expenditures on less grandiose operations.¹⁰⁰ Subsequently, the Murayamas sought to secure the participation of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, a proposal that—despite the fact that nearly two-thirds of the total costs of DM 908,300 was to come from German sources—was most welcomed by the GDR government, which saw the tour as a chance to “gain a political foothold in Japanese public life via music” and to offset the propaganda effects of the CCF festival.¹⁰¹ Understandably, when the news arrived that the New York Philharmonic was to come to Japan after all, and, worse, to start its tour at the Tokyo Festival (April 17–May 6) rather than the coinciding Osaka Festival (April 13–May 6), the Murayamas felt offended and insisted that KBK share the Gewandhaus Orchestra in exchange for the Royal Ballet. KBK might have signed for this exchange had it not been for the Leipzig Orchestra (or perhaps better, the GDR government) which refused to be exchanged with the Royal Ballet because it would not participate in a CCF-sponsored festival. Subsequently, the Murayamas decided not to take anything from KBK’s list of entertainment and cancel the Royal Ballet for their festival. At this moment the situation could have been contained had the Murayamas not owned the *Asahi Shimbun*, one of Japan’s leading conservative newspapers which now weighed in on the smear campaign against the EMWE.¹⁰²

¹⁰⁰ David M. Keiser, President, New York Philharmonic Society, to Robert H. Thayer, Special Assistant to the Secretary of State, November 27, 1959; Thayer to Keiser, December 10, 1959, NYPO Archives, Record Group “Executive—George E. Judd, Jr.,” file “Spring Tour 1961: State Department Correspondence.”

¹⁰¹ Hans Pischner, representative of the Minister of Culture, to Otto Winzer, Chair, Committee for Foreign Cultural Relations, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, June 23, 1960; Kurella to V. A. Korolyov, First Secretary of the Soviet Embassy in the GDR, October 6, 1960, SAPMO (BA), D30/IV2/2.026/105, fols. 59-60, 63-4. The Gewandhaus Orchestra received the invitation for the Osaka Festival through the concert agent Albert Sarfati on May 3, 1960, and subsequently forwarded it to the Ministry of Culture for official approval. Albert Sarfati to Karl Zumpe, Director, Gewandhaus Orchestra, May 3, 1960; Zumpe to Sarfati, June 9, 1960. I am grateful to Claudius Böhm, the archivist of the Gewandhaus Orchestra, to confirm the date of the invitation. As it transpired, confusion reigned in the GDR cultural bureaucracy about the two Japanese festivals. Acting upon the information of the Soviet Foreign Ministry (which in itself acted upon the information of a Japanese contact), Alfred Kurella, SED’s adviser in cultural affairs, warned Alexander Abusch, Minister of Culture, that the Osaka Festival would host a conference organized by the CCF, the purpose of which would be to adduce evidence that music could only advance in the “free world.” The Japanese source purportedly advised to stage the Gewandhaus Orchestra’s concerts as a riposte to the “political provocation of the Osaka Festival.” It seems that the Soviet Foreign Ministry misunderstood their informant. Kurella to Abusch, October 5, 1960, SAPMO (BA), D30/IV2/2.026/105, fols. 61-2.

¹⁰² Ross Parmenter, “The World of Music: Tokyo Evens It Up,” *New York Times*, January 29, 1961, X11; Nabokov to Hunt, February 10, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3. Nabokov summarizes in this letter a report from the Tokyo Embassy which Thayer had been reading to him. To be sure, the NYPO would call at Osaka during its five-city tour of Japan (on May 1 and 2), but not under the auspices of the Osaka Festival and not in the Murayamas’ Festival Hall. In the end, a compromise agreement was reached between the Tokyo and Osaka Festivals to share the Royal Ballet, Isaac Stern and the Juilliard Quartet. Nabokov to Josselson and Hunt, February 15, 1961, CCF, II-245-

The domestic turmoil against the EWME raged on relentlessly and even in the week before the opening, Nabokov and KBK had to stage two press conferences to ensure the Japanese audience that the Encounter had been set up as “a pure gathering of culture,” not as a “pure political maneuver,” “a propaganda sounding board” or “a passport to a good political hair-pulling contest,” to quote a few qualifications circulating in the anti-EWME press.¹⁰³ To deflect the main sticks with which his opponents beat him and KBK, he pointed out that the EWME was not a design of either the Japanese government or foreign powers (invitations had been sent out under the name of KBK only and care was taken in the Japanese promotion material to make it appear as if the event had been a homegrown idea¹⁰⁴), that Japanese musicians had been involved in its planning from the very beginning, and that none of the socialist nations had been deliberately excluded from participation in either the festival or conference program. Just as had been the case with the Rome Festival, invitations and requests for participants had been sent out to the PRC, USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia. As could be expected, only Yugoslavia responded positively; the PRC, Poland and Czechoslovakia failed to reply, and Tikhon Khrennikov, president of the Soviet Composers’ Union, pretended never to have received an invitation when he filed a protest to Nabokov for what to him seemed a ban on participants from the socialist countries to the EWME.¹⁰⁵

Khrennikov’s allegation was dubious, since the EWME’s impresario, Ian Hunter, had gone to Moscow personally to obtain participation from a

7. The Murayamas had reason to be intransigent: the year before, artistic director Michi Murayama had cancelled an unnamed European orchestra which she had booked for the 1960 Osaka Festival when the United States Cultural Center in Tokyo assured her that the Boston Symphony Orchestra would be able to get to Osaka in time to open the Festival, only to be informed at a late stage that this was not the case. This incident had obviously made Murayama suspicious of future American promises. Parmenter, “Osaka Fete Cites Bungling By U.S.,” *New York Times*, April 20, 1960, 78.

¹⁰³ “Music Encounter Being Billed as Cold War Strife,” *The Japan Times*, April 16, 1961, 3.

¹⁰⁴ KBK, Purpose statement in the brochure “1961 Tokyo East-West Music Encounter,” 1, CCF, III-39-9. This folder also contains Japanese-language brochures explaining the history and mission of the CCF.

¹⁰⁵ Nabokov surmised that the Japanese detractors of the EWME had instigated the boycott on the part of the socialist countries, and advised that both he and Bandō send out an explanation and a second invitation to Khrennikov. Interviews Charles Burton Fahs, Director, RF Humanities Division, with Nabokov, February 16 and April 25, 1961, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-399; Nabokov to Bandō, February 2, 1961; Bandō to Khrennikov, February 18, 1961, repr. in KBK’s report about the EWME, EWME Papers, doc. 18. The invitation letters to Kabalevsky and Khrennikov, which suggested the participation of Shostakovich, David Oistrakh, and Emil Gilels, are reprinted in the same report. The invitation to the Polish Composers’ Union requested the participation of the composers Witold Lutoslawski, Zygmunt Mycielski, and Stefan Kisielewski, all of whom politely declined. CCF, III-38-7.

Soviet orchestra or ensemble, but obviously to no avail.¹⁰⁶ Likewise, as it appears from the internal correspondence of the East German cultural establishment, the “White Russian émigré Nabokow [*sic*], whom the progressive Japanese press had unmasked as an agent of the [US Army’s] CIC [Counter Intelligence Corps],” had been anxious to have the Gewandhaus Orchestra to participate in the EWME (the report speaks about “coercion”). When this scheme failed, the CCF/KBK would have, by way of revenge, “ordered” the New York Philharmonic for Japan and scheduled its first concert on exactly the same night and hour at which the Gewandhaus Orchestra was slated to give its first performance in Tokyo.¹⁰⁷ Needless to say, it must have been clear to Nabokov and Hunter from the beginning that chances to obtain the Gewandhaus Orchestra were dim. They probably thought it worth trying, though, if only to refute charges of not having attempted to solicit participation from socialist countries. Be it as it may, the end result was a historical novum for Tokyoites, who on Wednesday April 26, 1961 could pick from a concert menu of two Western symphony orchestras—the New York Philharmonic under Leonard Bernstein in uptown Metropolitan Festival Hall and the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra under Franz Konwitschny in downtown Hibiya Hall.

Needless to say, the political implications of this “coincidence” were hard to overlook.¹⁰⁸ For *Tōkyō Shimbun* music critic Ginji Yamane, driving force behind the anti-EWME campaign, it was beyond doubt: the Gewandhaus Orchestra concert had been of infinitely higher quality than the New York Philharmonic concert. In contrast to the American orchestra’s “jazzy” and “exaggerated” interpretations of Bartók’s *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta* and Ravel’s *La Valse*, and Bernstein’s “showy” appearance as both conductor and soloist in Ravel’s Piano Concerto in G Major (Yamane did not mention the first work on the program, Roy Harris’s Symphony No. 3), the GDR orchestra knew to “awake the spirit of Beethoven” through “technically perfect” and “stylistically faithful” renditions of various specimens from his oeuvre (“Leonore” Overture No. 3, Piano Concerto No. 5 with Dieter Zechlin as soloist, and Symphony No. 1). Indeed, when one compared these two orchestras, Yamane explained, one could only conclude that the “Leipziger function[ed] as a human, the New Yorker as a machine,” or, for that matter, the Gewandhaus Orchestra was representative of “a truly

¹⁰⁶ Michael Lombardi, “What is the East-West Music Encounter: Visiting Impresario Explains Purposes,” *Mainichi Daily*, undated clipping, CCF, III-39-7.

¹⁰⁷ Siegfried Wagner, Chair, Cultural Department of the SED Central Committee, to Alfred Kurella, Chair, Cultural Committee of the Politburo of the SED Central Committee, “Informationsbericht über die Tournee des Gewandhausorchesters in Japan,” May 26, 1961, SAPMO (BA): D30/IV2/2.026/105, fols. 66-67.

¹⁰⁸ “East Meets West,” *Newsweek* (May 8, 1961): 67.

humane and democratic country,” the New York Philharmonic of a state in which “all pseudo-cultural aspirations are made subservient to capitalism and all artistic expressions degraded to a worthless and commercial show.” Much could be said about the East-West Music Encounter, Yamane concluded, but what use would it serve when “the success of the Leipzig Orchestra outshone everything else?” What mattered was that the Japanese answer to the “harassment” by the “ominous Congress for Cultural Freedom” was an unequivocal ‘no’.¹⁰⁹

Elated by reports from its informants stating that “their” orchestra had been considerably more successful in terms of attendance and level of performance than the orchestra of the enemy, the GDR Ministry of Culture claimed victory: despite attempts of the Japanese Foreign Ministry to subject the Gewandhaus Orchestra’s members to the most intricate fine points of its visa conditions and of the West German Embassy to exploit the Orchestra’s visit for its own ends (i.e., to pose the Orchestra as a representative of all Germany, to arrange “exchanges of opinion” between Orchestra members and their Western counterparts, and to seduce at least one Orchestra member not to return to the GDR), the Japanese public now knew that the world harbored also “a peace-loving German state” which “with particular affection nurtures Germany’s cultural heritage.”¹¹⁰ From Nabokov’s perspective, however, the New York Philharmonic concerts (which included a benefit concert for a tuberculosis sanatorium for students) constituted the moment at which the public opinion in Tokyo “swung around completely” to the Western side, leading it to conclude that the EWME was “one of the most momentous and valuable events ever held in Japan,” a turnabout where the deed was added to the word with the dismissal by Yamane from the *Tōkyō Shimbun*.¹¹¹ Likewise, British officials stationed in Osaka proudly

¹⁰⁹ Ginji Yamane, “Das Gewandhausorchester in Japan,” *Musik und Gesellschaft* [GDR Union of Composers and Musicologists] 11/5 (1961): 409–12.

¹¹⁰ Wagner, “Informationsbericht über die Tournee des Gewandhausorchesters in Japan,” May 26, 1961; GDR Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Information Division, “Tournee des Gewandhausorchesters in Japan,” June 22, 1961, SAPMO (BA), D30/IV2/2.026/105, fols. 66, 70–75. Incidentally, Gewandhaus director Karl Zumpke had not been pleased about the reports he heard about the “bourgeois” behavior of “comrade Zielke,” i.e., Ernst Zielke, director of the Deutsche Konzert- und Gastspieldirektion (DKGD), who on behalf of the Ministry of Culture had been in charge of arranging (and, for that matter, guarding) the Orchestra’s relations with the Japanese. Orchestra members were disturbed over Zielke’s rejection of overtures from the West German Embassy and the FRG-related East Asian Society (Ostasiatische Gesellschaft) without having consulted them first, the press conference he organized to promote the Orchestra (which turned out a fiasco), and his dubious usage of dollars from the tour’s revenues to purchase cigarettes and spirits on the Orchestra’s return flight. Zumpke to Pischner, July 10, 1961, SAPMO (BA), D30/IV2/2.026/105, fols. 77–79.

¹¹¹ Nabokov to Josselson, May 8, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3; Nabokov to John D. Rockefeller III, June 6, 1961, CCF, III-55-5; Nabokov to Oppenheimer, July 4, 1961, Oppenheimer Papers, 52-4. In the letter to Josselson, Nabokov related how he feared “demonstrations and outright sabotage” when he arrived in Tokyo. “They did do the latter [i.e., outright sabotage] on every echelon, but

reported that the Royal Ballet, which had been contracted by the Osaka Festival after all, had not only trumped the other performing groups on the program in terms of box-office results, official attendance, and quality (to the ears of one of them, the Gewandhaus Orchestra played “extremely well,” albeit in a “slightly old-fashioned style”), but had also been granted the distinction of a civic reception, “a mark of favor not previously shown to any of the participants in these [Osaka] Festivals.”¹¹²

In fact, browsing through the voluminous press coverage the Tokyo and Osaka festivals generated, one cannot conclude otherwise than that the vast majority of the Japanese audiences could not care less about the political provenance of the musicians who performed for them, and seemed to have held unreserved enthusiasm for both. The criticism that was vented was nearly exclusively directed to the local organization: the publicity had been tardy and deficient, concert schedules conflicted, the admission prices extremely high (ranging from ¥500 to ¥3,000), none of the leading music critics provided with free tickets—all with the result that nearly half of all the available seats had remained unfilled and, consequently, the Festival closed with a deficit of what one newspaper reported to be ¥170,000,000. (To be sure, the performances of the Royal Ballet and the New York Philharmonic were sold out, but here the problem was that many seats turned out to be double-booked.) Another major point of criticism was that both the Tokyo and Osaka Festival placed too much value on foreign attractions to the detriment of local talent, although even the aforementioned Ginji Yamane, who strongly advised that future festivals should be far more reflective of the interests of Japanese citizens rather than catering to Westerner’s taste for the exotic, had to admit that the Tokyo

only succeeded to make themselves ridiculous and silly, and produce, I am told, discussion in the labor union’s left wing and dismay among many intellectuals.” Nabokov felt reinforced in his confidence by a report from a West German diplomat stationed at the German Embassy in Tokyo, who observed that “the political left, the dreamers and their puppeteers [*Drabtzieher*] from Peking [Beijing] and Moscow have evidently lost an important battle. Japan prospers and has reached about the stage that inspired [Konrad] Adenauer’s motto in the 1957 elections: “No experiments, certainty for all” [*keine Experimente, Sicherheit für alle*]. [The visit of Anastas Mikoyan, Khrushchev’s First Deputy] was a ‘flop’; the congresses of the Japanese Communist Party, the Sōhyo, and the Anti-Atom [Association]—one after the other a total failure; *Asabi* of the Murayamas, and the other major newspapers all have become pro-Western, even pro-American and demand self-criticism from the Soviet in the cases of Berlin, disarmament, and nuclear non-proliferation. [...] Each day it becomes clearer that the Festival [EWME] was remarkably significant as a principal occasion for the Japanese intelligentsia to discuss the crucial question about the relation between art, society, and politics. [The Festival] offered art without propaganda at exactly the right time—that is a great service you paid.” Andreas Meyer-Landrut to Nabokov, cited in a letter from Nabokov to Josselson, October 17, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3.

¹¹² F. J. Ronald Bottrall, Representative of the British Council, Japan, to the Far Eastern Department, British Council, April 21, 1961; R. G. H. Watts, British Consulate General in Osaka-Kobe, to E. R. Warner, Chargé d’affaires, British Embassy in Tokyo, May 9, 1961, Records of the Foreign Office (INA), FO 371/158536.

Festival scored considerably more points in this regard than the Osaka Festival.¹¹³

As for the Conference, one editorial argued that much of the commotion over the (assumed) politics of the meeting could have been prevented had the full backing of Japanese musical circles been sought. The defamation campaign of the EWME detractors had raised more doubts than Nabokov and KBK could remove, with the result that many leading Japanese musicologists stayed away. However, despite all allegations and accusations, Sadao Bekku reported, the entire conference had been held in a “purely artistic atmosphere,” the only reference to politics being made by a Yugoslavian delegate who insisted—“un-Communistically”—that “politics must not exert pressure on music.”¹¹⁴ When asked for their experiences, participants unanimously agreed that the Conference had provided an unprecedented platform for Western and Asian music professionals to speak about common problems, although many expressed dissatisfaction over the proceedings of the Conference (too many papers, too little time for discussion, too much thematic overlap, insufficient quality of simultaneous translation, etc.).¹¹⁵ This response confirmed KBK and the Metropolitan Festival Hall in their belief that the EWME could not remain a once-only affair. Less than half a year after the EWME, Bandō asked Nabokov his

¹¹³ Daily press report on the EWME produced by Nagashima Associates, an international company hired by the Festival organization to take care of the PR. Yamane’s editorial appeared in the cultural section of the *Yomiuri Shimbun* of May 3, 1961, CCF, III-39-7. See also Eloise Cunningham, “Music of the Hemispheres: Special Report on the East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo,” *Musical America* 81/7 (July 1961): 23. Late July 1961, Bandō wrote Nabokov that the “financial problems” had been settled, although “we were confronted with much difficulty owing to double the expected expenses of the EWME.” Bandō to Nabokov July 27, 1961, Nabokov Papers, 5-1.

¹¹⁴ See aforementioned daily press report. Bekku’s commentary appeared in the *Tokyo Times* of April 27, 1961. There are indications that politics might have crept in further than I could deduce from the aforementioned printed sources. Professor Yoshihiko Tokumaru (Ochanomizu University), aged 24 at the time he attended the EWME, recalled that at the end of the Conference, the Organizing Committee asked the participants to subscribe to a declaration for cultural freedom, something that Mitsukuri and others refused to do. Interview with the author, May 16, 2010. I have not come across such a declaration in the archival materials consulted by me. The only resolution that is recorded is the one proposing the foundation of an International Institute for Comparative Music Studies. The Organizing Committee did state in the press—in response to its leftist detractors—that music should be separated from politics, and this was taken by some as too much of an authoritative demand. “Artists need to make a decision for themselves,” the composer/conductor Hikaru Hayashi responded. “Some may assume a certain political responsibility while others may try to avoid it.” Hayashi quoted in “Two Opinions on the Tokyo World Music Festival,” *Ongaku Geijutsu* [Musical Art] (April 1961): 44–6.

¹¹⁵ Responses to a request for impressions by Ruby d’Arschot (May 18, 1961) by Mantle Hood, May 27, 1961; Paul Ben-Haim, May 31, 1961; Elliott Carter, May 31, 1961; Henry Cowell, June 7, 1961; Dragotin Cvetko, June 7, 1961; Thakur Jaideva Singh, June 9, 1961; Gottfried von Einem, June 11, 1961; Josef Tal, June 13, 1961; Robert Garfias, June 28, 1961; José Maceda, July 5, 1961, CCF, III-38-2+10.

opinion for plans of no less than three sequels (1962-1964), none of which ever materialized.¹¹⁶

Ideology after the End of Ideology: Assessing “Problems of Progress”

The CCF’s desire to be seen as a disinterested institute that safeguards cultural freedom wherever it is under pressure is reflected in the absence of explicit references to political rationales in the (official) paperwork Nabokov produced since the Paris Festival. In a de facto report on the Tokyo Music Festival, for instance, Nabokov did not allude to political motives besides one merely introductory sentence that “[t]he encounter I planned was inspired by the newly-acquired independence of Asian countries following on the end of the colonial era.”¹¹⁷ Indeed, as had been the case with the Rome Festival, the original outline which Nabokov drafted for the CCF Executive Committee emphatically argued for a “confrontation done on a purely cultural, that is, *non-commercial* and *non-political* basis,” now that “the growing trend towards broader and more intense cultural exchanges among the countries of the world [have made] a universal point of view on our musical heritage both timely and valuable.”¹¹⁸ If the Rome Festival sought to dispel the specter of “provincialism” that—in Nabokov’s view—kept music professionals in Western Europe from engaging in collaborations and exchanges with each other and the United States, the Tokyo Festival was to exorcise the ghost of US/Eurocentrism which prevented the “Third World” from being seen as of vital importance to the “First World.”

The EWME was part of a larger program the CCF had been developing in response to the course of detente that the Kremlin seemed to be steering since the death of “the Father of the Soviet Nation,” a political move culminating with Khrushchev’s scathing, if selective, denunciation of Stalin’s methods of terror and discipline at the Twentieth Congress of the Soviet Communist Party (February 14–25, 1956). Although struck down with a bloody hand, the wide-spread strikes in Soviet labor camps following the news of Stalin’s death brought about in their wake a considerable relaxation of restrictions and the awarding of certain legal rights to prisoners. (For example, Nabokov’s sister suddenly got word from her husband who was spending his days in Soviet imprisonment since having been kidnapped in Vienna in 1946, asking her to write him and send her packages.) The new regime also seemed to bestow greater independence upon the middle cadre, i.e., the comprehensive stratum within the Soviet bureaucracy consisting of managers of collective farms, directors of factories, and minor government

¹¹⁶ Bandō to Nabokov, October 24, 1961, CCF, III-38-2.

¹¹⁷ Nabokov, report on “The East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo” (1961), 1, CCF, III-40-3.

¹¹⁸ Nabokov, “East-West Conference and Music Festival in Japan,” from “Draft Proposal for the CCF,” undated but probably written in 1955, 8-11, CCF, III-39-1.

officials. In its foreign policy, the Kremlin cooperated in ending of the Korean War, restored diplomatic relations with Greece, Yugoslavia, and Israel, scaled back its level of control over the People's Democracies in Eastern Europe (which opened up the prospect of considerable liberal reforms in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary in particular), and made overtures to the effect of enhancing West/East relationships under the mantra of "peaceful coexistence." Finally, in the field of culture, the shackles with which Stalin/Zhdanov had constrained modernism slackened (but were not fully released), opening up the possibility that—as Nabokov put it—"the exposition we did in 1952, which consisted of works that no one in the Soviet Union ever would have dared to show at the time, might perhaps be presented there soon."¹¹⁹

These developments in the Soviet Union raised serious questions concerning the future role of the CCF. One CCF member even suggested that the time had come to invite Khrushchev to a CCF congress, for which Nabokov clearly saw no genuine reason:

I am afraid these professional smilers like he [Khrushchev] and Bulganin can really do very little for us, but I do think that some kind of a change is going on in the Soviet Union....I think that the new regime is out for 'bourgeois respectability' so that they can show their country to the bemused foreigners and say 'Look at us; we are just like any other bourgeois country.' What galls me is that the Bolsheviks have brought Russia to a state of being a kind of huge zoo to which foreigners go to investigate how the beasts are being kept and fed....The existence of concentration camps and slave labor in the Soviet Union was the most favorable weapon in the arsenal of the free world when it exposed the nature of the Soviet State. To transform the practices of slave labor and concentration camps into something which gives the appearance of respectability was therefore a must to the post-Stalinist leadership of the USSR. All over India, Burma, and even Japan, I heard rumors to the effect that concentration camps and slave labor in the Soviet Union are already things of the past. I would not be surprised if in a year or two visitors to the Soviet Union are (like Mr. [Henry] Wallace) shown camps filled with milk-fed 'free-workers'. I think it would be, in general, a very good thing if we would start exposing this new trend towards respectability which has been well exemplified during 'Laurel and Hardy's' [i.e., Khrushchev and Bulganin's] trip through India and Burma.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Nabokov cited in the proceedings of the CCF International Executive Committee meeting of January 24–25, 1955, 52-3, ACCF, 1-5.

¹²⁰ Nabokov to Bertram D. Wolfe, October 30, 1955 and January 13, 1956, Wolfe Papers, 11-1. Nabokov provided similar analyses of the situation in the Soviet Union to Rockefeller Foundation officials. Minutes of an interview of Rockefeller Foundation officers with Nabokov, February 20, 1956; Edward F. d'Arms, Associate Director of the Rockefeller Foundation's Humanities Division, "Diary of Trip to Europe," April 30 and May 2, 1956. Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1956/100, 2-13A.

Indeed, as the post-Stalin Kremlin removed the most blatant signs of totalitarianism in the Soviet Union, a major rationale for the CCF disappeared. Added to this came the dissolution of the Peace Movement and the Cominform, the fight against which had occasioned the CCF's foundation and constituted the backbone of the consensus that held the organization together in Stalin's final years. As this common enemy had now been tamed, the cracks in this consensus which had started to appear since 1952 over the questions whether the next US president should be Eisenhower or his Democratic opponent, Adlai Stevenson (who enjoyed Nabokov's favor),¹²¹ whether Julius and Ethel Rosenberg's death sentence fitted their crime of passing American atomic secrets to the Soviets,¹²² and whether the CCF should condone or publicly reject Senator McCarthy's anticommunist crusade,¹²³ became all the more apparent. In other words, time had come to re-gauge the post-Stalin state of affairs and to formulate a new common purpose that could restore the consensus and with that, secure the continued existence of the CCF.

What united many (but not all) who participated in this re-examination—conducted at the meeting of the CCF's International Executive Committee in Paris, January 24–25, and the “Future of Freedom” Conference in Milan, September 12–17, 1955—was the belief that ideology, as a utopian and holistic system of beliefs—dogmatic in its theorizing and demagogic when put into practice—had outlived its time in the West. With economic stability restored and the standard of living of the working-classes raised to an unprecedented level under the conditions of welfare-state capitalism, the passionate cries for revolution which dominated the prewar and postwar global soundscape seemed to have been silenced by a confidence that all socio-economic problems could be solved by a pragmatic, rationalist, and

¹²¹ When Stevenson embarked upon a private world tour following his defeat, Nabokov lobbied with Schlesinger to seduce the Democrat leader into accepting an official reception by the CCF in order to disassociate the CCF from the Eisenhower administration. Nabokov to Schlesinger, May 19, 1953, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf.

¹²² Days before the Rosenbergs' execution scheduled for January 14, 1953 (but later postponed to June 9, 1953), the CCF secretariat urged the ACCF to issue a strong call for clemency, not because it questioned the verdict, but because practically the whole world was pressing for clemency—something which the Communists were turning to good account. The ACCF refused to bow to the Communist campaign, however, declaring the “pre-eminent fact of the Rosenbergs' guilt must be openly acknowledged before any appeal for clemency can be regarded as having been made in good faith.” In the end, the Paris secretariat decided to cable an appeal to the White House for clemency without approval of the ACCF. “Rosenberg Clamor Seen Duping Many: Cultural Freedom Committee [ACCF] Bids Non-Communists Shun ‘Mendacious Propaganda,’” *New York Times*, January 5, 1953, 2.

¹²³ ACCF members generally agreed that McCarthy's methods were reprehensible, but differed over whether McCarthyism anno 1952 posed a greater threat to cultural freedom in the United States than Stalinism. For a discussion of the challenge that McCarthyism posed to the ACCF, and, consequently, for the CCF, see Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 164–5; Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 195–212; Wilford, *The Mighty Wurlitzer*, 83–98.

detached case-by-case approach, involving a compromise between classical liberal and socialist positions regarding the role of the state in the planning of economic growth and social welfare.¹²⁴ This pride about having found a *modus operandi* through which socialists, liberalist, and conservatives could remain on speaking terms about issues that irreconcilably divided them before and immediately after World War II was nourished by—as one observer described it—a “sometimes rampant, sometimes quiet conviction that Communism had lost the battle of ideas with the West.”¹²⁵ A similar feeling that the mission of subduing the “Red threat” in Western Europe and the United States had been accomplished permeated the CIA headquarters for more than a year already. Indeed, no longer excited about the operation over which he was in charge, Thomas Braden, coordinator of the CIA’s collection of cultural front organizations, decided to look for new adventures and offered his resignation in September 1954.¹²⁶

To some, this confidence was expressive of a misguided complacency. This was especially so for the twenty-five delegates from the Asian, African, and Latin American continents, where the overwhelming majority of the population was far removed from a minimum level of prosperity. As Dwight Macdonald put it, these delegates had not come to Milan to hear philosophical deliberations about freedom, but to find out what freedom and democracy really meant to “people with white skins,” and what these people had to offer the countries which until recently had been living under their colonial rule.¹²⁷ The Soviet Union had a strong story, and its mildly conciliatory performance at the four-power summit with the United States, Britain, and France earlier that year (Geneva, July 18, 1955) had given rise—as Cord Meyer, Braden’s successor as chief of the CIA’s International Organizations Division, explained to his colleagues at the State Department—to “tendencies in certain areas [of the world] toward excessive and possibly unrealistic optimism regarding the Soviet Union.”¹²⁸ So what

¹²⁴ Major proponents of this analysis who spoke in Milan were Raymond Aron (*The Opium of the Intellectuals* [1955]), Daniel Bell (*The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties* [1960]), C. A. R. Crosland (*The Future of Socialism* [1956]), John Kenneth Galbraith (*The Affluent Society* [1958]), Seymour Martin Lipset (*Political Man: The Social Bases of Politics* [1960]), and Edward Shils (*The Intellectual and the Powers, and Other Essays* [1972]).

¹²⁵ Edward Shils, “Letter from Milan: The End of Ideology?,” *Encounter* 5/5 (November 1955): 54.

¹²⁶ Braden in an interview with Giles Scott-Smith, June 16, 1998, in Scott-Smith, *The Politics of Apolitical Culture*, 154–5.

¹²⁷ Dwight Macdonald, “No Miracle in Milan,” *Encounter* 5/6 (December 1955): 74.

¹²⁸ Cord Meyer, Jr., Director, CIA International Organizations Division, to L. Randolph Higgs, Deputy Operations Planner, State Department, memorandum “Milan Conference Sponsored by the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” August 25, 1955, Records of the Department of State (NARA), Bureau of Public Affairs, Subject Files of the Policy Plans and Guidance Staff, A1 1587-M, 67-CCF. This memorandum was meant to provide the USIA with advice of how to publicize the Milan Conference. While it was expected that the Conference would reflect to some extent the developments of the Geneva Summit, Meyer wrote, “the entire substance and focus of the [Milan]

story did the West have to offer? As it quickly transpired, there was no story. To be sure, it is not that the Western contingent of the Milan Conference was anything but indifferent to the situation outside the European-American purview. To the contrary, as defenders of freedom from alien powers and the thesis that political freedom is a *conditio sine qua non* for economic progress, they did embrace the decolonization movement that advanced across Africa and Asia. At the same time, however, they were convinced that this thesis was immalleable, and as such they hesitated to declare a strong economic and political commitment to the expeditious development of post-independence societies, a commitment which according to the leaders of these societies was vital in order not to lose their fragile freedom to doctrinaire socialism.

Few of the Western conferees were perceptive of this friction between the affluent NATO community and the indigent non-aligned community (which had already become manifest at the 1951 founding congress of the Indian CCF). On the second day of the Milan Conference, at the end of a panel on “Economic Progress in the Underdeveloped Countries and the Rivalry of Communist and Democratic Methods,” Nabokov, who might have overheard some grumbling among his “Third World” guests, unexpectedly took the floor to express his anguish and surprise that, of the Western speakers, merely two had referred to the question of economic aid to nascent nation states and that one of them had opposed it. Subsequently, several representatives of African and Asian countries ventilated their dissatisfaction in tones varying from—as the sociologist Edward Shils described it—“statesmanlike judiciousness” to “sardonic defiance.” Their main point was that their demand for aid was not to be taken as a threat (in the sense that they would choose the Soviet side should the West fail to step into the breach), but as a matter that served a common purpose, namely, the maintenance of hard-won liberty from foreign rule. Perhaps feeling the need to channel these emotional responses lest the prospect of a dialogue would disappear, the Indian delegate Mino Masani asked his Western colleagues whether they recognized the need for the West to present an equally inspiring ideal, a cause, and a sense of belonging to the peoples of the underdeveloped world as the Kremlin knew so effectively to present. Sidney Hook was quick to understand the pertinence of Masani’s question, and commented briefly on the moral debt of the West towards the peoples of Asia and Africa before advocating what came down to unilateral aid. Few of his fellow “white skin people,” however, endorsed his answer.¹²⁹

meeting will go beyond the foreign policy pleasantries that have been exchanged and deal with fundamental questions of free versus slave societies still very much at issue in the cold war.” As the appearance of particular U.S. interest in the Conference was to be avoided, Meyer concluded, “care should be taken not to overplay the conference quantitatively.”

¹²⁹ Prabhakar Padhye, “Asia at Milan,” undated typescript, Wolfe Papers, 78-1.

To a certain extent this lack of response was understandable, as what Masani was describing smacked of precisely the beast of ideology that the Western delegates thought to have slain. As much as he recognized the vital importance of the Third World's predicament and the obligation of the West to attend to it more than it had done before, Labour Party leader Hugh Gaitskell explained, the "free world" could not give the "sense of belonging" that Masani was asking for, as such a sense could easily "tend to be fascist or communist." In similar wording George F. Kennan argued that "we should all beware of causes for causes' sake," and advised the African and Asian countries not to turn to Moscow for a type of industrial development and social communion that "Russia herself has already outgrown."¹³⁰ Needless to say, this argument did not convince those who had broached the issue. Many of them were shocked at the lack of understanding on the part of their Western colleagues of the situation which nations found themselves in that only recently had gained sovereignty and now stood at the beginning of a politico-economic trajectory that the West had passed decades or even centuries earlier. How could Westerners think that the "end of ideology" thesis which they had arrived at was exportable to areas where ideology (nationalism) recently had been, or still was, necessary to mobilize resistance against their colonizers? Indeed, "our theories of liberty," Shils admitted, "must be thought out and formulated in such a way that they will do justice to the situations of the new countries of Asia, and Africa and South America."¹³¹

The point was taken by the conference organizers. In fact, for all of Gaitskell's and Kennan's fear of ideology-driven expressions of solidarity, the CCF management realized that the future of the CCF hinged upon its ability to pick up the gauntlet thrown down by the non-aligned community. In his closing address, Michael Polanyi, the Hungarian polymath who presided over the Organization Committee, conceded that at the time the Milan convention was mooted, he had taken it for granted that "the decisive problems of our age were those raised in Europe by Europeans [and] that we had only to resist victoriously the explosive forces of Moscow's Leninism to regain the peaceful leadership of the world which had temporarily slipped from our hands." But the interventions by the Asian, African, and South American delegates had made him realize that this perspective was "altogether distorted," since in "the proud people of the ancient lands, who have started their political life as independent nations on premises of their own for which there is no precedent in Europe, we are facing our partners

¹³⁰ Gaitskell cited by Padhye, "Asia in Milan"; Kennan, closing address Milan Conference, September 17, 1955, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1957/100, 2-18.

¹³¹ Shils, "The End of Ideology?," 58.

in the shaping of man's destiny on this planet."¹³² Subsequently, a resolution was adopted expressing the solidarity of "First World" intellectuals with those of the "Third World" and calling for a committee to study the problems of freedom in developing countries.¹³³

Under the general title of "Tradition and Change: Problems of Progress" and supported (as of October 1957 for a period of two years) by a \$500,000 grant from the Ford Foundation, this committee organized several small-scale but ambitious seminars about the problems of economic planning, land reform, urbanization, trade unions, democratic citizenship, education, religion, tradition and the position of the intellectual in both developed and developing societies.¹³⁴ The tone of these seminars, featuring groups of academics from the "first" and "third" worlds, was deliberately sober, analytical, factual, informal and, most importantly, free from conspicuous proselytism and "that ugly combination of flattery, apology, condescension, and national touchiness which is the mark of meetings between people from recently colonial countries and those from the recently ruling powers."¹³⁵ Indeed, the idea behind the seminars was that by showing artists, writers, academics, and policy-makers of non-aligned countries the CCF's genuine interest in their work and problems, and by presenting models for economic and cultural development consistent with liberal traditions, the Communist

¹³² Polanyi, closing address to the Milan Conference, September 17, 1955. Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1957/100, 2-18.

¹³³ CCF, report on the 'Future of Freedom' congress in Milan, September 12-17, 1955, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1956/100, 2-13A.

¹³⁴ "The Problems of Economic Growth" (Tokyo, April 1956), "Concepts of Freedom" (Beirut, May 1956), "Representative Government and Public Liberties in the New States" (Rhodes, October 1958), and "Representative Government and National Progress" (Ibadan, March 1959). Other seminars in these series focused on "Changes in Soviet Society" (Oxford, June 1957), "Workers' Participation in Management" (Vienna, September 1958), and "Industrial Society and the Western Political Dialogue" (Rheinfelden, September 1959). For a discussion of these seminars, see Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 111-22. Incidentally, before the Hungarian Uprising, the committee considered the desirability of inviting participants from the East Bloc to some of these colloquia. Although "it is evident that their participation, though tempting, would be futile on certain subjects," Polanyi suggested, "on others, it might be revealing and useful, permitting the West to demonstrate its intellectual strength in a direct confrontation." "Draft Proposal for the Mid-Century Dialogue: An International Round-Table of the CCF," undated but written in the aftermath of the Milan Conference, CCF, III-95-9. The CCF leadership stood open for the suggestion of inviting intellectuals from the other side of the Iron Curtain to participate in CCF seminars as long as they would not be invited through official Soviet channels, for then chances were too likely that "we are confronted with precisely that type of subservient and police-minded Soviet bureaucrat (stony look, square shoulders, blue serge suit and baggy pants) whom we want to avoid." Only when the Soviet army crushed the Hungarian resistance movement, Nabokov called for a temporary and conditional boycott of all US-USSR exchange programs involving engineers, technicians, scholars, scientists, artists and writers that had been set into motion after the 1955 Geneva Summit. Nabokov to Kennan, November 13, 1956, Kennan Papers, 32-13; Nabokov to Arthur Schlesinger and Richard Crossman, November 28-29, 1956, Schlesinger Papers (JFKL), P-20-nf.

¹³⁵ Shils, "Old Societies, New States," *Encounter* 12/3 (March 1959): 32-3.

myth of Soviet/Chinese benevolence and Western malevolence would lose its spell upon their minds and make them see that the CCF served their interests.¹³⁶ As Shils, one of the driving forces behind this seminar program, phrased it in an informal note for internal use:

[The CCF] is not just a political organization intending to discredit the Communists and to restrict their inroads among intellectuals in the West and in Asia and Africa. It is that but it is that because of a more positive conviction about the value of free creation in the intellectual and cultural spheres. It is essential that this broader and more positive outlook of the Congress be repeatedly demonstrated in order to overcome the fellow-travelling distrust which is still all too common everywhere.¹³⁷

The *modus operandi* chosen to achieve the CCF's circuitous objective that Shils so aptly captured in the above citation was diachronic and synchronic comparison, i.e., the discussion of the "problem of progress" in a particular country in relation to both that country's past and to other countries. Thus the cultural component of the seminars, titled "Patronage of the Arts," involved an in-depth survey of the challenges posed to the visual arts, music, theater, literature and poetry in a modern society, i.e., a society in which the feudal structures of cultural patronage rapidly dissolved and the "mass media" and/or the government assumed the role of "democratizing" what had originally been conceived for a social elite. Questions pertaining to the relation of artists to their public and the professional world, the gap between the work of (modernist) contemporary artists and the taste of the public, the nature and meaning of private and institutional patronage in the economy of the arts, the social status of the artist in contemporary societies, the conflict between old and new or native and foreign traditions, and the role of the government in mediating these gaps and conflicts, were to be answered for a considerate number of countries that could be viewed as representative of a particular approach: the Anglo-Saxon countries for occasional, the Continental European countries for considerable, and the People's Democracies for structural or even coercive governmental support of (or interference in) the arts.¹³⁸ Although nowhere expounded as such in

¹³⁶ Daniel Bell, Director of the CCF Seminar Program, in an interview with Chadbourne Gilpatric, Assistant Director of the Rockefeller Foundation's Humanities Division, May 14, 1956, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 2, Series 02.1956/100, 2-13A.

¹³⁷ Shils, postscript to a memorandum "The Patronage of Culture," undated but probably early 1958, CCF, III-16-3.

¹³⁸ Memorandum "Patronage of the Arts: Enquiry into the Role of Patronage in the Arts Today," unattributed and undated but an elaborated version of the previously cited memorandum by Shils; Herbert Passin, comments to Shils's memorandum, March 8, 1958, CCF, III-16-3. Since the Ford Foundation was already conducting an intensive investigation of art patronage in the United States, the CCF inquiry was limited to Europe, Asia and Latin America. Nabokov to Josselson, memorandum "Patronage of the Arts," July 3, 1958, CCF, III-16-1.

the internal correspondence, this comparative method might be construed as serving both direct and indirect purposes: directly, it produced a substantiated set of recommendations as to how philanthropic foundations and governmental bodies working within their existing constitutions could improve the effectiveness of their patronage; indirectly, it could still guarantee the CCF agenda of showing “difference” by addressing a “problem” to which liberal, social democratic, and communist policies had developed widely divergent solutions, leaving it up to the reader to decide which social ideology provided the best remedy to the particular “problem of progress” at hand. How this principle worked with respect to discussions of musical “progress” is the topic of the next and last section of this chapter.

Good/Bad Hybridizations: The Politics of Comparison

Among the participants in Nabokov’s 1954 Rome Festival who were appreciative of the knowledge gained of “what the music of this world sounds like now [and] how others are thinking about it” was Lou Harrison, one of the laureates of the concomitant composers’ competition. However, as he confided to Nabokov over a luncheon, there was one thing he had been particularly struck by: “the absence of Oriental representation.” Should the next “conference of intercultural importance” perhaps not be “a wider bringing together of the musicians of the world, musicians representing as many of the *high* musical civilizations as possible”?¹³⁹ As to the implication of that meaningful qualification “high,” Harrison did not leave any ambiguity: “*eligible* musical civilizations should possess a theory and literature, be capable of explicit mathematic demonstration as to pitch and rhythm, and have the native rudiments of notation sufficient to insure a history.” Applying these criteria, Harrison arrived at the conclusion that representatives of “China, Japan, India, and (from where came most of what we directly inherit) Islam” should be included in the program next to Europeans and Americans.

The participation of these nominees, Harrison advised, would have to be secured by mediation of kings, emperors, and maharajahs. Harrison assumed that the Japanese Emperor was likely to send his musicians, and as for India, possibly one of the Maharajahs would do so as well. In the absence of monarchs, former colonizers should be taken to account. As for China, for instance, “her Majesty Elizabeth of England ought to collect the instruments for this (for her family’s having ruined so much in China) and Chancellor Adenauer set some good scholars to work on the theory and history (for Count Walderssee’s having fired [*sic*] the Imperial library in 1901).” For Islamic participation Nabokov was advised to contact the Al’Hazzar

¹³⁹ Harrison to Nabokov, June 8, 1954, and to Michael Allawerdi, June 28, 1954, my emphases, CCF, II-248-9. Further references in this and the following paragraph are derived from these two letters.

University in Cairo. Once brought together, the “musicians of these high civilizations”—Harrison envisioned—would “exchange music, instruments, and knowledge among themselves and us,” participate in conferences on “the adoption of a number-proportion system for all notations of world music [and] the metronome mark,” “stimulate instrument-makers towards more capable [instruments],” and work towards “the establishment of a center for the exchange of music, instruments, and knowledge[s], at least among the musicians of Japan, China, India, Islam, and the West.”

Harrison was usually more farsighted than most of us, but there were limits even to his imagination. When Harrison wrote him about Nabokov’s plans, Michael Allawerdi saw a chance to realize his ambitions to bring about nothing less than the “universal unification of the language of music and tastes of human beings.”¹⁴⁰ A Syrian philosopher steeped in Greek/Arabic music theory, Michael Allawerdi (Mikha’il Khalil Allah Wirdi) was an ardent advocate for “lift[ing] humanity towards perfection” through a restoration of natural tuning as opposed to equal-tempered tuning, according to him the source of all trouble in the world and the separation of East and West in particular. In 1948, he lectured to a UNESCO convention that “should the world desire to follow this [Allawerdi’s] opinion and act on it, it would soon see the difference between distorted and correct tunes and will also realize by experience how distorted tunes produce anarchy and disturbance which would ultimately lead to war and how clear and correct tunes produce order and lead to peace in an indirect way.”¹⁴¹ He had high hopes that UNESCO would support him in this mission, but, unsurprisingly, UNESCO’s commitment did not extend beyond polite expressions of appreciation.¹⁴² Now he hoped that Harrison could persuade Nabokov, the US government, UNESCO, the Ford Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, and kindred organizations to sponsor a conference of “musical scientists” from different countries in Damascus or Beirut, the “international usefulness” of which was “obvious.”¹⁴³ “While I think he is in the right way,” Harrison wrote Nabokov, Allawerdi also seemed “a little bit oblivious. Islam should have more awakened representation.”¹⁴⁴

Nabokov was more modest in his ambitions about what his East-West Music Encounter was to achieve: not a search for universal standards in tuning and temporal measurement, but a discussion of common problems in

¹⁴⁰ Allawerdi to Harrison, July 17, 1954, Harrison Papers, 6-2.

¹⁴¹ The lecture, titled “The Role of Music in the Erection of Peace,” delivered at the third UNESCO Conference in Beirut on December 9, 1948, is published as the preface to Allawerdi’s six hundred-page exposition of his theory, *The Philosophy of Oriental Music* (Damascus: Ibn Zeydoun, 1948).

¹⁴² Julian Huxley, UNESCO Director-General, December 10, 1948, repr. in *The Philosophy of Oriental Music*, 21.

¹⁴³ Allawerdi to Harrison, July 17, 1954, Harrison Papers, 6-2.

¹⁴⁴ Harrison to Nabokov, October 28, 1954, CCF, II-248-9.

the East and West with respect to preserving performing traditions. He probed this theme in a small-scale festival/symposium he organized (in collaboration with the Giorgio Cini Foundation) within the framework of the 1958 Music Festival of the Venice Biennale.¹⁴⁵ “One of the most serious problems of our day is undoubtedly that of the relation—partly one of conflict, partly of reinterpretation and adjustment—between tradition and the onrush of modernism,” Nabokov explained this project to his invitees. At a time when larger numbers of people than ever before had access to contemporary music, this music had evolved to a level of complexity that was extremely difficult to appreciate for the uninitiated. How could this gap between the modern(ist) artist and his audience be bridged? How should his “increasingly audacious strivings for new expression” respond to the tradition of his art? How could contemporary music in those non-Western countries where Western influence at one point or the other had asserted itself be reconciled with local music traditions that were historically alien to it?¹⁴⁶

The unpublished proceedings of the symposium are revealing of the discourse about musical tradition and modernity at the mid-twentieth

¹⁴⁵ Although he assisted the director of the Biennale’s Music Festival, Alessandro Piovesan, in securing the participation of the Orchestra and Choir of the North German Radio (Hamburg) as well as the premiere of Stravinsky’s *Threni—id est Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetiae*, Nabokov’s role in the organization of this event was mainly limited to the symposium, which neatly fitted in with the CCF’s “Patronage of the Arts” program. Apart from Stravinsky, the musical program, which was conceived as the “confrontation of polyphonic traditions of the past with present-day polyphonic trends,” featured concerts of works from the Renaissance (Josquin des Prez, Gesualdo, and others), the Baroque (J. S. Bach, Pachelbel, and others), pre-World War II modernism (Bartók, Berg, Webern, and Hindemith), post-World War II modernism (Boulez, Stockhausen, and Nono) and jazz (Modern Jazz Quartet). In the end, the last component would remain barely realized, since Piovesan passed away late February 1958, just at the moment when engagements had to be sealed. Boulez, for instance, was already contracted by the Donaueschingen Festival to compile a full avant-garde program.

¹⁴⁶ Nabokov to Michael Polanyi, October 31, 1957, CCF, III-16-1; invitation letters and official announcement, February–April 1958, CCF, III-16-2; Nabokov, “Proposal for a Symposium: Tradition and Change in Music,” undated but probably late 1957 or early 1958, CCF, III-15-9. Initially the symposium was intended to contract papers from Aldous Huxley (who, on recommendation of Stravinsky, had intensively studied the works of Gesualdo), André Malraux, Theodor W. Adorno, Ernest Ansermet, Luigi Dallapiccola, Emil Staiger, Heinrich Strobel, and Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt. All except the latter two declined for reasons of time and/or uncertainty about the topic (Huxley), lack of affinity with “cultural philosophy” (Adorno), or disapproval of Stravinsky’s turn to dodecaphony (Ansermet). In the end Nabokov managed to assemble an intimate round table of mainly music critics and/or composers: Roman Vlad, Massimo Mila, Mario Zafred, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Frederick Goldbeck, Claude Rostand, Hans Heinz Stuckenschmidt, Virgil Thomson, and W. H. Auden. (Unforeseen circumstances forced Strobel to retract his commitment to attend.) Huxley to Nabokov, February 2, 1958; Nabokov to Huxley, February 13, 1958; Huxley to Nabokov, February 22, 1958, CCF, III-15-8; Ansermet to Nabokov, January 27, 1958; Adorno to Nabokov, February 22, 1958, CCF, III-15-14, CCF, III-15-14; Nabokov to Rolf Liebermann, Director of the Music Department of the North German Radio (NDR), February 24 and March 4, 1958, CCF, III-15-8. See Appendix B3 for the festival and symposium program.

century.¹⁴⁷ Roman Vlad interpreted the entire Western music history as a “tradition of innovation,” and posed the question whether or not this tradition had arrived at a genuine rupture in the present time (i.e., 1950s)—as, for instance, Boulez asserted—and if so, what the next step could be. Stuckenschmidt, deliberately posing as “the devil’s advocate,” answered that, since Schoenberg had “completed” the evolution of functional harmony and composers lacked a tradition against or from which they could define their work, they had to “create from the void” (*creatio ex nihilo*). Frederick Goldbeck, too, recognized that the task of composers had become more difficult than ever, but felt the need to criticize the “neoclassical” treatment of tradition for “reduc[ing] the dialogue with tradition to pastiche.”¹⁴⁸

If these contributions and their ensuing discussions were rather abstract and focused on aesthetical and compositional aspects, Virgil Thomson brought in a sociological and comparative perspective that was in the spirit of the CCF’s “Tradition and Change” program.¹⁴⁹ The “tradition of constant change” or “the doctrine of continuous advance,” Virgil started his exposé, had become “very questionable” from the viewpoint of the mid-twentieth century:

Actually the belief that change is constant and progressive has been built up in the last forty years by interested parties, with a view to sustaining market values in the contemporary output. In a century thoroughly vowed to improvements of every kind, to assume that music also improves automatically can be quite convincing to many, even in spite of the ever-increasing prestige of classics from the past and of the constant manipulation of the musical market by managers and publishers.

This relentless commodification of the classics had put a strain on contemporary music that—Thomson observed—perhaps only was relieved in Europe by the state-subsidized radio. Yet, there the heavily subsidized broadcasts of contemporary music had the downside effect of saturation, leading the public to demand more instead of less classics in the concert hall. In the end, Thomson concluded despondently, whether in the “state monopoly” of Soviet Russia, the “state-subsidized industry” of Europe, or the “‘private’ industry operating under the formulae of state-protected monopoly-capitalism,” the situation everywhere moved toward “a standardized product and a standardized consumer.” And this

¹⁴⁷ The papers presented at the symposium, in addition to a transcription of the discussions, are kept in the CCF Records, III-15-10+13.

¹⁴⁸ Vlad, “Continuity and Discontinuity of Musical Tradition”; Stuckenschmidt, “Invention versus Tradition”; Goldbeck, “Traditions, Dissonances, Composers,” CCF, III-15-13.

¹⁴⁹ Thomson, “The Tradition of Constant Change,” CCF, III-15-13. A substantially rewritten version of this paper appeared as “Ending the Great Tradition: A Modest Proposal” in *Encounter* 12/1 (June 1959): 64–7.

“standardization” was also affecting contemporary music: who could still tell one contemporary composer’s work from another’s, even those belonging to either the neoclassical school or serial dodecaphony? As a result, the contemporary composer found himself to be part of an “industry” that demanded him to “either fit in or get out” and maneuvered itself into a position “to control ‘change’ as well as sell tradition.” The only way out of this situation, Thomson suggested, was a “discipline of spontaneity,” i.e., resolutely “forget[ting] about progress and conservation and traditions and great responsibilities [and] just writ[ing] music in any technique that pleases us and [with which we can express] the ideas and feelings, however small, that we really have, instead of those that somebody else thinks we ought to have.”

Thomson’s bleak analysis of music’s state of affairs in the world was substantiated by the argument of a speaker who brought in an entire different area of expertise to the table: the French Indologist Alain Daniélou.¹⁵⁰ Having worked and lived extended periods of his life in Banaras (present-day Varanasi) and Madras (present-day Chennai), Daniélou’s message was alarming: some very important sections of the world’s cultural heritage were being swept away by “the impact of Western musical experiments and popular music forms.” The root of the problem, Daniélou argued, was that the West only exported “the most mediocre” of its music, with the result that “[w]e find everywhere in the East a picture, painted with meticulous care, which shows an imposing, outmoded, ridiculous, puritan and grandiloquent Occident that is really the opposite of what we are.” At the same time, Westerners so often imprinted upon the minds of those they colonized that their music was monotonous and under-developed because of a lack of harmony, that at present,

in most non-European countries we meet with series of apparently concerted efforts, as well-meaning as they are unconscious, on the part of governments, radios, music schools, international organizations, to alter and destroy the great schools of traditional music under the pretext of preserving national art and help its evolution by modernizing its conceptions and reforming its basis....[These sensitive peoples] try to harmonize, to reform, to develop, to Borodinize, to Stokowskize their music which so far had seemed to them delicious, perfect, complete, in the hope that it may, at least nominally, be compared to that music which has been made a symbol of Western power.

Decades later, the postcolonial theorist Homi K. Bhabha would call the process Daniélou described “mimicry.”¹⁵¹ Yet, whereas Bhabha’s concept meant to capture the possibilities for the colonized to appropriate the

¹⁵⁰ Daniélou, “Problems of the Preservation of Traditions,” CCF, III-15-11.

¹⁵¹ Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1994), 121–31.

colonizer's language and discourse for their own uses (including subverting the colonizer), the colonized in Daniélou's analysis are silent—they are the innocent victims of a culture imposed upon them in its worst manifestations: the “easier styles of Italian, French, American popular songs of which the recordings are too often the only ones that the most noisy representatives of the West bring with their gramophone on their civilizing missions.” Adding to the misery, local musicians found their traditions reduced by their colonizers' culture industry from a craft to a “depersonalized, standardized, canned product,” fixated by means of recording practices for “wide commercial circulation.”

The result of all this are “hybrids” which in Daniélou's view had “to be opposed at all costs.” To begin with, Westerners should enlarge their “musical horizon” and realize that to those cultures upon which the West obtruded itself, modernization amounted to nothing less than the desiccation of their “source of constant renewal, [viz], freedom of expression,” if not just “collective brainwashing and cultural genocide.” Next, Westerners should encourage by all means the countries that still possess a great musical tradition to maintain that tradition in its purest form, with its methods of teaching, its style, its technique, its instruments, its institutional framework, and the size of its audiences. If one might think, however, that Daniélou, given his mission of preservation, must have seen a partner in the burgeoning field of ethnomusicology, then one is dismally wrong. In Daniélou's estimation, ethnomusicology amounted to

a weapon of psychological destruction particularly pernicious...which deals in the same breath with learned systems of music considered exotic and the lowest forms of popular or primitive music. Too often these friends of all that is picturesque, who travel extensively, record haphazardly and collect in one record the great music codified by Avicenna and Farabi and a little song of a Kermanshah shoemaker. They create collections where you find side by side, the brilliant technique of an Indian classical performance and the cries of Pygmy ladies going to the market, when it would be more logical or at least more decent to bring together the great works of Eastern classical music and the masterpieces of ancient Western art.

This “indifferent approach,” Daniélou continues, led the local practitioners to ignore their own heritage. What was needed to protect the world's “great traditions” against the West, then, were concert platforms on which the best representatives of the “great traditions” could meet as well as research centers that would combine recording activities with the theoretical investigation of the concepts and systems pertaining to a particular music culture. And to those composers interested in cross-cultural composition, Daniélou had only to say that “[n]either the eastern Debussys nor the

oriental fantasies of our composers will help us to understand one another nor enrich our heritage. We need pure, real, authentic music.”¹⁵²

Daniélou’s defense for in-depth music(ologic)al exchanges and commitment to the preservation of performing traditions of formerly colonized nations perfectly fit the CCF’s “Tradition and Change” program. It provided an occasion to representatives of Asian performing traditions to compare their precarious situation (state or philanthropic patronage barely existed in most decolonized nations) with their Western counterparts, and to draw the conclusion that for all the imperfections, the West was most committed to safeguarding ‘non-popular’ forms of culture. Needless to say, ‘the elephant in the room’, i.e., the form of state patronage that was certainly not deemed to be conducive to the status of “highbrow” traditions was the ideological enemy. After all, if the professionalization of musical traditions according to Stalin’s edict “nationalist in form, socialist in content” attested from the Soviet perspective to their “natural advance” into the Communist utopian state, for Nabokov it only proved that within the Soviet orbit, no single music could emerge unaffected from the indiscriminate taste of the middlebrow.¹⁵³ Daniélou, too, referred more than once to the Kremlin’s policy concerning the modernization of musical life in the Soviet minority republics to substantiate his deep-felt conviction that the practice of harmonizing melodies from an indigenous music tradition represents all of the “[prejudices] we must extricate ourselves from[:] the superstition of evolution, progress, notation and the polyphonic and orchestral superstitions.”¹⁵⁴ If translated to a Western context, then the melodic and rhythmical features of the music should be contained at all times. Daniélou demonstrated what he meant in his arrangements of the melodies he transcribed from the rendition by the Bengal poet Rabindranath Tagore (Example 1).

Reading through Nabokov’s and Daniélou’s writings, it becomes clear that to their mind, multiculturalism, crossovers, middlebrow culture and the Soviet doctrine of socialist realism were all suspicious of corrupting the only culture that they deemed worthy of consideration and preservation, i.e., *high*

¹⁵² Daniélou, “Problems of the Preservation of Traditions.” This paper was the outline of an argument that Daniélou would develop in a report for UNESCO, *The Situation of Music and Musicians in countries of the Orient* (Florence: Olschki, 1971).

¹⁵³ Victor Vinogradov, “The Study of Folk Music in the U.S.S.R.,” *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 12 (1960): 74; Nabokov, “La Musique en Russie Soviétique et dans les Pays Limitrophes,” 7, Nabokov Papers, 45–2.

¹⁵⁴ Daniélou, “Problems of the Preservation of Traditions.” After his visit to the IMC in Tehran which immediately preceded the EWME, Daniélou wrote that contacts in Teheran with “Asiatic representatives of the eastern Soviet Republics” proved of “no interest,” since “the music they presented as original folklore [was] so being adapted and arranged that it had lost most of its original character and could be of no value for my study.” Daniélou, “Visit to Japan in April-May 1961,” Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-399.

EXAMPLE 1 Alain Daniélou, “Töbu Möné Rékho” (Will You Remember Me). Poem and melody by Rabindranath Tagore.
© 2005, Michel de Maule, Paris.

Tö - bu mö - né ré - kho,
Will you re - mem - ber me,

ah! tö - bu, mö - né ré - kho Jö - di du - ré
will you al - ways re - mem - ber me? When I am gone,

ja - i chö - lé, tö - bu mö - né ré - kho.
gone far a - way, far a - way, Will you al - ways re - mem - ber me?

or “untainted” culture. Creating cross-cultural understanding and evaluating cultural patronage systems provided the rationale with which Nabokov applied for grants. In an application to the Rockefeller Foundation, he advanced the lack of understanding between “East and West on the art of music” as an argument for arranging a “confrontation” between the two hemispheres. That musical exchanges between Asia and the West had until then been scarce and haphazard was not to be ascribed to “inadequate communications or lack of good will,” Nabokov reasoned. It rather was due to “the widely differing ways by which both Easterners and Westerners approach their own and each other’s music.” Speaking on behalf of the listener, Nabokov proceeds:

Asian musics strike the Western ear as a series of picturesque and exotic sounds whose chain of seemingly improvised musical anecdotes do not fit into any familiar or identifiable pattern. To most Eastern listeners, except for those who are familiar with Western methods, the music of the West is so

foreign to their ears that it seems to them not merely another province of the same art but in fact a different art altogether.¹⁵⁵

As grounds for this basic misunderstanding, Nabokov advances the usual list of actual or presumed differences between the musical practices of ‘East’ and ‘West’:

Whereas music in the West has evolved as a highly individualized art, marked by the gradual separation of function between composer and performer, Eastern music has remained hieratic, based on the art of the inventing performer who creates within a framework of highly complex custom and tradition. Western music has for centuries been characterized by a succession of changes in style and technique; music in the East is an art with an unbroken tradition.

Needless to argue, this train of argument perpetuates a conception of musical difference which has commonly become identified with orientalism, i.e., the idea of a progressive Western culture marked by the stasis of the East. For whatever musical reality of “the East” Nabokov describes, it certainly does not correspond to the reality at least most musical practitioners on the Asian continent found themselves in at the time the idea of the “confrontation” occurred to him.

Despite the implicit orientalist logic underpinning his motivation, it should be nonetheless recognized that what mattered to Nabokov (and Daniélou) was to change the listener’s mis/uninformed preconceptions and prejudices about “exotic” musics. The projected “dialogue between East and West on the art of music” was to lay the foundation of “an overall aesthetic theory able to encompass without implications of inferiority or superiority the phenomenon of Eastern and Western music.” Indeed, the whole enterprise was to respond to “the need to re-evaluate our experience and our unconscious assumptions about the musics of other cultures, to develop a more broadly inclusive outlook, and in fact to evolve a suitable language of aesthetics, adequate to express the complexities of music—the multiplicity of its traditions in their national and regional aspects—and its essential unity.”

In fact, the valued difference running through Nabokov’s proposal does not so much proceed along geographical divides as it does between social ones. This becomes particularly obvious when he warns that the festival “should not aim at giving too broad a view of worldwide musical culture (i.e., it should not degenerate into a kind of senseless ‘musical circus’), but rather limit itself to the most valuable, the most exquisite, the most perfect

¹⁵⁵ “East-West Music Encounter”, undated but enclosed in a subsidy application to the Rockefeller Foundation, June 19, 1956, CCF, III-37-3 and III-14-8. Further references in this and the next paragraph are derived from this document.

examples thereof.”¹⁵⁶ By indicating what his project should not be, Nabokov in effect revealed what the “new world outlook” as he and his congenial colleagues imagined it to be actually meant in concrete terms. Theirs is a world of “pure” culture, uncompromised by commercial and political encroachments and untainted by processes of hybridization—a disinterested, museum-like world constituted by “the highest standards of quality,” which can only be maintained by drawing “as sharp a distinction as possible between purely *folkloristic* and *traditionally artistic* elements.” Such a distinction is at times difficult to draw, Nabokov admits, but nonetheless it “should *always* be attempted.” Thus the terms on which the “confrontation” would take place were unmistakably informed by the aesthetic of autonomy cherished by a self-defined high-brow elite, which implied that the festival could only showcase “those examples of musical culture which in their own right can be termed works of *art*” (Nabokov’s emphasis). Likewise, Nabokov regularly impressed his audiences upon their mind that

it is our task, as thoughtful persons concerned with the past and also with the future of music...to appeal to our fellow musicians in Asia and Africa and urge them to prevent the hybridization of their art on the lowest level of a common denominator which, as a whole, are the vulgarized, so-called popular musics, whether they are commercial or not, pumped so freely into the air all over the world.” [Indeed,] “in a world with our modern techniques [it is most important] to love, understand, preserve, and protect each other’s arts, [and] encourage them to grow and develop *in the proper, in the right way*.”¹⁵⁷

It will not come as surprise that such paternalism was not appreciated by all of those to whom the call to invest in cultural preservation was addressed. For instance, at the time of the East-West Music Encounter, one commentator saw Nabokov’s reported concern “to find that the Japanese artists themselves have completely discarded [their] great tradition, particularly since they have done so not to open new ways for themselves, but merely to copy us” as indicative of the still current Western tendency to essentialize Japan to an image from which it is not allowed to deviate.¹⁵⁸ This criticism indeed touches upon the sore spot: for all their well-meant protectionism, its political implications are precisely those of the colonialist discourse which Nabokov and Daniélou wished to veer away from, in that sense that ‘the other’—albeit for other reasons—emerges as a perceived

¹⁵⁶ Nabokov, “East-West Conference and Music Festival in Japan,” from “Draft Proposal for the CCF,” undated but probably written in 1955, CCF, III-39-1.

¹⁵⁷ Nicolas Nabokov, “A Message,” (my emphasis), in *The Preservation of Traditional Forms of the Learned and Popular Music of the Orient and the Occident*, ed. William Kay Archer (Urbana, IL: Center for Comparative Psycholinguistics, University of Illinois, 1961), 5.

¹⁵⁸ Yuichiro Kojiro, “View of Japanese Architecture,” *The Japan Architect* (September 1961): 67–9. Nabokov is quoted without reference.

integral entity that has to be contained for the better of ‘the self’, and as such, finds itself excluded, or at least confronted with the pressure to exclude itself, from the project of modernization, with all its harms *and* benefits.

The concern for “preservation” of ‘the self’ and ‘the ‘other’ against “hybridization” was one of the leading themes at the EWME Conference. In a plenary address, Lou Harrison elaborated—in the UNESCO-sanctioned language he so cared about, Esperanto—on the concerns he earlier expressed in his correspondence with Nabokov. His message to what he called “the civilized musical traditions” was anything but gleeful: the threat of overpopulation, the unequal distribution of global food supplies, and the incessant quarrel between nations which let go at one another “like baby monsters” with the “tools of death” its factories did not stop to produce—this all could render the fate of humankind “terrible, even final.” The time was ripe, then, for this humankind to take responsibility, including the practitioners of that “very beautiful, very alluring art”: music. One of the concrete projects for which the four “musical civilizations” should engage themselves, Harrison argued, would be the establishment of

some beautiful Institute, some kind of united Music Room to which we might each bear the good things from our separate musical cultures,...a place where one can find the splendid heritage of world music—to inspire, reassure, and free them.¹⁵⁹

Free them from what?, one might think from a hindsight perspective. Why would Harrison limit his interest to what he calls “high musical civilizations”? Why should the diversity of world’s musical traditions be subjected to criteria which determine whether they are eligible for consideration or not? What about the “low” musical traditions, the ones without notation or sophisticated theories and instruments? This does not correspond with the common image of Harrison as a paragon of multiculturalism *avant la lettre*.¹⁶⁰

Needless to say, by focusing on this conditionality in Harrison’s interests I do not mean to question the integrity of his life-long advocacy for world’s musical diversity, of pressing upon our minds that “it’s never enough just to know your own musical tradition,” that “there’s so much out there in the world,” and that “there’s no reason to put on blinders.”¹⁶¹ I do wish to point out, though, that enthusiasm for pioneers in cross-cultural composition

¹⁵⁹ Lou Harrison, address East-West Music Conference (April 1961), Thomson Papers, 29-47-20.

¹⁶⁰ As in, for instance, David Nicholls, “Transethnicism and the American Experimental Tradition,” *The Musical Quarterly* 80/4 (1996): 574–6.

¹⁶¹ Quoted in sleeve notes to the Piano Concerto/Suite for Violin, Piano, and Small Orchestra, recorded on NW 366-2.

sometimes tends to overshadow historical analysis, leading to anachronistic portrayals of visionaries promoting cultural relativism in a time purported to be inimical to it. As might be gathered from Harrison's normative conception of music (which is reflected in his oeuvre for non-Western instruments or ensembles, near to all of which descend from the elite stratum of China, Japan, Korea, and Indonesia), the cultural relativism he stood for was indeed "purely cultural," in that his interest only extended to the emancipation of non-Western musics, not of their producers.

Understandably, fascination for new sound worlds does not by definition translate into political advocacy on behalf of the people behind them—something which has come to be implied by the emancipatory undertones of the 1990s concept of multiculturalism. The intended politics of Harrison's generation of 'cross-cultural composers' resided in their attempt to open the ears of consumers of Western music for non-Western musics in a way that goes beyond what they conceived as exoticism, not in raising the issue of, for instance, cultural heritage ownership. To Cowell, for instance, non-Western musics appeared as just one among many resources from which the composer should be able to draw without being criticized for eclecticism.¹⁶² It will also be recalled from the earlier cited letter that Harrison was not so much concerned with the preservation of non-Western musical systems and instruments as with their development in order to broaden the arsenal of musical materials available to the modern composer. As composers interested in working with 'other' musics, Cowell and Harrison were not against "hybridization" in principle, but they distinguished 'good' from 'bad' hybridizations and conceived of themselves as "preserving both musical traditions and that sort of hybrid music coming into being."¹⁶³ Perhaps no composer has put this in stronger (and more peculiar) wording than Virgil Thomson, who, after a Daniélouesque criticism of the "Tin Pan Alley types [of hybrids] from Tokyo and Bombay and Cairo and Naples and Rio," advised that

What we are looking for is a strong crossbreed, a Eurasian, Eurafrikan, or Afro-Asian strain that can stand all the climates. The 1961 Tokyo East-West Music Encounter was a getting together of some of music's higher breeds in the hope that such frequentations, if carried on repeatedly, might just possibly engender a strain of musical thoroughbreds better built for survival in tomorrow's tough one-world than is our present, on the whole, puny stock.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶² Henry Cowell, "Address for the East-West Music Encounter," Cowell Papers, 131-2; Cowell's paper is published in the proceedings of the East-West Music Encounter, *Music—East and West* (Tokyo: Executive Committee for EWME, 1961), 71-6.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁶⁴ Thomson, "Toward Improving the Musical Race," *Musical America* (July 1961): 5.

Not yet confronted with the postcolonial critique of Orientalism and Occidentalism, this generation's engagement with 'other' musics is deeply steeped in the Romantic critique on Western society, a critique that usually amounts to charges of shallowness, exploitation, narrow-mindedness, narcissism or excessive rationalization, and which holds up an undefined 'East' as a mirror for the sense of inspiration, communality, and devoutness which 'the West' would have lost. In this vision of 'the East' as the therapeutic panacea for the ailments of modernization, a particular mode of music failed to get noticed, even by a Harrison without blinders. This mode is the hybrid: not in the sense that Cowell used it, namely, a self-assigned permission to "appropriate elements from among any of the resources presented by music, in any part of the world or in any historical period" in the act of artistic creation,¹⁶⁵ but in the sense of music produced by, and mediated through, the Adornian "culture industry."

If the CCF's festivals and conferences indeed may be seen as reflective of a strategy to unite intellectuals over the world on a shared concern to contain both communism and 'mass' or 'middlebrow culture', then it explains why the EWME festival program pitted orchestras, ensembles and quartets performing an overall Western repertoire against near to anonymous groups of musicians and dancers from India, Thailand, Indonesia and Japan, instead of staging intercultural performances like the ones demonstrated by what was at the time the most iconic duo of East/West exchange, Yehudi Menuhin and Ravi Shankar. Indeed, ten years after the event, Nabokov admitted how over time he had come to

deplere the "potpourri" of inherent musical nonsense produced by Menuhin and Shankar, both of whom independently I admire as excellent performers, but [I] only wish they would exercise their art separately and not serenade each other in joint 'jumbo-mumbo' activities. Whilst this so-called "cross-fertilisation" produced nothing but humbug (and nothing is worse than mish-mash), I have always been more concerned with the *preservation* of pure, as yet untarnished (i.e., uncrossbred) non-European music, than with its *propagation* in the West. I do not believe in the 'co-equality' in value and meaning of so-called 'Western' music as related to the different musics that have had an admirable, ancient, but solely ritualistic and craftsmanlike development. Nor do I believe they should be taken out of their ethnic context. Furthermore, I do not believe they can be '*befruchtend*' to the art of music as I know it, except as a passing fad or as an exotic stimulant. You see, I am totally un-Unesco-ish about all this.¹⁶⁶

Consequently, Nabokov let his cooperation to a proposal by Africanist Ulli Beier to organize an "African Music Festival" depend on whether it would

¹⁶⁵ Cowell, "Address for the East-West Music Encounter," 72.

¹⁶⁶ Nabokov to Ulli Beier, February 26, 1972, Nabokov Papers, 72-1.

deal with “the *authentic* traditions of African music unpolluted by their low-level contact with the only art of music I recognize and belong to [i.e. Western music].”¹⁶⁷ Assessed against this criterion, commercially successful crossovers like the mid-1960s ‘West meets East’ ventures of Menuhin and Shankar were disqualified from making a positive contribution to the world’s most refined culture.

Nabokov and Daniélou practiced what they preached. Both would successfully submit an outline to the EWME Conference for what would become the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation, the “United Music Room” which Harrison had dreamt of. Founded with support from the Ford Foundation in 1963 in the enclave of the “free world,” West Berlin, the Institute would—in the words of Daniélou, the head of the Institute—gain “a reputation for its defense and support of musicians from non-European cultures” and for “encouraging traditional music by urging governments and radio to support their own musical heritages without any feelings of inferiority.”¹⁶⁸

In its aim to stimulate projects of cultural preservation, the CCF found an ally in the Ford Foundation. United in their analysis that, due as much to totalitarian pressures as to commercially driven mass media, “democracy is on challenge in the world today,” both organizations considered the awakening of cultural awareness in the “Third World” as an effective strategy for resisting communist obtrusiveness.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, when against the backdrop of the Vietnam War, revelations about covert CIA activities and the splintering of non-aligned nations into myriad authoritarian regimes, the faith in liberal universalism came to be displaced by an increasing affinity with cultural relativism, investment in local heritages was seen as a tactic of soothing those who criticized the American modernization programs for being too one-sidedly focused on economic and political development at the expense of the indigenous traditions in the societies they sought to sustain/contain.¹⁷⁰ Free from restrictive legislation and political entanglements, the Ford Foundation felt itself chosen to implement “cultural development” programs in politically sensitive areas by supporting organizations like the CCF and the Berlin Institute for Comparative Music

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Alain Daniélou, *The Way to the Labyrinth: Memories of East and West* (New York: New Directions, 1987), 266.

¹⁶⁹ Brochure *Congress for Cultural Freedom: Ten Years*, June 1960, 6–7, Kennan Papers, 21-13; H. Rowan Gaither, ed., “Report of the Study for the Ford Foundation on Policy and Program” (Detroit, Michigan: Ford Foundation, 1949): 18–22, 43, 87–8.

¹⁷⁰ Kathleen D. McCarthy, “From Cold War to Cultural Development: The International Cultural Activities of the Ford Foundation, 1950-1980,” *Daedalus: Journal of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences* 116/1 (1987): 106–9.

Studies.¹⁷¹ Evolved from a Cold War discourse in which both political and cultural interests converged, this Institute institutionalized, together with, for instance, UNESCO's International Music Council, a discourse on which today's investments in apparently disinterested notions like "world heritage" and "diversity in unity" are predicated.

Seen from this long-term perspective, a consideration of the political, economic, and cultural interests that have motivated efforts of cultural preservation during the Cold War is perhaps the more relevant, as it might increase our insight on present-day efforts that not so much promote preservation of cultural authenticity as encourage cultural diversity, dialogue, and even hybridization. Projects, in other words, that might appear as involved in the arguably still-continuing 'project' of linking as much as possible of Asia, Africa, and South America to the neo-liberal hegemony that emerged from the post-war trans-Atlantic bond between the United States and Europe, a hegemony that at present is perhaps more challenged than ever could be imagined by the early guard of Cold Warriors-turned-cultural preservationists.

¹⁷¹ See the annual reports of the Ford Foundation, 1957-1977 [<http://www.fordfound.org>].

Against the Tide

Failures, Disclosures, and One Moment of Rapprochement

Unfinished Projects: Nabokov's India and Brazil Festivals

Mission accomplished. Every other soul would have thought that after the protracted and troublesome gestation period which the East-West Music Encounter went through. Not so Nabokov. True, the East-West Music Encounter had turned into reality in Japan, but the reader will remember that the original target of the operation had actually been India. So on his way back to Paris from Tokyo, Nabokov stopped by in Delhi to pay a visit to Prime Minister Nehru to discuss, once again, “a small but very exquisite festival of Indian and Western music, a kind of follow-up of the Tokyo Festival, but in a different way more suitable to India.”¹ Yehudi Menuhin, by this time firmly established as one of the West's most prominent promoters of (North) Indian music, was “absolutely enthusiastic” about Nabokov's plans and immediately consented to plead the case with “the Rockefeller people.”² Ten years earlier, Prime Minister Nehru had invited Menuhin to India with the words: “We have received so many exports from the West, but somehow the very finest and noblest of Western art has not come our way as we would like it to have.” Indeed, “many soloists have played in India, jazz of course is rampant, and large orchestras have been sent at very great expense,” Menuhin explained to John D. Rockefeller III. “But the bridge between Indian music and our own would be best accomplished by a string quartet and a few chosen small ensembles and musicologists.” The projected seven-day festival, scheduled for Delhi in January 1962, would “go a long way towards bridging [this] gap,” Menuhin predicted, something that “no large orchestra travelling under forced pressure” could possibly

¹ Nabokov to Prabhakar Padhye, Secretary, Office for Asian Affairs, Congress for Cultural Freedom, January 5, 1961, CCF, III-38-7; Nabokov to Josselson, May 12, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3.

² Nabokov obviously approached Menuhin to improve the chances of success for his festival plans. Not a representative of a politically partisan organization like Nabokov, Menuhin had considerably easier access to the Rockefeller Foundation and the Indian government. “If you find that there is an interest for [the Festival idea among official circles],” Nabokov advised Padhye, “you may say that the idea stems not from me alone but from Menuhin [as well].” For the same reason, he asked Menuhin to “drop [the Rockefeller Foundation] a line and say that this is our mutual baby” (rather than solely Nabokov's initiative). Nabokov to Menuhin, January 10, 1961; John K. Galbraith to Nabokov, October 9, 1961, CCF, III-55-5.

accomplish. After all, convening the masters of “the very subtle and gentle art of Indian classical music” and an “orchestra [playing] Strauss or Beethoven symphonies” in one room “would be like a conversation between one person who whispers and another who shouts.”³ Instead, Nabokov and Menuhin thought of engaging soloists such as—apart from Menuhin and his sister Hephzibah—the lutenist Julian Bream, the flutist Severino Gazzeloni, the piano duo Aloys and Alfons Kontarsky, and small ensembles like the Juilliard String Quartet who already had expressed their interest to follow up their tour of Japan with a tour of the Indian subcontinent. For the adjoining five-day conference, it was proposed to invite fifteen to twenty participants from outside of India and an equal number from India to discuss topics like “Evolution in Music,” “Differences and Similarities in Musical Structures of Indian and Western Music,” “The Psychology of the Listener and of the Musician,” and “Traditional Music Facing Industrial Civilization.”⁴

Unfortunately, this time, too, the preparations proceeded anything but smoothly. Nabokov did manage to collect \$5,000 from the Ford Foundation and \$7,000 from the Farfield Foundation towards funding the Western contingent, but still \$10,000 to \$15,000 more was needed to cover the expenses of Asian participation. Grant applications to the Asia Foundation (a CIA front) and each of Rockefeller’s philanthropic foundations failed—partly because Nabokov had overextended his amount of applications to the Foundation, and partly because the Foundation was overcommitted in Indian projects, in particular the construction of the new International House in Delhi.⁵ Likewise, Nabokov’s request to the State Department for assistance in securing the participation of the Juilliard Quartet and the harpsichordist Sylvia Marlowe was rejected as the budget for cultural exchanges with India at the time when the Festival was to take place had already been allocated to the Baird Marionettes, the University of Maine Dramatic Club, and “a variety show, designed to reach a different type of audience”—precisely “the kind of things Indians bitterly need,” Nabokov scowled.⁶

Then, just when Nabokov and his CCF brother in arms, J. Kenneth Galbraith, at the time US Ambassador to India, managed to squeeze out the

³ Menuhin to John D. Rockefeller III, January 16, 1961, CCF, III-55-5.

⁴ Nabokov, memorandum “Tradition and Change in Music: A Music Conference and Festival to be held in New Delhi in January 1962,” May 14, 1961, CCF, III-55-8.

⁵ Nabokov to Menuhin, July 12, 1961; Nabokov to Donald McLean Jr., Council for Economic and Cultural Affairs, June 7, 1961; Nabokov to Charles B. Fahs, Division of Humanities, Rockefeller Foundation, July 19, 1961; Nabokov to Robert Blum, President, Asia Foundation, July 26, 1961; Nabokov to Menuhin, August 28, 1961, CCF, III-55-5.

⁶ Nabokov to Philip Coombs, Assistant Secretary for Cultural Affairs, June 5, 1961; Coombs to Nabokov, July 14, 1961; Heath Bowman, Chief, Presentations Division, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, State Department, to Nabokov, July 28, 1961; Nabokov to Marlowe, July 26 and August 29, 1961, CCF, III-55-5.

needed funds from the State Department after all, the Indian government began to throw grit in the bearings. When it learned that the CCF was joining the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR, the Indian equivalent of the British Council) in sponsoring the Festival, Nehru's Foreign Office, acting on the assumption that no event sponsored by the CCF could have a "universal representation," insisted that invitations be sent out to scholars in the Soviet Union, Poland, and Czechoslovakia with the ICCR as the only inviting organization. At a later stage, the CCF was to be given "due acknowledgement" for its assistance. Nabokov whole-heartedly agreed with this procedure but insisted, in his turn, that only scholars be selected who could be trusted to be "competent" and "authentic" and not officials or bureaucrats of government agencies. In addition, since he found it—understandably—difficult to accept that the CCF would carry the burden of raising money for the travel of European, American, and Japanese delegates as well as for the Western participation in the Festival for something as vague as "due recognition," he also demanded that the collaboration of the ICCR with the CCF be clearly stated in the Festival promotion materials. After a month of waiting, Nabokov learned that his terms were accepted, and that an official letter to that effect would be forthcoming. This letter never came. By late October, Ambassador Galbraith's office found out that Nehru finally had given his general approval, but clearance from the Foreign Secretary was still pending. When this clearance still had not come by mid-November 1962, Nabokov felt obliged to call off the whole event.⁷

Another of the projects Nabokov conceived at the time was not any more fortunate. After Europe and Asia, logic—as well as Fidel Castro's completion of his revolution in Cuba—dictated that the next large-scale

⁷ Nabokov to Galbraith, October 9, 1961; Galbraith to Nabokov, October 24, 1961; John Hunt to Max Eisenberg, Assistant to the Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural Relations, November 23, 1961, CCF, III-55-5+6; Nabokov to Hunt, November 28, 1961, CCF, II-245-7. *The New Statesman* (February 19, 1962) reported that the Rockefeller Foundation had backed out of the project upon learning of ICCR's intention to invite delegates from "the political East," but I have not been able to verify this. The Indian government suddenly and unexpectedly gave its approval to execute the East-West Music seminar after all in early May 1963. Inam Rahman to Nabokov, May 10, 1963, CCF, III-55-6. This reversal might indicate a change in attitude of Nehru regarding the CCF, which did not fail to lend its moral and (modest) financial support in India's border conflict with the PRC in the previous year. "I hope the PM will finally learn where our true friends are," the Indian Ambassador in Paris confided to Nabokov. Nabokov to Nehru, November 14, 1962; Nehru to Nabokov, November 18, 1962; Nabokov to Josselson, November 17, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2. The festival-seminar eventually took place at the Azad Bhavan Auditorium and Art Gallery, New Delhi, on February 12–17, 1964, under the sponsorship of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations, the ICCF, the Sangeet Natak Akademi, the Delhi Music Society, and the Max Müller Bhavan, with delegates from (apart from India) the Western sphere of influence (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, West Germany, and Iran) and the socialist sphere of influence (Soviet Union, East Germany, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia). For full details, see Appendix B5.

CCF event be located in Latin America. Nabokov travelled in the autumn of 1961 to the Americas—first New York and Washington, DC, then to Rio de Janeiro—to sound out the possibilities of an international music and dance festival in Brazil, “an artistic event comparable, if not surpassing, the festivals previously organized for the CCF in Paris, Rome, and Tokyo.”⁸ As Nabokov imagined it, the Festival was to take place simultaneously in three or four of the principal cities of Brazil (Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Bahia, and Brasilia) for the duration of one month in 1963 or 1964, to be dedicated to the memory of Heitor Villa-Lobos and Manuel de Falla, and to involve the collaboration of artists and artistic organizations from Latin America, Europe, Africa and North America. Apart from the latest achievements in the field of “advanced contemporary music by composers from all over the world,” the concert programs were to emphasize, “in a broad, yet not dogmatic, nor in a narrow folkloristic manner,” the classical, modern and traditional sources of Latin American music. In addition to groups from Brazil and other Latin American countries as well as the usual attractions from Europe and the United States, Nabokov intended to engage one or two groups of dancers and musicians from the new nation states in West Africa for what he called a “Rencontre noire.” Needless to say, the Festival was to be supplemented by a series of public discussions conducted by distinguished music critics, music historians, composers and other personalities in the field of the arts from Europe, the Americas, and Africa on themes such as “The State of Music and its Future in Latin America” and “The Influence of the African Traditions upon the Music of the Twentieth Century.”⁹

⁸ Nabokov, memorandum “Project for an International Music and Dance Festival in Brazil,” November 17, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3. Earlier, in the wake of the overthrow of the Perón regime in Argentina (October 1955) and the free elections in Peru (June 17, 1956), the CCF had tried to get a foothold on the Latin American continent through a conference in Mexico (“The Future of Liberty,” September 1956). Modeled after the 1955 Rangoon Conference, the meeting turned into a disaster when Latin American participants started to voice virulent protests against the United States, in particular for its role in the overthrow of the Arbenz regime in Guatemala (June 1954).

⁹ Nabokov to Josselson and Hunt, November 5, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3; Nabokov to Eisenberg, November 6, 1961, CCF, III-55-6. An expanded version of this memorandum, accompanied with a balance estimating the total costs at about \$100,000, is located in the papers of President Kennedy’s Special Consultant on the Arts, August Heckscher II (JFKL), 22-Festivals—General. In contrast to the stated aims expressed in these documents, written after Nabokov’s reconnaissance trip to Brazil, memoranda prior to his trip suggested that the Festival might be themed on folk music (“International Folklore Festival”), either limited to folklore influences on Latin America (music and dance from Africa, South India, Martinique, Spain, and Portugal) or extended to folklore such as that of Irish ballad singers, Basque mountain pipers, Gypsies, Yugoslavia, Soviet Russia (the ballet company of Igor A. Moiseyev), “certain Arab countries,” Africa, India, West Indies, Thailand, and Japan (*kabuki*). Nabokov, memorandum “South America Festival and Conference,” undated, CCF, III-49-5; memorandum “Festival ‘The Sources of Latin American Music,’” August 28, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3.

Nabokov was warned to be prepared for resistance in Brazil. His musical friends there were obviously very enthusiastic about the plans, but the cultural-political establishment, as in most other countries in South America, distrusted the CCF for the usual reasons. In addition, the economic and political climate of Brazil rapidly destabilized after João Goulart assumed the presidency from Juscelino Kubitschek in 1961 (technically, from Jânio Quadros, who after Kubitschek managed to sit in the saddle for a mere seven months), which was anything but conducive for organizing a large-scale festival. Indeed, “everything is progressing in the kind of exasperatedly disorganized and slow way in which I expected it to progress,” Nabokov reported to Josselson from a rainy Rio. “I did *not*, however, expect this ‘world’ to be as total bouillabaisse as it is at present—economic and political collapse, revolution, and general disaster...” The governor of Guanabara State (which comprised the city of Rio de Janeiro), Carlos Lacerda, seemed one of the few to be “*earnestly* interested” in the project, but almost everyone advised Nabokov “not to trust the s.o.b.” Nabokov nevertheless left Brazil with the feeling that “the Festival ‘wagon’” had started rolling and would keep rolling as long as the political climate remained stable and state authorities would not be involved in the sponsorship for the sake of preventing “Japanese-style troubles from the Brazilian left.” Having said that, Nabokov was acutely aware that to organize a festival of the same international splendor as the Tokyo Festival in Brazil would require even more time, effort, and above all, patience.¹⁰

And so it turned out to be. While Nabokov went through the usual mill of fundraising and support-seeking activities in New York and Washington, Brazil’s political horizon looked bleaker by the day, especially when Governor Lacerda picked an open political fight with President Goulart who had decided to resume Brazil’s diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and oppose sanctions against Cuba. When Nabokov visited Rio in August/September 1962, the governor’s stature had risen to such proportions that he was believed to “carry half of the country with him if there were now elections.” Lacerda called for strong measures against Soviet infiltration and accused the Brazilian branch of the CCF of defeatism and being soft on Communism. Ironically, the chair of the Brazilian CCF committee, the Romanian émigré Ștefan Baciu, at the same time complained to the Paris secretariat that the CCF’s politics were too anticommunist. Expecting to get embroiled in a political quagmire he wished to avoid this time, Nabokov made an unexpected move with respect to the Festival: he proposed to dissolve the partnership with the CCF and to compile an international sponsorship consisting of the governor and an international

¹⁰ Nabokov to Josselson, August 1, November 2, 14, and 28, 1961; Nabokov to John Hunt, November 7, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3.

score of artistic personalities, including Nabokov the composer, but not Nabokov the CCF secretary-general. At the end of his trip it seemed that two music festivals were underway: one in Rio de Janeiro (August 18–September 11, 1963), which was to be organized on the scale of the Paris and Tokyo festivals, and a more discrete one in Bahia (September 8–19, 1963), which was to be themed on the legacy of African traditions in the Americas (“Rencontre noire”) and joined with a conference of experts on African music as well as a small exposition of African art hosted by the University of Bahia. It was not meant to be, though: for reasons that are not entirely clear (but probably related to the general economic malaise and political unrest which held Brazil in its grip and was to culminate in the CIA-incited military coup of April 1964), both the rector of Bahia University and the Rio authorities failed to give the green light in time, impelling Nabokov, once again, to call off the whole affair.¹¹

Musical Diplomacy across the Wall: Nabokov’s Tenure as Willy Brandt’s Cultural Adviser

Nabokov was not someone to allow his ideas to be wasted, though, and soon he saw an occasion to turn them into reality after all. In the course of 1962, he was approached by the Governing Mayor of West Berlin, Willy Brandt, to come to Berlin and give shape to his (and the Kennedy administration’s) ambition to promote the Western part of the city as a cultural center of global importance that, by implication, would outshine the eastern part of the city from which it had been physically sealed off since August 13, 1961, by the infamous Wall.¹² Blessed with a budget of \$2,000,000 from the Ford Foundation, the foremost pillars of this program involved an artist-in-residence program,¹³ a literary colloquium, a drama seminar, an opera workshop (to be led by George Balanchine), an international expert program based on cultural themes (the *Berliner Begegnungen*), and the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies

¹¹ Nabokov to Josselson, June 27 and September 18, 1962; Nabokov, memoranda “Festival of Rio de Janeiro” and “Conference et Festival de Bahia,” September 8, 1962; Nabokov to Albérico Fraga, Rector, University of Bahia, December 17, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2. For the state of the program as of the moment of cancellation, see Appendix B6.

¹² The advice to invest in the cultural allure of West Berlin came from the official delegation (headed by Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson and former US Military Governor of Germany, Lucius D. Clay) that President Kennedy sent to Brandt in the wake of the erection of the Wall. Clay to Philip Coombs, Assistant Secretary of State for Cultural Affairs, September 28, 1961; Coombs to Clay, October 13, 1961, Records of the State Department (NARA), Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, Office of the Assistant Secretary, Subject Files, A1 5072, 3-Germany. Late 1962, Brandt officially asked the CCF to make Nabokov available for a position as his cultural adviser. Brandt to Josselson, November 20, 1962, Brandt Papers, entry A6, 40.

¹³ Composers who participated in this program included, among others, Luciano Berio, John Cage, Elliott Carter, Morton Feldman, Hans-Joachim Koellreutter, György Ligeti, Krzysztof Penderecki, Roger Sessions, Gunther Schuller, Roman Vlad, Iannis Xenakis, and Isang Yun.

(IICMSD), which was waiting to be realized since its conceptualization at the Tokyo Encounter.¹⁴ Alain Daniélou, invited to Berlin to lead the IICMSD, aspired to nothing less than turning the “wall of shame” into a “symbol of true freedom,” a model to overcome “walls of prejudices and backward, inhuman forces (foremost the Pope).” Yehudi Menuhin went even further, envisioning concerts by “any of the people who are divided by a wall, such as North and South Koreans, East and West Germans, Israelis and Arabs, Pakistanis and Indians” as part of an extended artistic and academic program centering on refugees, exiles, and otherwise displaced people. In short, West Berlin was to become the center of redemption for the sins of humankind.¹⁵

Nabokov’s aims were more practical but no less aspiring: for the first edition of the Berlin Festival under his artistic directorship in 1964 (which was bestowed upon him after the passing of his predecessor, Gerhart von Westerman), he implemented the “Black Encounter” program he originally designed for Brazil. Sold on its sponsors as a way to highlight Berlin as “the center of cultural exchange between Germany and the rest of the world,” the Festival featured performances of traditional dance and theater by troupes from Dahomey (Benin), Cameroon (the Fali tribe), and Nigeria (Duro Lapidó’s *Ọba kò so* [The King Has Not Hanged Himself]); Langston Hughes’s retelling of the Nativity story with a full African American cast (*Black Nativity*); Jean Genet’s *Les nègres, clownerie* (brought by the New York Blacks Company as *The Blacks*); Aimé Césaire’s *La tragédie du roi Christophe*;

¹⁴ Nabokov to Josselson and Shepard Stone, Ford Foundation, memorandum “Arts Project for Berlin,” July 20, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2; Nabokov and Stone, memorandum “Berliner Kulturprojekte der Ford Foundation,” August 1963, Dieter Sattler Papers, vol. 3. After the expiration of its first subsidy (June 1966), the Ford Foundation granted another three-year subsidy of \$125,000 to the IICMSD as a supplement to a modest contribution from the Berlin Senate. Over the years, the IICMSD, in close collaboration with UNESCO’s International Music Council, developed into a full-fledged center for research and promotion of traditional music practices from Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America through recordings (in particular the UNESCO *Music from the Orient* series), concerts, expositions, conferences, and publications, including the quarterly *The World of Music*. In 1966, a branch was established in Venice for the particular purpose of coordinating appearances by extra-European musical groups at European festivals. As time progressed, funds from the Berlin Senate dwindled, and when in the wake of the end of the Cold War the Senate cancelled its subsidy altogether, the IICMSD closed its doors in 1996. A limited share of the IICMSD business correspondence (excluding the early years) is stored today in the Ethnologisches Museum, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin.

¹⁵ Daniélou to Nabokov, March 7, 1963, Nabokov Papers, 5-4; Menuhin to Nabokov, April 4, 1963, Nabokov Papers, 4-6. Nabokov doubted that Menuhin’s idea could be realized, assuming that none of the governments involved would allow their citizens to participate in an event in which the “enemy” was present. Menuhin insisted that his proposal, which in his view captured “*the* theme of the century [and] the only theme worthy of Berlin,” not be approached “timidly or with a faint heart.” After all, “it is a theme which enables one to be absolutely frank, as we must come clean with our own crimes at the same time as bringing out those of all human races. We have seen decimation of the Red Indian, of the Australian Aborigine and of many peoples in Africa, as well as animals. It could be a tremendous human theme, and out of it might emerge a new moral attitude...” Nabokov to Menuhin, April 18, 1963; Menuhin to Nabokov April 20, 1963, Nabokov Papers, 9-3.

and a score of American jazz soloists and combos.¹⁶ For the 1965 edition of the Festival, dedicated to Japanese culture and its relation to the West, he drew on his Japanese network to bring, for first time in its history, the Kabuki Theater of Tokyo to Europe.

In addition, Nabokov, as part of Brandt's strategy to defuse East-West tensions in Berlin, endeavored to obtain the participation of artists from "the other side" while rejecting proposals for the Festival that could provoke on the political level.¹⁷ The prime obstacle to securing cooperation from the socialist countries was the fact that the Berlin Festival was tied to the Berlin Senate, and with that, to the West German government in Bonn, both of whom remained stern in their opposition to any form of accommodation with their Eastern counterparts. To depoliticize the Festival and enable citizens of socialist countries to accept his invitation, Nabokov proposed to privatize the Festival and keep it apart from existing arrangements on cultural exchanges with West Germany. As it turned out, the Soviet government, searching for a way to enhance its presence in West Berlin without having to recognize the Bonn government, was pushing for the same move. When in early 1964 Nabokov came to visit the Soviet Embassy at Unter den Linden, he found the Soviets willing to cooperate in what they chose to qualify as a "counter-festival." Indeed, Ambassador Pyotr A. Abrassimov turned out to be a far cry from the typical *apparatchik* Nabokov so despised, revealing himself as an interesting conversationalist unclouded by "ideospeak." Abrassimov not only immediately pressed the buttons to obtain the cellist Mstislav Rostropovich and his wife, the soprano Galina

¹⁶ Subsidy application to the Deutsche Klassenlotterie, department Berliner Zahlenlotto, undated, Records of the (West) Berlin Senatsverwaltung für Wissenschaft und Kunst (Landesarchiv Berlin), 1213. Incidentally, Nabokov experienced that the boosting of West Berlin's cultural prestige provoked envy in other parts of West Germany. When asked for a contribution to Nabokov's first Berlin Festival, Rolf Liebermann, *Intendant* of the Hamburg State Opera, flatly refused to consider it: "I consider [Gustav Rudolf] Sellner [*Generalintendant* and chief director of the Deutsche Oper Berlin] to be an idiot, [and] the whole of Berlin to be a multi-million inflated pig's bladder [*eine mit Millionen aufgepumpte Schweineblase*] which one day will have to burst under its financial overnourishment [*finanzieller Überfütterung*]; and the gold-lined Berlin carpets will not change anything about that—they will only grow thicker and thicker themselves." Liebermann's resentment resulted from the fact that the Berlin opera house could spend DM 560,000 on a production of Manuel de Falla's *Atlántida* whereas he had to work with a budget for DM 450,000 for a whole year. Liebermann to Nabokov, December 12, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2.

¹⁷ When the German musicologist Fred K. Prieberg suggested to list on the 1964 Festival program works by Soviet dodecaphonists (Valentyn V. Sylvestrov, Andrey M. Volkonsky, Edison V. Denisov, etc.), Nabokov explained how important he thought it was not to politicize such repertory, but to present it "as a normal phenomenon" to be judged on its own artistic merits. A more important reason not to list these compositions on a Western festival program, he added, was not to jeopardize these composers who had been officially denounced at the 1962 meeting of the Soviet Composers' Union. Prieberg to Nabokov, September 6, 1963; Nabokov to Prieberg, December 7, 1963, Nabokov, 9-6.

Vishnevskaya, for the Berlin Festival, but also managed to secure an official invitation for Nabokov to visit the Soviet Union.¹⁸

Although the CCF was in full support of Brandt's *détente* politics, Josselson looked warily at Nabokov's socializing with Soviet authorities, and when he learned of his projected visit to the Soviet Union, he urged Nabokov to change his mind for fear of him becoming "an unwitting instrument of Soviet policy in Germany." Apart from the "many enemies you have in Berlin who are only waiting for an opportunity to knife you," he explained to Nabokov cryptically, "you could find yourself in a very embarrassing situation, not immediately, but maybe a year or two from now." Initially, Nabokov did not see the point of Josselson's caveats and stuck to his plan to stop over at Moscow on his way back from a business trip from Japan in July 1964. But when he came to Karachi, the last stop before Moscow, he suddenly decided to go straight back to Berlin for reasons of fatigue and his angina pectoris.¹⁹

The mutual policy of accommodation between the US and USSR in 1962-4 was short-lived. After the assassination of President Kennedy on November 22, 1963, the US administration under Lyndon B. Johnson quickly returned to a hard line vis-à-vis socialist countries, Nabokov explained to an SED official. As he saw it, this change of course was foreshadowed by the protest emanating from the US Mission in Berlin against his plan to open the 1964 Berlin Festival with a memorial concert for

¹⁸ Nabokov, memorandum "Die gewünschte Beteiligung sowjetischer Künstler an den Berliner Festwochen 1964," January 10, 1964, Nabokov Papers, 9-3; Otto Frei, "Neue sowjetische Initiativen über Berlin: Vorschlag für regelmäßige Kontakte mit alliierten Beratern," *Neu Zürcher Zeitung*, December 10, 1964, Nabokov Papers, 12-31; Büro Walter Ulbricht, memorandum "Über eine Aussprache zwischen dem sowjetischen Botschafter in der DDR, Genossen [Pyotr] Abrassimow und Genossen Staatssekretär [Otto] Winzer am 18.2.1963," February 19, 1963, SAPMO (BA), DY30/3496 (fols. 32-3); Nabokov to Josselson, June 8, 1964, Nabokov Papers, 6-3. For Nabokov's recollections of his first meeting with Abrassimov and his deputy for cultural affairs, Yuli A. Kvitsinsky, see *Bagázh*, 255-68. From Kvitsinsky's memoirs it transpires that Abrassimov, for his part, recognized in Nabokov a worthy conversant, i.e., someone who was not the typical "political blabbermouth" he so often had to deal with. Kvitsinsky, *Vor dem Sturm: Erinnerungen eines Diplomaten* (Berlin: Siedler, 1993), 197.

¹⁹ Nabokov to Josselson, June 21, 1964, Josselson Papers, 23-2; Josselson to Nabokov, June 29, 1964; Nabokov to Josselson, July 3, 1964, Nabokov Papers, 6-3; Josselson to Nabokov, December 10, 1964, Nabokov Papers, 12-31. Incidentally, three years earlier, both Josselson and Nabokov had tried to dissuade Stravinsky from accepting an invitation from the Union of Soviet Composers. Knowing that it would be futile to argue with someone who had become "very, very old, perpetually drunk and a bit senile," Nabokov suggested that conditions be created in the West which would "prevent [Stravinsky's] going by a) having him invited to the White House, b) having the State Department organize a tour for [Robert] Craft at that time to the North Pole and the USSR, [or] c) producing some sort of grand international prize here in Europe." Nabokov spoke to Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands, at the time president of the Center for European Culture, to explore the latter option, and, as is well known, Stravinsky was invited to the White House for a dinner in his honor on January 18, 1962. All this, however, could not prevent the composer from going to the Soviet Union in September/October of that year. Nabokov to Josselson, July 21, 1961, August 1, 1961, and October 25, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2+3.

President Kennedy, as such a concert could harm the candidacy of Johnson on the eve of the presidential elections.²⁰ (Nabokov ignored this protest and organized a memorial ceremony demarcated by a speech by Reverend Martin Luther King and a performance of Stravinsky's *Elegy for JFK*.) Likewise, the Soviet regime broke off cultural relations with West Berlin after the pianist Sviatoslav Richter and the Bolshoi Ballet had been denied to fulfill their German engagements. (Since the Kremlin refused to recognize West Berlin as an integral part of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Berlin Senate and the Bonn administration had agreed that Soviet artists would only be hosted when they would perform in both West Berlin and Federal Republic territory.) Determined not to let West Berlin "dry out [of great artists] like the Rio Grande," Nabokov managed to attain an exceptional status for his Festival through which he could secure the participation of, for instance, Mstislav Rostropovich and Emil Gilels.²¹

Three years later, however, when he proposed to theme the Berlin Festival on "East-West Encounters," he faced a full boycott from all East Bloc authorities. This time Nabokov intended to get to the core of the matter, and with Abrassimov's 1964 invitation to the Soviet Union still standing, he requested a meeting with the Soviet Minister of Culture, Yekaterina Furtseva, in Moscow. From her he learned that the boycott on the part of the East Bloc governments was motivated by the fact that the Board of Trustees of the then recently privatized Berlin Festival was dominated by representatives of the Bonn government. Only if this contingent would be prevented from exercising influence on the selection of the performers and the content of the Festival, the Soviet Ministry of Culture would be prepared to turn a blind eye to the fact that most of the funding for the Festival emanated from Bonn. Subsequently, Nabokov advised the Bonn government to completely withdraw from the Berlin Festival. When Bonn refused, and the prospect of realizing artistic East-West exchanges waned, Nabokov lost interest in the Festival and resigned as its artistic director.²²

²⁰ SED Central Committee, Office Walter Ulbricht, memorandum "Unterredung mit dem Berater Brandts für kulturelle Fragen, Nabokow," March 7, 1964, SAPMO (BA), DY30/3513 (fols. 32-6). The exact reason for Nabokov's conversation with someone from Walter Ulbricht's office is not clear, but it probably was related to his efforts to obtain the participation of GDR and Soviet artists in the Berlin Festival. From the memorandum it seems that his interlocutor was checking out Nabokov's role in Brandt's city government as well as his insights into his understanding of the policies of Bonn, Paris, London, and Washington regarding Germany and Berlin.

²¹ "Kulturaustausch: Kleine Schritte," *Der Spiegel* (September 29, 1965): 49-50.

²² Nabokov to Brandt, August 4, 1967; Nabokov to Egon Bahr, Ambassador, Federal Foreign Office (Bonn), September 5, 1967. Nabokov Papers, 14-7; Nabokov to Klaus Schütz, Governing Mayor of West Berlin, November 3, 1969; Schütz to Nabokov, December 5, 1969, Nabokov Papers, 18-7. For Nabokov's recollections of his 1967 trip to Moscow and Leningrad (where he met with the "Rostropoviches, Shostakoviches, Khachaturians, and Rozhdstvenskys"), see *Bagázh*, 252-4, 269-88. "All the time I was there," he wrote to George Kennan (who encouraged

The Curtain Falls: The Disclosure of the CCF/CIA Network

In the period Nabokov worked for the city of West Berlin, the foundations of the Congress for Cultural Freedom gradually crumbled under the ever-swelling cries of protest which permeated the 1960s. Whereas the new generation of politically engaged artists, writers, and academics (the so-called “New Left”) in both the United States and Western Europe attacked the status quo from the outside, ill-considered operations like the U-2 reconnaissance plane overflights of Soviet territory (1954-60) or the Bay of Pigs invasion (April 17, 1961) broke the US state-private consensus regarding America’s role in global politics from the inside, not to mention the fateful decisions that kept the world for nearly two weeks in fear of a nuclear conflict (the Cuban Missile Crisis, October 1962) or gradually implicated the US deeper and deeper in a dragging war in Vietnam (1955-77). Nabokov deplored the “messy affair” of the CIA’s attempt to overthrow the Fidel Castro government as well as the “loss of prestige for the President” it entailed. “From here *and* Asia,” Nabokov reported from Europe, “the new administration looks as more of a failure than the non-administration of Mr. E.” Although concealing it from the outside world, privately Josselson, too, expressed his growing disillusionment with Washington’s policy-making. Years later, he was to write in a tentative memoir that “the experience of working with and for the ‘outfit’ [CIA] [had become] truly traumatic [for] many of those who were actively engaged on our side in the Cold War.” Had in the 1950s “our motivation” been buttressed by “America’s historic promises,” in the second half of the 1960s “our individual values and ideals [had] been eroded by our intervention in Vietnam and by other senseless United States policies.”²³

Worse, in this critical climate, journalists started to ferret out the intricate patchwork of covert lines linking the most innocuous-sounding civil associations to the government’s intelligence apparatus. In August 1964, a

him to meet Svetlana Alliluyeva, Stalin’s daughter, who had just defected to the United States), “I felt sad, harassed, often depressed and angry, on the one hand about the neglect to which are subjected so many good people and things and, on the other hand, about the pietistic bosh they make of other things. I was received extremely courteously by everybody including such people as Mrs. Furtseva and Shostakovich. But though they will play my music and want me to come back, I don’t very much feel like it.” Nabokov to Kennan, September 13, 1967, Kennan Papers, 32-13. This feeling of despondency did not keep Nabokov from accepting the following year Abrassimov’s invitation to Byelorussia (where both men had grown up) and to attend in Moscow a concert of his music that was to be organized by the Union of Soviet Composers. However, when the Red Army invaded Czechoslovakia to suppress the Prague Spring just at the moment he was about to depart, Nabokov cancelled the trip. This decision led to a cooling-down in his relation with Abrassimov, but in 1971, he again received an invitation to Moscow, where a concert of his music was given. Nabokov to Brandt, August 17, 1971, Brandt Papers, entry A8, 15.

²³ Nabokov to Josselson, May 8, 1961, Josselson Papers, 23-3; Nabokov to J. Robert Oppenheimer, July 4 and October 3, 1961, Oppenheimer Papers, 52-4; Josselson, autobiographical note “The Story Behind the Congress for Cultural Freedom,” summer 1969, Josselson Papers, 27-2.

leak in a Congressional investigation into the tax-exempt status of private American foundations exposed the CIA's 'fronting' procedure to the public limelight. With the genie out of the bottle, it was only a matter of time before the CCF's cover would be blown. In a desperate attempt to avert the pending revelations, Josselson (whose aforementioned cryptic warning to Nabokov probably alluded to this predicament) tried to cut the CCF from the umbilical cord of the CIA and attract the Ford Foundation as its sole sponsor. (Irony has it that the Ford Foundation had also been deeply implicated in the CIA network through Shepard Stone from at least 1956.) The solution came too late: in a series of investigative articles published in late April 1966, the *New York Times* meticulously dissected the uncontrollable "Frankenstein's monster" that the CIA had become, and confirmed that this "monster" fed the CCF and its flagship magazine *Encounter*.²⁴ A year later, *Ramparts* magazine, despite the CIA's attempts at preventing publication, added fuel to the fire with a detailed inquiry into the CIA's network of front organizations, revealing the scope of the Agency's infiltration in both domestic and foreign affairs.²⁵ *Ramparts* did not mention the CCF by name, but Thomas Braden, one of the chief architects of this network, did in a well-meant but fatal attempt to defend the Agency against "wild and scurrilous" charges and to separate the truth from the untruth. Indeed, in a stream of confessions, he talked about "agents" planted in the CCF and the *Encounter* editorship and named the 1952 European tour of the Boston symphony Orchestra as one of several cultural activities to have been enabled by CIA subsidies.²⁶

In the days after the revelations, many CCF associates broke their ties with the organization out of indignation over the lie they had been bought into, while the CCF headquarters frantically tried to save what could be saved, not the least themselves. Their strategy was to neither deny nor confirm the CIA connection, and to refute the allegation that this "regrettable" connection had compromised the integrity of CCF members and activities. "The Congress for Cultural Freedom has never knowingly received support, directly or indirectly, from any secret source, American or

²⁴ Tom Wicker, John W. Finney, Max Frankel, E. W. Kenworthy, et al., *New York Times*, April 25–29, 1966.

²⁵ Sol Stern, "A Short Account of International Students Politics and the Cold War," *Ramparts* 5/9 (March 1967): 29–39; "Three Tales of the CIA," *Ramparts* 5/10 (April 1967): 17–28.

²⁶ Braden, "I'm Glad the CIA Is 'Immoral,'" *Saturday Evening Post* (May 20, 1967): 10–14; Max Frankel, "Ex-Official of CIA Lists Big Grants to Labor Aides," *New York Times*, May 8, 1967, 1. Frances Stonor Saunders demonstrates that both President Johnson and then CIA Director Richard Helms knew about Braden's article at least a month before its publication, but unlike with the *Ramparts* revelations, they did not mount a sabotage operation. Braden thought it likely that the CIA had decided to let him deal the deathblow to the CIA's longtime engagement with the Non-Communist Left, many of whom had turned against the Government for its Vietnam policy. Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 399–403.

otherwise,” Nabokov wrote to the editor of the *New York Times*. “Grants and contributions received over the years have been in the form of disinterested grants-in-aid, and there has been no effort on the part of any donor to influence the way in which the CCF carries out its international program.” When asked, various exponents of Nabokov’s network publicly subscribed to this statement, including W. H. Auden, Sidney Hook, and Yehudi Menuhin.²⁷ Josselson assumed full responsibility for the CCF’s having accepted CIA funds and tendered his resignation, as did his deputy, John Hunt. Although the CCF General Assembly condemned “in the strongest terms” the way in which the CIA had “poisoned the wells of intellectual discourse,” officially it did not accept Josselson’s and Hunt’s resignation. Officiously, though, Josselson was told that he could not stay on in the position of executive director and was ‘retired’ for \$30,000 a year, payable from the capital reserve of the Farfield Foundation. He would be succeeded by Shepard Stone, whose last deed as director of the Ford Foundation’s International Program was the procurement of a FF guarantee sum of \$4,650,000 to cover the CCF’s complete array of activities for a period of the next five years.²⁸

Needless to say, the revelations about the CIA’s fronting activities had disastrous consequences for the image of the CCF. Especially in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East, where the Congress had always been subject to official suspicion, reputations of those who had supported or worked for the organization were ruined—some even faced imprisonment and physical harassment. It was a heavy burden to bear for Josselson, the more so because he found himself alone in bearing it: neither his employer backed him, nor those whom he thought his brothers-in-arms in fighting for the good cause. Some who had been intimately involved in the CIA/CCF setup passionately defended that the ends justify the means in times of war, even when that war is ‘cold’, but most simply denied to have been in on the secret. Much to the grievance of Josselson, Nabokov disassociated himself both in public and in private from the CCF by ridicule and laughter, describing the whole affair as a farce: “One wonders why one should not have sent all one’s gas and electricity bills directly to the CIA since the last twenty years, and whether perhaps the Vatican Council and Mao’s Red Guards have not been subsidized by this generous (and costly, for those who pay their taxes here) organization,” he wrote to one of his former CCF

²⁷ Nabokov, Letter to the Editor, *New York Times*, April 30, 1966, CCF, II-243-8; Menuhin to Nabokov, May 14, 1966, Nabokov Papers, 13-2. Menuhin apparently thought that the allegations about the CCF/CIA link were false. “What an unpleasant accusation,” he wrote in an effort to console his friend. “As a matter of fact, I would think much more of the CIA if they did associate with ‘people like us’.”

²⁸ Statement of the CCF General Assembly, May 13, 1967, Hook Papers, 124-5.

colleagues. “I feel sorry for Mike and John, but in a certain way...they wanted it, the morons [*Dandins*]...”²⁹

To be sure, Nabokov’s resentment towards Josselson and Hunt resided not in the fact that he felt excluded from the plot (*if* he was excluded, that is), but for the way he had been worked out of the CCF through the back exit after the *New York Times* disclosures. Back then, the “organization people,” as he now referred to Josselson, Hunt, and Stone, had offered him a modest retirement settlement without explaining to the public and CCF members the reasons for his resignation, thereby making it appear as if “I, and not others, have been an agent of a certain distinguished Agency.” From that moment, he turned his back to the “Congrès pour la liberté de la haute couture,” wishing “to come to some sort of final settlement” which he thought was due him for his years of loyalty, and “sing to the Congress the words of the last chorus of [Bach’s] *St. John’s Passion*: ‘Rů-ŭhe sa-anfte, sa-anfte Růh’.”³⁰ The Congress, renamed into the International Association for Cultural Freedom (IACF) and adopting a rigid *détente* course, never regained its former splendor, and finally voted to dissolve itself in January 1979.

Nabokov accepted a golden handshake of \$34,500 (one-off) from the Farfield Foundation as well as an invitation from Arthur Schlesinger to come to New York to lecture at the City University, which was later followed up by other lectureships and a composer-in-residence position at the Aspen Institute for Humanistic Studies in Colorado (led by Joseph E. Slater, a former Ford Foundation executive). When asked for his advice on cultural matters and Soviet politics, he would give it.³¹ Neither did he refrain from putting a bug in governmental ears from time to time,³² nor did he fail to press the cases of the South Korean composer Isang Yun or the Soviet

²⁹ Nabokov to Konstanty Jeleński, February 28, 1967, Jeleński Papers, 13-294. To Virgil Thomson, he jested: “Don’t you think that the simplest way to live would be to send *all* our bills to the CIA? They love ‘paying’, so it seems, for everything under the sun.” Nabokov to Thomson, February 21, 1967, Thomson Papers, 29-69-18. To Stephen Spender, he joked about writing “a funny Gogol-like story about a man who, whatever he did, and whoever his employer, found he was always being paid for by the CIA.” Spender to Nabokov, August 26, 1970, Nabokov Papers, 29-19.

³⁰ Nabokov to Oppenheimer, November 9 and 30 and December 7, 1966, January 4, 1967, Oppenheimer Papers, 52-4.

³¹ In preparation for a trip to Moscow on behalf of President Nixon, W. Averell Harriman, former US Ambassador to the Soviet Union, asked Nabokov about his advice how to approach the Kremlin on questions such as West Berlin, the SALT talks, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Nabokov to Harriman, January 6, 1971, Nabokov Papers, 24-7.

³² When Secretary of State Henry Kissinger booked success in improving the relations between Washington and Beijing, Nabokov seized the opportunity to congratulate him and suggest that Balanchine’s New York City Ballet and the Juilliard String Quartet be dispatched to seal the *détente*. “The NYC Ballet is so fresh, so real, so full of life that it will worthily contrast with those faded, and somewhat dusty glories of Soviet companies of which, until the political break [with the USSR], China must have had an overdose.” Nabokov to Kissinger, July 23, 1971, Balanchine Archive, 1289.

dissidents like Yuli Daniel, Andrey Sinyavsky, and Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn.³³ But the ambition that two decades earlier had drawn him into the realm of cultural politics had disappeared, and eventually turned into cynicism. When President Carter's attempts to restore relations with Moscow and some of the lost prestige of the United States after the downfall of his predecessor (Richard Nixon) failed, Nabokov expressed his relief that "the god-awful *détente* is about to die and we'll be again in a cleaner attitude toward Mr. Brezhnev & Co."³⁴

Indeed, back in 1964, inspired by his meetings with Ambassador Abrassimov and his cultural attaché, Yuly Kvitsinsky, Nabokov seemed to have toyed with the thought of returning to his fatherland, hoping that he might be more successful with his music there than he had been in the West. But a range of unpleasant incidents during his visit to Leningrad and Moscow three years later sobered him up. "I assumed that the Revolution at least had brought order and discipline here," Kvitsinsky remembered Nabokov to have told him at his departure from Moscow. But considering the sloppy service in restaurants, the unexpected cancellation of trips, the disappearance of some of his belongings from his hotel room, and other kindred incidents, "I really cannot understand why you brought about the Revolution and why so many people have been incarcerated and murdered under Stalin. I do not idealize Western society, where much is concealed with money, alleged freedoms and false values. Perhaps with you much is rougher and cruder, and with that, also more honest and open. But it will be easier for me to end my days in the West, even though nothing will come of my music there."³⁵ Nabokov had been liberated from any illusions about either side of the Cold War divide.

Although obviously hurt by what each considered an act of betrayal of the other, Nabokov's and Josselson's bitterness over the way their successors ran the organization they had built up, in addition to the

³³ When Yun got kidnapped from West Berlin by the South Korean secret service (June 17, 1967) and condemned to life-long imprisonment for espionage (he had visited North Korea in 1963), Nabokov urged the IACF to intervene—to no avail. It was left to Yun's friends, Gunter Freudenberg and Francis Travis, to organize a world-wide petition which pressured the South Korean government to release him (February 23, 1969). Nabokov to Pierre Emmanuel, IACF Director, October 12, 1967, Nabokov Papers, 14-12. In 1974, when Solzhenitsyn was thrown out of the Soviet Union by the Brezhnev government, Nabokov tried to get the author of the *Gulag Archipelago* to the Aspen Institute. Nabokov to Avis Thayer Bohlen, February 1974, Thayer Bohlen Papers, 65.

³⁴ Nabokov to Avis Thayer Bohlen, March 22, 1977, Thayer Bohlen Papers, 65. Nabokov was despondent about Carter's Secretary of State Cyrus Roberts Vance, though. To Menuhin, he related how Vance had asked him in 1947 or 1948 "quite seriously and candidly: 'Mr. Nabokov, how many [atomic] bombs one would need to seal off[f] the Soviet Union from the rest of Europe?', and to my nonplussed stare added: 'We should after all consider this as a *practical* (sic!!) alternative!'" Nabokov to Menuhin, January 13, 1977, Foyle Menuhin Archive, 3/2/273.

³⁵ Kvitsinsky, *Vor dem Sturm*, 200-1.

gloominess with which they observed the developments in both the Soviet Union and the United States in the 1970s, kept their friendship intact. “It [was] not an easy relationship and never has been, with his Chekhovian fits, tears and breast-beating one day, effusive affection the next,” Josselson wrote to Hook about Nabokov. “[But] having worked so closely together over so many years, I was willing to forgive him much.”³⁶ Josselson spent the last years of his life writing a biography of Barclay de Tolly, the Russian Army’s commander-in-chief who found himself dishonorably discharged despite the success of his scorched-earth strategy of retreat before the overwhelming preponderance of Napoleon’s forces in 1812. Nabokov together with W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman wrote an opera based on Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (1973) and, after having finished his long overdue second book of memoirs in 1976 (*Bagázh*), planned a third one on his experiences as CCF secretary-general as well as a large-scale Stravinsky commemoration for 1980, a pan-European event involving the collaboration of the Berlin Festival, the Paris Autumn Festival and a British partner.³⁷ Fate had little mercy on the two men, however. In January 1978, Josselson, struggling with circulatory problems for nearly two decades, died following heart surgery. Three months later, Nabokov succumbed to heart failure as a result of a medical error during the aftercare to what had been routine prostate surgery.³⁸

³⁶ Josselson to Hook, undated but probably 1976, Hook Papers, 16-26.

³⁷ Nabokov to Georg Solti and Shepard Stone, undated but probably written in 1978, Christopher Cox Papers, 5-106.

³⁸ Isaiah Berlin gathered that Nabokov had been given an antibiotic to which he was allergic. Arthur Schlesinger reported that Nabokov had been given no antibiotics at all, as a consequence of which he ran a high temperature that his weak heart could not bear. Berlin to Avis Thayer Bohlen, April 25, 1978, Thayer Bohlen Papers, 49; Schlesinger to his family, April 7, 1978, Schlesinger Papers (NYPL), 99-1.

Conclusion

As Long As the Music Sounds...

Deine Zauber binden wieder
Was die Mode streng geteilt,
Alle Menschen werden Brüder
wo dein sanfter Flügel weilt.

Seid umschlungen, Millionen!
Diesen Kuß der ganzen Welt!
Brüder—überm Sternenzelt
Muß ein lieber Vater wohnen!

Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller, “Ode an die Freude” (1785)
Ludwig van Beethoven, Symphony No. 9, Op. 125 (1824)

For all their appeals to God and humanity, both Schiller and Beethoven could probably never have imagined to how many “millions” of their posterity their message would speak—or be *made* to speak. Which of the major political currents and leaderships that steered the course of twentieth-century history have not invoked the “Ode to Joy” to communicate their aspirations for the “millions”?—aspirations that were intensely divisive? Whether at the Nazi rallies in the 1930s, the celebrations of Beethoven’s bicentennial in both Germanies at a time of West-German/Soviet rapprochement (1970), or the ceremonies marking the reunification of Germany (1989)—the ‘Ninth’ was there every time to capture the moment’s symbolic value of unity. By the same token, Beethoven provided the soundtrack to the major celebrations of ‘togetherness’ mentioned in this dissertation: the joint concert of the Iraqi and US National Orchestras in 2003, the foundation of the Kulturbund in 1945, the merger of the SPD and KPD into the SED in 1946, and the inauguration of the Congress for Cultural Freedom in 1950.

Significantly, the music selected from Beethoven’s oeuvre for these purposes was already imbued with meaning through its lyrics or its association with heroic dramas: the “Ode to Joy,” Goethe’s *Egmont*, and *Fidelio*. Adorno, for one, saw in the ease with which these works could be exploited for the most diverging ideologies a confirmation of his conviction that music loses its “critical” power once it is married to the rhetoric of monumentality, emancipation, and resolution. Indeed, according to Adorno, Beethoven’s overwhelming music turned the opacity of Schiller’s poem dangerously susceptible to “authoritarian” intentions—in the sense that it allowed everyone to fill in whom they consider as their “loving Father” and part of “universal brotherhood.” Rather than “magically” uniting what was

divided, Beethoven's music gave—in Adorno's perception—the “Ode to Joy” a “somewhat uncanny quality of a magic incantation.”¹

One wonders whether Adorno would have held to his reading if he had lived to witness the Ninth Symphony's performance at the occasion of the German Reunification in 1989—the famous performance by an orchestra comprised of musicians from both Germanies, Soviet Russia, Britain, France, and the United States, when the conductor Leonard Bernstein took “an academic risk in the name of humanity” by substituting the word *Freude* in Schiller's title for *Freiheit*.² One also wonders how Nabokov would have perceived this landmark event. As the ultimate realization of the CCF's project, i.e., convincing the world that the best chances for mankind's future reside in the recognition and pursuance of individual freedoms rather than in state-managed collectives? As the final proof that art that is truly “of the people” is that art which has not been created by the dictates of totalitarian regimes?



The legacy of the Congress for Cultural Freedom is as complicated as it is contested. George F. Kennan, one of the principle architects of the covert state-private network from which the CCF emerged once (before the disclosures of CIA funding) pressed a despondent Nabokov on his mind that he could “think of no group of people who have done more to hold our world together in these last years than you and your colleagues. In this country [the United States] in particular, few will ever understand the dimensions and the significance of your accomplishments.”³ After the exposure of the CIA/CCF link, all hopes for recognition were lost in a cacophony of contenders. As Peter Coleman remarked:

The opposing assessments of the Congress were clear enough over thirty years ago when the controversy over CIA funding first exploded. Its

¹ Adorno, *Beethoven: The Philosophy of Music*, trans. Edmund Jephcott (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1998), 33, 192. Adorno felt the same about *Fidelio*, which to him had “a hieratic, cultic quality [in which] the Revolution is not depicted but re-enacted as in ritual.” *Ibid.*, 164.

² Bernstein, program notes, December 1989, Bernstein Collection, 103-13. For a discussion of this performance, see Alexander Rehding, “‘Ode to Freedom’: Bernstein's Ninth at the Berlin Wall,” *Beethoven Forum* 12 (2005): 36-49. For more on the intersections between music and politics in Beethoven's works, see Richard Taruskin, “Resisting the Ninth,” *19th-Century Music* 12 (1989): 241-56; Nicholas Cook, *Beethoven: Symphony No. 9* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); David B. Dennis, *Beethoven in German Politics, 1870-1989* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1996); Esteban Buch, *Beethoven's Ninth: A Political History*, trans. Richard Miller (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2003); Stephen Rumph, *Beethoven after Napoleon: Political Romanticism in the Late Works* (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2004).

³ Kennan to Nabokov, June, 19, 1959, cited in Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 9.

partisans pointed to its role in the defeat of Stalinism; its critics claimed its influence was small. The one saw it as a story of idealism and courage, the other as a gravy train. The one shrugged off CIA funding, the other insisted it was the real theme. *Pecunia non olet*, cried one: money doesn't smell. He who pays the piper calls the tune, replied the other.⁴

Of all the CCF's activities, Nabokov's festivals were probably the most disputed. Sidney Hook, the ACCF chairman who at the time had supported Nabokov's project, describes in his memoirs the legacy of the Paris festival as having done "more to further Nabokov's career and reputation than to further cultural freedom."

It was an extravaganza that provided junket tours for hundreds, and left the Congress saddled with a bureaucracy whose subsequent care and feeding was a burden on its resources. The whole premise of the undertaking was oversimplified, if not false. Since art has flourished even under political tyrannies, there was nothing the festival presented that could not have been offered to the world under the aegis of an enlightened despotism. The rationalizations offered by Nabokov and others to my feebly expressed doubts—viz. that the Congress would be making fast friends especially in France by these pyrotechnical displays, and that indirectly this feast of cultural riches would have a bracing effect on the climate of political opinion—were laughable.⁵

True, from a hindsight perspective, one may wonder what Nabokov's expensive enterprises actually have achieved. Jazz and popular culture won the 'cultural' Cold War, not one of the various strands of modernism. For all Nabokov's efforts to convince his audiences that the intentions of the CCF were "purely cultural," nearly all of his festivals met with resistance and a hostile reception, including from those who were supposed to be persuaded of the CCF's message of freedom. The basis for this rejection was a mix of suspicion of American/Western 'hidden' involvements (which had been fed by the inauguration of the organization in Berlin in June 1950) and aversion towards the "universalism" the CCF's festivals espoused—a quality that the Prague Manifesto described as "falsely cosmopolitan," which in today's language is probably to be translated as "cultural imperialism." Indeed, had the "cultural Cold War" not simply become a lucrative enterprise for the selected few? Virgil Thomson seems to hint at this view when he writes in 1960:

⁴ Coleman, "Supporting the Indispensable," *The New Criterion* 18 (September 1999): 62.

⁵ Hook, *Out of Step*, 445–6. At the time of the Festival, however, Hook seemed to have been fully supportive of the project, writing Nabokov that it had been the only kind of action that was possible in France, at least, as well as the only event that did not turn out to be "a psychological defeat for the cause of freedom," and that he was pleased that his "confidence in your judgment and leadership has been vindicated." Hook to Nabokov, June 12, 1952, Hook Papers, 124–4.

[T]he whole music world these days seems to be hedge-hopping frontiers as if Europe, Asia Africa, and the Americas were the terrain of one vast steep-chase. Cold War on the cultural front has found music ever so useful towards seducing the affection of peoples. I suppose this is a good thing. Whether it is good for politics I could not say. But it gives trips to musicians, gets performers and composers round the globe, provokes paying engagements and performing-rights fees. Every government in the world and every international business organization, occasionally even the roman Papacy, now uses modern music and art for propaganda purposes.⁶

For all what one may think of the Nabokov's festivals, one should not forget their original rationale: a reply to the Soviet adeptness in using the performing arts for propaganda purposes. "This country has no ministry of culture," Kennan justified the CIA/CCF setup, "and [the] CIA was obliged to do what it could to try to fill the gap." Therefore, it should be praised for having done so, and not criticized.⁷

Apart from the strategic considerations that led the CIA to operate in the field of culture, America's involvement in the field of cultural propaganda had much to do with the concerns of the advocates of a cultural counteroffensive for the recognition of America's cultural standing and place in the realm of "universal" culture. The success of the Boston Symphony Orchestra at the 1952 European tour gave a considerable confidence boost to Washington's propaganda strategists that the United States *did* have an alternative to offer to Europe's and Soviet Russia's orchestras. When the overt apparatus for cultural representation activities was set in place (USIA en ANTA), various orchestras, performing ensembles, and dance companies came to tour the globe in the name of "freedom."

The intellectual and artistic networks that the CCF forged in the 1950s and 1960s provided transatlantic and global platforms ("communities of thought") on which common concerns could be explored, compared, debated, and addressed by action. The foundation of the International Institute for Comparative Music Studies and Documentation is one such concrete example of an institute which provided a patronage for artists who did not enjoy governmental support in their own countries. Daniélou's agenda of "opposing the hybrids" seems anachronistic now, but, as this dissertation has shown, it expressed the concerns and values characteristic of the 1950s and 1960s, an often neglected transitory stage between the onset of the postwar reconstruction and decolonization movements and the cultural relativism and post-colonialism currents of the 1980s and 1990s. Seen as such, the CCF's decision in the mid-1950s to embrace a strategy of

⁶ Thomson, "Looking Back on a Decade," *Encounter* 15/5 (November 1960): 50.

⁷ Kennan, *National Review*, November 9, 1967, cited by Coleman, *The Liberal Conspiracy*, 237.

collaboration, exchange, understanding, and outreach to the decolonized/ decolonizing nations rather than targeting the Soviet Union or the People's Republic of China directly might have been the best turn that could be made.

By the same token, it seems difficult to imagine that music and musical taste could ever be so politicized again as it was in the last century. But as new ideological currents are claiming their right on the global stage, often espousing the same “totalitarian” values that the CCF so protested, we see ample examples of (ab)uses of music’s “unique power”—the power to enhance any meaning that we wish to hear or are made to hear. Throughout this dissertation, we have seen various individuals and groups of diverging political persuasions and intentions—anti-Stalinist liberals, progressive liberals, communists, socialists—expressing their belief in the binding and transcending power of music. If not referring to contemporary music, then most of the time specific works from the classical, German or Russian-centered musical traditions were implied. With respect to the Western side of the ideological divide, we have heard the idea from: Secretary of State Colin Powell, on the occasion of America’s latest “victory over tyranny”; the music editors at the Office of War Information, in their efforts to uplift the morale of soldiers and citizens in war areas; the music officers at the OMGUS Information Control Division, in their mission to prepare Germany for its reintegration into the international community; Wilhelm Furtwängler, in the closing statement at his denazification trial to absolve himself of every suspicion of guilt; Yehudi Menuhin in his defense of Furtwängler and his performances before German audiences in the immediate aftermath of World War II; Olin Downes, in his efforts to keep being seen as an independent critic of his government; and finally Nabokov, in his campaign for removing skepticism towards the values of liberal “civilization.” As “apolitical” their appeals to the universal qualities of music may sound at times, in contexts where it is ‘permitted’, the reconciling rhetoric of diplomacy can easily slip into the divisive rhetoric of “psychological warfare.”

It for each of us to be cautious and aware of the intentions behind incantations of music’s “unique power.” It is also for each of us to decide whether Aaron Copland was right when he introduced Shostakovich at a dinner on the occasion of the Soviet composer’s participation in the Waldorf Peace Conference by remarking that

[i]t is one of the marvels of the art of music that it makes us all forget ideological differences—at least for as long as the music sounds.⁸

⁸ Aaron Copland, “Introducing Shostakovich at Dinner,” March 1949, in *Aaron Copland: A Reader—Selected Writings 1923-1972*, ed. Richard Kostelanetz (New York: Routledge, 2004), 132.

Or does W. H. Auden's often misinterpreted poem "Music is International" (1947) strike true? It is as if Colin Powell read these lines while preparing his speech for the 2003 musical celebration of US-Iraqi unity:

Orchestras have so long been speaking
This universal language that the Greek
And the Barbarian have both mastered
Its enigmatic grammar which at last
Says all things well. But who is worthy?
What is sweet? What is sound?...

APPENDICES

Manifesto

Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics¹

Prague, May 29, 1948

PROCLAMATION

1. Music and musical life of our time reveal themselves to be in a profound crisis. This is characterized primarily by a sharp contrast and contradiction between so-called “serious” and “entertainment” music.
2. So-called serious music is becoming constantly more individualistic and subjective as to its contents, ever more complicated and mechanically constructed as to its form.
3. So-called entertainment music is becoming more and more superficial, commonplace and standardized, and is in some countries the product of a monopolized entertainment industry.
4. The elements of serious music have lost their proportion to one another: either the rhythmical or harmonic elements are excessively predominant at the expense of the melodic element, or the elements of form and construction are so stressed that the rhythmic and melodic elements are neglected; finally, there are other styles in contemporary music in which formless flow of melody and quasi-aesthetic imitation of older contrapuntal styles are substituted for logical development, neither of which can disguise the poverty of invention in the majority of cases.
5. On the other hand popular music concentrates only on obvious melody to the neglect of all other musical elements; it employs only the most vulgar, corrupted and standardized melodic clichés, as is especially evident in American entertainment music.
6. Both trends in music have an equally falsely cosmopolitan character, obliterating national traits in the musical life of the peoples.
7. Though seemingly contradictory, they are both, in fact, only two aspects of the bad cultural conditions brought about and developed by the same social process.
8. The more this inadequacy comes into evidence in so-called serious music, the more subjective are its contents and the more complicated is its form, causing a constant decrease in the size of its audience and appealing to smaller and smaller circles, the more entertainment music continues to penetrate into more and more countries, the more it asserts itself, and

makes superficial and banal the emotional life of millions of listeners spoiling their taste.

9. We composers and music critics, assembled at the Second International Congress in Prague, wish to draw attention to the contradictory nature of this state of affairs; for we live in a time when new social forms are being built up, and when the entire human culture is advancing into a higher stage and is presenting new and urgent tasks to the artist.
10. This Congress has no intention of giving any prescription or directive concerning methods of musical creation; it understands that every country and people must find its own ways and means. But we must have a common understanding of the social causes and fundamentals of the crisis in music and together we must work with might and main to overcome it.
11. The successful overcoming of this crisis in music is, in our opinion, possible, if
 - composers become conscious of this crisis and find a way out of their tendency towards extreme subjectivism, so that music becomes the expression of the new and great progressive ideas and emotions of the broad masses and of all that is progressive in our time;
 - composers in their work ally themselves more closely with the national cultures of their countries, defending them against falsely cosmopolitan tendencies; for true internationalism in music can be achieved only by the development of its national characteristics;
 - composers direct their attention also to such forms of music which are capable of more concrete content such as opera, oratoria, cantata, chorus, song, etc.;
 - all composers and musicologists work actively and practically for the overcoming of musical illiteracy and for the musical education of the broad masses.
12. The Congress calls on composers the world over to create music which combines the finest craftsmanship, originality and high quality with genuine popular appeal.
13. The Congress considers that the exchange of experiences and ideas between composers and musicologists of all countries is absolutely essential. To achieve our aim it is necessary that progressive musicians should first unite their forces in their own countries. This with the aim to make possible the establishment of an International Association of Progressive composers and Musicologists in the near future.
14. The congress is convinced that this new International Association of Progressive composers and Musicologists and the preserving and conscious work will overcome the danger inherent in a long and deeply rooted musical crisis, and will give back to music its important and ennobling function in society.
15. Thus music will become a powerful force contributing to the solution of the great historical tasks facing progressive humanity.

RESOLUTION

1. All participants have unanimously welcomed the organising of the Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics by the Syndicate of Czech composers, which has paved the way to close international co-operation between composers and musicologists on the broadest possible basis.
2. It is incumbent on participants in the Congress to work most intensively for the putting into practice of the ideas worked out in the Proclamation issued and the Congress. Composers and musicologists of countries not represented, either by organizations or groups, at the Congress, will be informed by the Syndicate of Czech Composers of the result of work done at the Congress and will be called upon to co-operate in the spirit of the Proclamation and of this Resolution.
3. The Syndicate of Czech Composers will publish a collection of lectures and a digest of the discussions held at the meetings of this Congress in Czech, Russian, English and French.
4. In accordance with the Proclamation made at the Congress and with the resolution passed at the Plenary meeting, which was held on the 29th May 1948 at 3 p.m., the Executive Committee of the Congress was entrusted with the functions of an "Inception Committee" for the preparation of an "International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists" whose ideological basis is the Proclamation issued at the Congress.
5. It is the duty of every member of the "Inception Committee" to inform his organization or group of progressive composers and musicologists of the Proclamation and Resolution made at the Congress, as well as of the idea on which the International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists is based.
6. Where no such organization or group exists the members of the "Inception Committee" are entrusted to create one.
7. Every organization or group of progressive composers and musicologists has to nominate a representative for the preparatory committee of the "International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists" and must submit his name to the Syndicate of Czech Composers [address] at the latest by the 31st July 1948; at the same address he is to inform the Syndicate of the stage reached in the preparatory work.
8. The Syndicate of Czech Composers is calling a meeting of this preparatory committee on the 29th, 30th and 31st October 1948 in Prague.
9. The task of the International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists will be
 - to put into practice the ideas underlying the Proclamation of the Congress;
 - to arrange for an International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists to be held annually;

- to publish collections of musicological essays and reports which endeavour to employ progressive means of solving musicological problems;
- to publish collections of various types of vocal and instrumental music and of “mass” songs by composers of every nationality, inspired by the new social tasks of music;
- to arrange international compositions for opera, cantatas, choirs, “mass” songs, etc., which correspond to the ideas expressed in the Proclamation made at the Congress.

For the “Inception Committee” of the International Association of Progressive Composers and Musicologists:

<i>Austria</i>	Hanns Eisler
<i>Brazil</i>	Arnaldo Estrella
<i>Bulgaria</i>	Veselin Stoyanov
<i>Czechoslovakia</i>	Stěpán Lucký · František Alois Kypka · Antonín Sychra · Jaroslav Tomášek
<i>France</i>	Roland de Candé
<i>Great Britain</i>	Alan Bush · Bernard Stevens
<i>Holland</i>	Marius Flothuis · Eberhard Rebling
<i>Hungary</i>	Denés Bartha
<i>Poland</i>	Zofia Lissa
<i>Romania</i>	Alfred Mendel[s]sohn
<i>Switzerland</i>	Georges Bernand
<i>USSR</i>	Tikhon Khrennikov · Boris Yarustovsky · Yuri Shaporin
<i>Yugoslavia</i>	Oskar Danon · Natko Devčić

¹ This document was drafted by Hanns Eisler and adopted by the Prague Congress. This reproduction is based on a copy sent to Virgil Thomson, Thomson Papers, 29-57-6.

Manifesto

Congress for Cultural Freedom¹

Berlin, June 29, 1950

1. We hold it to be self-evident that intellectual freedom is one of the inalienable rights of man.
2. Such freedom is defined first and foremost by his right to hold and express his own opinions, and particularly opinions which differ from those of his rulers. Deprived of the right to say “no,” man becomes a slave.
3. Freedom and peace are inseparable. In any country, under any regime, the overwhelming majority of ordinary people fear and oppose war. The danger of war becomes acute when governments, by suppressing democratic representative institutions, deny to the majority the means of imposing its will to peace. Peace can be maintained only if each government submits to the control and inspection of its acts by the people whom it governs, and agrees to submit all questions immediately involving the risk of war to a representative international authority, by whose decisions it will abide.
4. We hold that the main reason for the present insecurity of the world is the policy of governments which, while paying lip-service to peace, refuse to accept this double control. Historical experience proves that wars can be prepared and waged under any slogan, including that of peace. Campaigns for peace which are not backed by acts that will guarantee its maintenance are like counterfeit currency circulated for dishonest purposes. Intellectual sanity and physical security can only return to the world if such practices are abandoned.
5. Freedom is based on the toleration of divergent opinions. The principle of toleration does not logically permit the practice of intolerance.
6. No political philosophy or economic theory can claim the sole right to represent freedom in the abstract. We hold that the value of such theories is to be judged by the range of concrete freedom which they accord the individual in practice. We likewise hold that no race, nation, class or religion can claim the sole right to represent the idea of freedom, nor the right to deny freedom to other groups or creeds in the name of any ultimate ideal or lofty aim whatsoever. We hold that the historical contribution of any society is to be judged by the extent and quality of the freedom which its members actually enjoy.

7. In times of emergency, restrictions on the freedom of the individual are imposed in the real or assumed interest of the community. We hold it to be essential that such restrictions be confined to a minimum of clearly specified actions; that they be understood to be temporary and limited expedients in the nature of a sacrifice; and that the measures restricting freedom be themselves subject to free criticism and democratic control. Only thus can we have a reasonable assurance that emergency measures restricting individual freedom will not degenerate into a permanent tyranny.
8. In totalitarian states restrictions on freedom are no longer intended and publicly understood as sacrifices imposed on the people, but are, on the contrary, represented as triumphs of progress and achievements of a superior civilization. We hold that both the theory and practice of these regimes run counter to the basic rights of the individual and the fundamental aspirations of mankind as a whole.
9. We hold the danger represented by these regimes to be all the greater since their means of enforcement far surpasses that of all previous tyrannies in the history of mankind. The citizen of the totalitarian state is expected and forced not only to abstain from crime but to conform in all his thoughts and actions to a prescribed pattern. Citizens are persecuted and condemned on such unspecified and all-embracing charges as "enemies of the people" or "socially unreliable elements."
10. We hold that there can be no stable world so long as mankind, with regard to freedom, remains divided into "have" and "have-nots." The defence of existing freedoms, the reconquest of lost freedoms, *and the creation of new freedoms* are parts of the same struggle.
11. We hold that the theory and practice of the totalitarian state are the greatest challenge which man has been called on to meet in the course of civilized history.
12. We hold that indifference or neutrality in the face of such a challenge amounts to a betrayal of mankind and to the abdication of the free mind. Our answers to this challenge may decide the fate of man for generations.
13. *The defence of intellectual liberty today imposes a positive obligation: to offer new and constructive answer to the problems of our time.*
14. We address this manifesto to all men who are determined to regain those liberties which they have lost and to preserve *and extend* those which they enjoy.

¹ This document was drafted by Arthur Koestler and adopted by the Berlin Congress after the incorporation of the italicized amendments of Hugh Trevor-Roper and A. J. Ayer in articles 10, 13, and 14.

Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century

(L'Œuvre du XXe siècle)

Paris, April 30-June 1, 1952

1. Organization
2. Symphonic Concerts,
Operas, and Ballets
3. Chamber Music Concerts
4. Exhibition of Paintings
and Sculptures
5. Unrealized Projects
6. Round-Tables and Public
Discussions
7. Affiliated Concerts

1. Organization

President • Nicolas NABOKOV

Artistic Director • Julius FLEISCHMANN

Treasurer • Pierre BOLOMEY

General Manager • Hervé DUGARDIN

Assistant Manager • Denise TUAL

Chamber Music Program • Frederick GOLDBECK

Art Exhibition • James Johnson SWEENEY

Literary Debates • Roger CAILLOIS, René TAVERNIER, and François BONDY

2. Symphonic Concerts, Operas, and Ballets

April 30

Église St. Roch

Inaugural Concert

Chorale Saint-Guillaume de Strasbourg

Orchestre des Concerts Lamoureux

conductor Fritz Munch

- Johann Sebastian BACH, Magnificat in D Major (BWV 243) and cantata “Bleib bei uns, denn es will Abend werden” (BWV 6)
- Francis POULENC, *Stabat Mater* (1950-1)
solist Geneviève Moizan

May 2-3

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Opera

Alban BERG, *Wozzeck* (1914-22)

libretto Georg Buchner

Wiener Oper and Wiener Philharmoniker

conductor Karl Böhm · *stage director* Oscar Fritz Schuh · *decors* Caspar Neher

May 5

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic Concert

Orchestre du Théâtre National de l'Opéra

conductor Bruno Walter

- Richard STRAUSS, *Don Juan* (1888-9)
- Claude DEBUSSY, *Prélude à l'après-midi d'un faune* (1891-4)
- Gustav MAHLER, *Das Lied von der Erde* (1908-9)
solists Elsa Cavelti (replacing Kathleen Ferrier) and Lorenz Fehenberger

May 6

Théâtre National de l'Opéra

Symphonic Concert

Boston Symphony Orchestra

conductor Charles Munch

- Samuel BARBER, *The School for Scandal Overture* (1931)

May 7+9

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

- Arthur HONEGGER, *Symphony No. 2* (1940-1)
- Walter PISTON, *Toccata* (1948)
- Claude DEBUSSY, *La Mer* (1903-5)
- Maurice RAVEL, *Daphnis et Chloé*, Suite No. 2 (1913)

Opera and Ballets

Grand Ballet du Marquis de Cuevas¹

conductor Gustave Cloez

- Henri SAUGUET, *Cordélia*, one-act ballet (commission)
choreography John Taras · *scenery and costumes* Jacques Dupont
- Vittorio RIETI, *Don Perlimplin*, one-act opera (commission)
libretto Federico García Lorca · *stage director* Yves Robert · *scenery* Antoni Clave
- Georges AURIC, *Coup de feu*, one-act ballet (commission)
choreography Aurel Milloss · *scenery* A. M. Cassandre

May 8

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic Concert

Boston Symphony Orchestra

conductor Pierre Monteux

- Ralph Vaughan WILLIAMS, *Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis* (1910)
- Darius MILHAUD, *Protée*, Suite No. 2 (1913-9)
- William SCHUMAN, *Symphony No. 3* (1941)
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913)

May 10-15

Théâtre National de l'Opéra
Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Ballets

New York City Ballet

artistic director George Balanchine · conductor Léon Barzin

- Pyotr I. TCHAIKOVSKY, *Swan Lake* (1875-6)
choreography George Balanchine, based on Lev Ivanov
scenery Cecil Beaton
- Maurice RAVEL, *La Valse* (1919-20)
choreography George Balanchine · *costumes* Barbara Karinska
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *La Cage* (1951)
choreography Jerome Robbins · *costumes* Ruth Sobotka
- Emmanuel CHABRIER, *Bourrée fantasque* (1891-3)
choreography George Balanchine · *costumes* Esteban Frances
- Paul HINDEMITH, *Die vier Temperamente* (1940)
choreography George Balanchine
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *L'Oiseau de feu* (1909-10)
choreography George Balanchine · *costumes* Marc Chagall
- Richard STRAUSS, *Till Eulenspiegel* (1894-5)
choreography George Balanchine · *scenery* Esteban Frances
- Ernest CHAUSSON, *Jardin aux Lilas* (1896)
choreography Anthony Tudor · *scenery* Cecil Beaton

- Sergey PROKOFIEV, *The Prodigal Son* (1928-9)
choreography George Balanchine · *scenery* Georges Rouault
- Aaron COPLAND, *The Pied Piper* [Clarinet Concerto] (1948)
choreography Jerome Robbins
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *Orpheus* (1947)
choreography George Balanchine · *scenery* Isamu Noguchi

May 16

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic Concert

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

conductor Ernest Ansermet

- Arthur HONEGGER, Symphony No. 5 (1950)
- Paul HINDEMITH, *Nobilissima Visione* (1938)
- Bohuslav MARTINŮ, Chamber Sonata for Cello and Orchestra (1940)
solist Henri Honegger
- Maurice RAVEL, *Rapsodie Espagnole* (1907-8)

May 17

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic Concert

Orchestre de la Suisse Romande

conductor Ernest Ansermet

- Albert ROUSSEL, Suite in F (1926)
- Frank MARTIN, Violin Concerto (1950-1)
solist Joseph Szigeti
- Claude DEBUSSY, *Trois Images* (1905-12)

May 19

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Stravinsky Soirée

Chœur et Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française

conductor Igor Stravinsky

- *Scènes de ballet* (1944)
- *Oedipus Rex* (1926-7)
text (after Sophocles), *design and narration* Jean Cocteau

May 20

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Schoenberg/Stravinsky Soirée

Chœur et Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française

conductor Hans Rosbaud

- Arnold SCHOENBERG, *Erwartung* (1909)
solist Irma Kolássi
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *Oedipus Rex* (1926-7)
Oedipus Léopold Simoneau · *Jocasta* Eugenia Zareska (replacing Patricia Neway)

May 22

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Stravinsky SoiréeOrchestre de la Société des Concerts du Conservatoire
conductor Igor Stravinsky

- Symphony in C (1938-40)
- Capriccio for Piano and Orchestra (1928-9)
soloist Monique Haas
- Symphony in Three Movements (1942-5)

May 23

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Bartók Soirée²Orchestra of the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS),
West Berlin*conductor* Ferenc Fricsay

- *Two Portraits* (1907-10)
- Divertimento for String Orchestra (1939)
- Piano Concerto No. 2 (1930-1)
soloist Géza Anda
- Dance Suite (1923)

May 24

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic Concert³Orchestra of the Radio in the American Sector (RIAS),
West Berlin*conductor* Ferenc Fricsay

- Boris BLACHER, Variation on a Theme by Paganini (1947)
- Sergey PROKOFIEV, *Scythian Suite* (1914-5)
- Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH, Suite from *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (1930-2)
- Paul HINDEMITH, *Symphonic Metamorphosis of Themes by Carl Maria von Weber* (1943)

May 26-27

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

OperaBenjamin BRITTEN, *Billy Budd* (1951)*libretto* E. M. Forster and Eric Crozier, after Herman Melville

The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden

conductor Benjamin Britten · *stage director* Basil Coleman ·*stage design* John Piper**May 28**

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic and Vocal Concert⁴

St. Cecilia Academy of Rome, Chorus and Orchestra

conductor Igor Markevitch

- Alfred CASELLA, *Paganiniana* (1942)
- Luigi DALLAPICCOLA, *Canti di Prigionia* (1938-41)
- Manuel de FALLA, *The Three-Corned Hat Suite* (1919)
- Darius MILHAUD, *Les Choéphores* (1915-6) and
Finale from *Les Euménides* (1917-23)

May 29

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

Symphonic and Vocal Concert

Accademia di Santa Cecilia Orchestra and Chorus

conductor Igor Markevitch

- Ferruccio BUSONI, *Turandot* (1905)
- Gian Francesco MALIPIERO, *La Terra*, based on the *Georgics* of Virgil (1946)
- Albert ROUSSEL, *Bacchus et Ariane* (1930)
- Maurice RAVEL, Piano Concerto in G Major (1929-31)
soloist Arturo Benedetti Michelangeli
- Zoltán KODALY, *Psalmus Hungaricus* (1923)

May 30-31

Théâtre des Champs-Élysées

OperaVirgil THOMSON, *Four Saints in Three Acts* (1927-8)*libretto* Gertrude Stein

Presented by the American National Theater and Academy and Ethel Linder Reiner Productions

June 1

Palais de Chaillot

Closing Concert⁵

Lamoureux Orchestre

conductor Pierre Monteux · *soloist* Nicole Henriot

- Hector BERLIOZ, *Le Carnaval romain* Overture (1843-4)
- Vincent d'INDY, Symphonic Interlude from *Fervaal* (1889-95)
- Gabriel FAURÉ, Ballade for Piano and Orchestra, Op. 19 (1877-81)
- Franz LISZT, Piano Concerto No. 1 in E♭ Major (1830-49)
- Willem PIJPER, Symphony No. 3 (1926)
- Aaron COPLAND, *El salón México* (1932-6)
- Jean SIBELIUS, *The Swan of Tuonela* (1895)
- Richard STRAUSS, *Der Rosenkavalier* Suite (1945)

3. Chamber Music Concerts

NB. Not all soloists were announced in the final program booklets.

Occasionally names could be established from reviews.

May 7

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- Elsa BARRAINE, Quintet for Woodwinds and Horn (1931)
- Henri DUTILLEUX, Chorale and Variations, third movement from Piano Sonata No. 1 (1946-8)
pianist Geneviève Joy

- Yves BAUDRIER, *Mélodies* (1919)
baritone Yvon Le Marc'Hadour
- André JOLIVET, *Incantations* for flute solo (1936)
- Pierre BOULEZ, *Structures* for Two Pianos (1951-2)
pianists Pierre Boulez and Olivier Messiaen
- Charles KOECHLIN, Woodwind Trio for Oboe, Clarinet and Bassoon (1945)

May 9

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- Olivier MESSIAEN, *Les Visions de l'Amen* for Two Pianos (1943)
pianists Olivier Messiaen and Yvonne Loriod
- Claude DEBUSSY, *Syrinx* for flute (1913/1927)
- Alexander SCRIBAN, Piano Sonata No. 10 (1912-3)
pianist Yvonne Loriod
- Manuel de FALLA, Concerto for Harpsichord and Six Instruments (1923-6)
harpsichordist Marcelle de Lacour

May 13

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- Ralph Vaughan WILLIAMS, Five Variations of *Dives and Lazarus*, for Strings and Harps (1939)
- Roman PALESTER, *Three Sonnets to Orpheus* (R. M. Rilke) for Soprano and Orchestra (1951-2)
- Georges ENESCU, Violin Sonata No. 3
violinist Yehudi Menuhin · *pianist* Georges Enescu
- Arthur LOURIÉ, *Little Gidding* (T.S. Eliot) for Tenor and Instruments (1952)
- Roland MANUEL, Suite in the Spanish Style for Harpsichord, Oboe, Bassoon and Trumpet (1933)
harpsichordist Marcelle de Lacour

May 15

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- pianist* Yvonne Lefébure · Pascal Quartet
- Leos JANÁČEK, Concertino for Piano and Six Instruments (1925)
- Anton WEBERN, Five Pieces for String Quartet, Op. 6 (1909)
- Samuel BARBER, Piano Sonata in E \flat Minor (1949)
- Paul DUKAS, Piano Sonata in E \flat Minor (1899-1901)
- Gabriel FAURÉ, Piano Quintet No. 2 (1919-21)

May 21

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- Jean FRANÇAIX, Double Variations for Cello and Strings (1950)
cellist Hubert Verron

- Charles IVES, Piano Sonata No. 2, *Concord, Mass., 1840-60* (1916-19/1947)
pianist Robert Cornman
- Constant LAMBERT, Concerto for Piano and Strings (1930-1)
pianist Robert Cornman
- Erik SATIE, *Socrate*, symphonic drama in three parts with voice (1920)
conductor Darius Milhaud

May 24

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

- Arnold SCHOENBERG, String Quartet No. 2, with soprano solo, Op. 10 (1907-8)
soprano Rosemary Kuhlmann · Berlin Quartet
- André CAPLET, Septet for Strings, Voices and Instruments (1909)
pianist Robert Cornman
- William WALTON, *Façade* (E. Sitwell) for Narrator and Instruments (1922-9/1942/1951)
conductor Robert Craft

May 29

Comédie des Champs-Élysées

Nederlands Kamerkoor

conductor Felix de Nobel

Sacred Music for A Capella Choirs

- Ildebrando PIZZETTI, *De Profundis* (1937)
- Michael TIPPETT, *Plebs Angelica* (1943-4)
- Alexandre TANSMAN, *Two Psalms* (1951)
- Henk BADINGS, *Lied van het bemelsche land* (1941)
- Antony HOPKINS, *Gloria in Excelsis Deo* (unknown)
- Heitor VILLA-LOBOS, *Chôros* No. 4 for Three Horns and Trombone (1926)

Secular Music for A Capella Choirs

- Anton WEBERN, *Entflieht auf leichten Kähnen* (S. George), Op. 2 (1908/14)
- Claude DELVINCOURT, *Capriole* (unknown)
- Sem DRESDEN, *Wachterlied* (1919)
- Henri ZAGWIJN, Music for carillon
- Edgar VARÈSE, *Ionisation* for Orchestra and Percussion (1929-31)
- Henry BARRAUD, *Le Testament Villon* for Voice, Harpsichord, and Choirs (1945)
baritone Yvon Le Marc'Hadour

4. L'Œuvre du XXe siècle / XXth Century Masterpieces An Exhibition of Paintings and Sculptures

Le Musée National d'Art Moderne, May 5-June 30, 1952

The Tate Gallery, July 15-August 17, 1952

Alexander ARCHIPENKO • Jean ARP • Giacomo BALLA • Max BECKMANN • Christian BÉRARD • Pierre BONNARD • Georges BRAQUE • Constantin BRANCUSI • Alexander CALDER • Paul CÉZANNE • Marc CHAGALL • Giorgio de CHIRICO • Le CORBUSIER (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret-Gris) • Salvador DALÍ • Robert DELAUNAY • André DERAÏN • Marcel DUCHAMP • Raoul DUFY • James ENSOR • Max ERNST • Roger de LA FRESNAYE • Paul GAUGUIN • Alberto GIACOMETTI • Albert GLEIZES • Natalie [Natalia] GONCHAROVA • Vincent van GOGH • Juan GRIS • George GROSZ • Wassily KANDINSKY • Ernst Ludwig KIRCHNER • Paul KLEE • Oskar KOKOSCHKA • Wilfredo LAM • Michel [Mikhail] LARIONOV • Fernand LÉGER • Kazimir MALEVICH • Franz MARC • André MASSON • Henri MATISSE • Roberto MATTA • Jean METZINGER • Joan MIRÓ • Amadeo MODIGLIANI • Piet MONDRIAN • Claude MONNET • Henry MOORE • Edvard MUNCH • Amédée OZENFANT • Constant PERMEKE • Francis PICABIA • Pablo PICASSO • Pierre Auguste RENOIR • Georges ROUAULT • Henri ROUSSEAU • Chaim SOUTINE • Gino SEVERINI • Georges SEURAT • Yves TANGUY • Henri de TOULOUSE-LAUTREC • Félix VALLOTTON • Jacques VILLON • Jean-Édouard VUILLARD

5. Round-Tables and Public Discussions

May 16

Salle Gaveau

Inaugural Session: The Writer in the City

Salvador de MADARIAGA (chair) • Jean GUÉHENNO • Guido PIOVENE • Katherine Anne PORTER • Denis de ROUGEMENT • Eduardo SANTOS MONTEJO • Stephen SPENDER

May 21

Centre des Relations
Internationales

Round-Table I: Isolement and Communication

Jacques MADAULE (chair) • Roger CAILLOIS • James T. FARRELL • Jeanne HERSCH • Eugenio MONTALE • Allen TATE

May 23

Centre des Relations
Internationales

Round-Table II: Revolt and Solidarity

Raymond ARON (chair) • W. H. AUDEN • Jean DANIELOU • P. Y. DESHPANDE • Czeslaw MILOSZ • Guglielmo PETRONI

May 26

Centre des Relations
Internationales

Round-Table III: The Spirit of Painting in the Twentieth Century

Jean CASSOU (chair) • Bernard DORIVAL • Herbert READ • Rudolph von RIPPER • James Johnson SWEENEY • Lionello VENTURI • Edgar WIND

May 28

Centre des Relations
Internationales

Round-Table IV: Diversity and Universality

Wladimir WEIDLE (chair) • Marc ALDANOV • Giovanni Battista ANGIOLETTI • Raymond ARON • Karl BJARNHOF •

Vitaliano BRANCATI • Charles ESTIENNE • Louis MACNEICE
• Gaëtan PICON • Elias VENEZIS

May 30

Salle Gaveau

Closing Session: The Future of Culture

Denis de ROUGEMONT (chair) • W. H. AUDEN • William
FAULKNER • Salvador de MADARIAGA • André MALRAUX

6. Unrealized Projects⁶

- Claude DEBUSSY, *Le Martyre de St. Sébastien* (1910); an entirely new production for which Robert Inghelbrecht, a friend of Debussy and conductor of this work's premiere, was to be approached.
- Arnold SCHOENBERG, *A Survivor from Warsaw*, Op. 46 (1947).
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *The Rake's Progress* (1951); secured by the Théâtre National de l'Opéra but postponed to June 18, 1952.
- Richard STRAUSS, *Ariadne auf Naxos* (1912-16); to be produced by the Vienna Opera.
- Anton WEBERN, *Augenlicht*, cantata for choir and orchestra, Op. 26 (1935).
- Kurt WEILL, *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* (1930); to be programmed together with Erik Satie's *Socrate* (1919) and Manuel de Falla's *El retablo de Maese Pedro* (1923).
- Three church concerts of Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish music.
- Two concerts by the Hallé Orchestra (Manchester) and the Sheffield Choir under direction of John Barbirolli.
- An unspecified "program of classical music for popular audience" by the Boston Symphony Orchestra.
- Two unspecified "opéra-bouffes" on May 7 and 9.
- A theater program including a staging of Bernard SHAW's *Cæsar and Cleopatra* (1898) as well as dramatic readings by British and French actors.

7. Affiliated Concerts

April 30/May 8, 11 and 22

Opéra-Comique

Claude Debussy

Pelléas et Mélisande (1902)

May 15

Opéra-Comique

Emanuel Bondeville

Madame Bovary (1951)

May 16

Palais Garnier

Arthur Honegger

Antigone (1924-1927)

Jeanne d'Arc au bûcher (1938/1942)

May 21 and 25

Salle du Conservatoire

Musique concrète

Club d'Essai of the Radiodiffusion Française

Works by Olivier Messiaen, Yves Baudrier, André Jolivet, Pierre Henry, and Pierre Schaeffer

May 23 and 26

Opéra

Richard Strauss

Salome (1905)

May 29

Salle Favart

Maurice Ravel

L'Enfant et les sortilèges (1919-25)

-
- ¹ It had been meant for the New York City Ballet to premiere the Auric and Sauguet ballets, but George Balanchine returned the commission when the scores arrived with a three-week delay, making it impossible for him to squeeze sufficient rehearsals in the already overburdened schedule of his ballet. Balanchine to Nabokov, February 6, 7 and 13, 1952, Balanchine Archive, 1289.
 - ² In the earliest phase of planning, the Piano Concert No. 2 was to be flanked by the Concerto for Strings, Percussion and Celesta (1936) and the Concerto for Orchestra (1943). Nabokov, memorandum "Masterpieces of Our Century," July 20, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.
 - ³ Other works that have been considered for this program were Scriabin's *Prometheus* (1910) and Shostakovich's First Symphony (1926). Nabokov, memorandum "Masterpieces of Our Century," July 20, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.
 - ⁴ Other works considered for this program were Arthur Honegger's *Le Roi David* (1921) and Luigi Dallapiccola's *Sei cori di Michelangelo Buonarroti il giovane* (1933-6). Nabokov, memorandum "Masterpieces of Our Century," July 20, 1951, CCF, III-4-3.
 - ⁵ Fauré and d'Indy were last-minute inclusions in response to criticism from the French press. The concert program that was announced consisted of (apart from the Berlioz, Copland, and Strauss) Prokofiev's "Classical" Symphony (1917), Ravel's *Alborada del gracioso* (1905/1918), Ottorino Respighi's *Fontane di Roma* (1917), and Rachmaninoff's Piano Concert No. 2 (1901). ACCF press release, April 9, 1952, ACCF, 12-8; René Dumesnil, "Clôture de l'Œuvre du vingtième siècle," *Le Monde*, June 3, 1952.
 - ⁶ Nabokov, memorandum "Masterpieces of Our Century," July 20, 1951, CCF, III-4-3; press release tentative program, 18 February 1952, ACCF, 12-8.

Music in the Twentieth Century

(La Musica nel XX secolo)

Rome, April 4-15, 1954

International Convention of Contemporary Music

(Convegno Internazionale di Musica Contemporanea)

1. Organization
2. Concerts and Operas
3. Unrealized Proposals
4. Conference
5. Participants

1. Organization

Music Council/Honorary Committee/Music Advisory Board

Igor STRAVINSKY (Honorary President) • Samuel BARBER • Boris BLACHER • Benjamin BRITTEN • Carlos CHÁVEZ • Luigi DALLAPICCOLA • Arthur HONEGGER • Gian Francesco MALIPIERO • Frank MARTIN • Darius MILHAUD • Virgil THOMSON • Heitor VILLA-LOBOS

Executive Committee

Nicolas NABOKOV (chair) • Boris BLACHER • Luigi DALLAPICCOLA • Guido M. GATTI • Frederick GOLDBECK • Mario LABROCA • Igor MARKEVITCH • Denis de ROUGEMONT • Henri SAUGUET • Virgil THOMSON • Gian Franco ZAFFRANI

Candidates Competition¹

Category I: violin concerto (prize: 12,000 Swiss francs)

Peter Racine FRICKER (UK) • Camargo M. GUARNIERI (Brazil) • Mario PERAGALLO (Italy) • Ben WEBER (USA)

Category II: overture (prize: 8,000 Swiss francs)

Yves BAUDRIER (France) • Conrad BECK (Switzerland) • Giselher KLEBE (Germany) • Wladimir VOGEL (stateless)

Category III: work for voice and chamber ensemble (prize: 5,000 Swiss francs)

Bernd/Beroud BERGEL (Israel) • Lou HARRISON (USA) • Jean Louis MARTINET (France) • Camillo TOGNI (Italy)

Contest Jury²

Paul COLLAER (chair) • Aaron COPLAND • Roland-MANUEL • Rollo H. MYERS • Goffredo PETRASSI • Robert SOETENS • Heinrich STROBEL

2. Concerts and Operas

April 4

Argentine Theater

Symphonic Concert I

Orchestra and Chorus of the St. Cecilia Academy
conductor Fernando Previtali • *chorus director* Bonaventura Somma

- Giovanni Battista GABRIELI, *In Ecclesiis* (1615)
- Gian Francesco MALIPIERO, *Elegia-Capriccio* (1953)
- Albert ROUSSEL, Concerto for Small Orchestra, Op. 34 (1926-7)
- Béla BARTÓK, *Cantata profana* (1930)
soloists Gregorio Wu Pak Kiu and Nestore Catalani
- Claudio MONTEVERDI, *Magnificat* (arr. G. F. Ghedini)

April 5
Foro Italico

Symphonic Concert II

Symphony Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductors Darius Milhaud and Victor Desarzens

- Darius MILHAUD, Symphony No. 5 (1953)
- Erik SATIE, *Socrate*, symphonic drama in three parts with voice (1920), on Plato's *Dialogues*
soloist Suzanne Danco
- Competition Work No. 3 (category I: Weber)
soloist Joseph Fuchs
- Competition Work No. 5 (category II: Beck)

April 6
Concert Hall
St. Cecilia Academy

Chamber Music I

Orchestra of "The Scarlatti Association"
conductor Franco Caracciolo

- Fartein VALEN, *Pastorale*, Op. 11 (1930)
- Giorgio Federico GHEDINI, *Concerto detto "L'Alderina"* for flute, violin, and orchestra (1950)
soloists Raymond Meylan and Renato Ruotolo
- Jacques IBERT, *Symphonie Concertante* for oboe and string orchestra (1948-9)
soloist Sidney Gallesi
- Carlos CHÁVEZ, Symphony No. 5 (1954)
- Ferruccio BUSONI, *Gioconda* Overture, Op. 38 (1987/1904)

April 7
Foro Italico

Symphonic Concert III

Symphony Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductor Ferruccio Scaglia (substitute for Igor Markevitch)

- Competition Work No. 8 (category II: Vogel)
- Competition Work No. 2 (category I: Guarnieri)
soloist Theo Olof
- Paul HINDEMITH, Concerto for Orchestra, Op. 38 (1925)
- Gottfried von EINEM, *Dantons Tod*, Suite for Orchestra, Op. 6 (1947)

Rome Opera House

Operas

Orchestra and Choir of the Rome Opera House
conductor Armando La Rosa Parodi

- Hans Werner HENZE, *Boulevard Solitude* (1952), after Abbé Prévost's *L'Histoire du chevalier Des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut*
director Hans Werner Henze · *design* Jean-Pierre Ponnelle
- Vieri TOSATTI, *Il Sistema della Dolcezza* (1948-9), after Edgar Allen Poe's *The Method of Kindness*
director Enrico Colosimo · *design* Erminio Maffioletti

April 8

Foro Italico

Chamber Music II

Chamber Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana

conductor Ferruccio Scaglia

- Competition Work No. 9 (category III: Togni)
soloist Gino Orlandini
- Manuel de FALLA, Concerto for Harpsichord and Five Instruments (1923-6)
soloist Sylvia Marlowe
- Francis POULENC, *Litanies à la vierge noire* for female voices and orchestra (1947)
- Benjamin BRITTEN, *Seven Michelangelo Sonnets*, Op. 22 (1940)
tenor Herbert Handt · *pianist* Giorgio Favaretto
- Sergey PROKOFIEV, *Five Songs from the Poetry of Anna Akhmatova*, Op. 27 (1916)
soprano Mascia Predit · *pianist* Giorgio Favaretto
- Vittorio RIETI, Partita for Harpsichord and Six Instruments (1945)
soloist Sylvia Marlowe

April 9

Foro Italico

Symphonic Concert IV

Symphony Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana

conductors Franz André and Virgil Thomson

- Competition Work No. 6 (category II: Baudrier)
- Competition Work No. 1 (category I: Peragallo)
soloist André Gertler
- Boris BLACHER, *Paganini Variations*, Op. 26 (1947)
- Arthur HONEGGER, Symphonic Movement No. 3 (1932-3)
- Virgil THOMSON, *Three Pictures for Orchestra* [*Sea Piece with Birds – The Seine at Night – Wheatfields at Noon*] (1947-52)

April 10

Foro Italico

Chamber Music III

Chamber Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana

conductor Carlos Surinach

- Competition Work No. 11 (category III: Martinet)
soprano Carla Schlean
- Guido TURCHI, *Concerto breve* for string quartet (1940)
- Georges AURIC, Piano Sonate
soloist Gino Gorini
- Olivier MESSIAEN, *Cantéyodjayá* for piano (1949)
soloist Gino Gorini
- Riccardo MALIPIERO, Seven Variations on *The Roses* by R. M. Rilke for voice and piano (1951)
soprano Carla Schlean · *pianist* Giorgio Favaretto

April 11
 Concert Hall
 St. Cecilia Academy

- Leos JANÁČEK, Concertino for piano, clarinet, horn, bassoon, 2 violins and viola (1925-6)
soloist Armando Renzi

Chamber Music IV

Parrenin Quartet

Under the auspices of the French Academy, the American Academy, and the Ministry of Cultural Relations

- Elliott CARTER, String Quartet, No. 1 (1950-1)
- Arnold SCHOENBERG, Six Short Pieces for Piano, Op. 19 (1911) and Suite for Piano, Op. 25 (1921-3)
soloist Pietro Scarpini
- Riccardo NIELSEN, *Sonatina perbrevis ad usum Petri et Karoli Mariae* for piano (1954)
soloist F. Scarpini
- Claude DELVINCOURT, String Quartet (1953)

April 12
 Eliseo Theater

Chamber Music V

Orchestra and Choir of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductor Robert Craft and Nino Antonellini

- Alfredo CASELLA, *Serenata* for clarinet, bassoon, trumpet, violin and cello, Op. 46b (1927)
- Igor STRAVINSKY, Septet for clarinet, horn, bassoon, piano, violin, viola and cello (1952-3)
- Aaron COPLAND, Quartet for Piano and Strings (1950)
- Ildebrando PIZETTI, Three Choral Compositions for five-voice a capella

April 12
 Foro Italico

Symphonic Concert V

Orchestra and Choir of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductor Hans Rosbaud

- Competition Work No. 7 (category II: Klebe)
- Competition Work No. 4 (category I: Fricker)
soloist Henrik Szering
- Goffredo PETRASSI, *Coro di morti* (1940-1), dramatic madrigal for male voices, three pianos, brasses, contrabass, and percussion
- Karl Amadeus HARTMANN, Concerto for Piano, Winds and Percussion (1953)
soloist Maria Bergman

April 13
 Concert Hall
 Cecilia Academy

Chamber Music VI

Instrumental group of the Radiotelevisione Italiana St.
conductor Carlos Surinach

- Competition Work No. 12 (category III: Bergel)
soloist Dimitri Lopatto

- Competition Work No. 10 (Category III: Harrison)
soloist Leontyne Price
- Alban BERG, Four Pieces for clarinet and piano,
Op. 5 (1919-20)
soloist Louis Cahuzac · *pianist* Gherardo Macarini Carmignani
- Samuel BARBER, *Hermit Songs*, Op. 29 (1952-3)
soprano Leontyne Price · *pianist* Samuel Barber
- Henri SAUGUET, *La Voyante*, lyric scene for voice
and small ensemble (1932)
soprano Leontyne Price

April 14
RAI Auditorium

Chamber Music VII

Orchestra of "The Scarlatti Association" and the Choir
of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductor Hermann Scherchen

- Edgar VARÈSE, *Octandre* for eight flutes (1924)
- Josef Matthias HAUER, *Twelve-Tone Music* for nine
solo instruments, Op. 73 (1937)
- Alan RAWSTHORNE, Concerto for piano, strings
and percussion (1939)
soloist Frank Pelleg
- Luigi NONO, *Epitaph for García Lorca* (No. 2) for
flute, strings and percussion (1951-3)
soloist Severino Gazzelloni
- Luigi DALLAPICCOLA, *Canti greci* for voice and
instruments (1942)
soloist Magda László
- Anton WEBERN, *Das Augenlicht*, Op. 26 (1935)

April 15
Foro Italico

Symphonic Concert VI: Stravinsky Soirée

Symphony Orchestra of the Radiotelevisione Italiana
conductor Igor Stravinsky

- *Orpheus* (1947)
- *Scherzo à la Russe* (1945)
- *Norwegian Moods* (1942)
- *Scènes de ballet* (1944)
- *L'Oiseau de feu* (1909-10)

April 10
Pecci-Blunt Palace

Recital I

tenor Hugues Cuénod · *pianist* Jacques de Menasce

- Jean BINET, *Dix chansons* (1943)
- Jacques de MENASCE, *Deux lettres d'enfants* (1954)
and *Outrenuit* (1953)
- Daniel-LESUR, *Berceuses à tenir éveillé* (1947)
- Erik SATIE, *Trois mélodies* (1916-7)

April 13

Pecci-Blunt Palace

Recital II*harpsichordist* Sylvia Marlowe · *cellist* Bernard Greenhouse

- François COUPERIN, Passacaille in C Minor
- John LESSARD, Toccata in Four Movements (1951)
- Johann S. BACH, Sonata in G Minor
- Alexei HAIEFF, *Bagatelles* (1940-55)
- Domenico SCARLATTI, Sonata in C Major
- George F. HANDEL, Sonata in C Major

April 15

Pecci-Blunt Palace

Recital IIIBritish Council Music Series of English Music
[program unknown]**3. Unrealized Proposals³**Samuel BARBER, *Capricorn Concerto* for flute, oboe, trumpet, strings (1944)Alban BERG, *Der Wein* (1929-30)Pierre BOULEZ, *Le soleil des eaux* (1950) or *Polyphonie* (1950-1)Benjamin BRITTEN, *Spring Symphony*, Op. 44 (1949)Ferruccio BUSONI, *Arlecchino oder Die Fenster* (1914-6)

John CAGE, Experiences No. 1 for Two Pianos (1945)

Luigi DALLAPICCOLA, *Il prigioniero* (1944-8)Manuel de FALLA, *El retablo de maese Pedro* (1919-23)Charles KOEHLIN, *La loi de la jungle* (1939-40) or *Le buisson ardent* (1945)Darius MILHAUD, *La création du monde* (1923)Nicolas NABOKOV, *La Vita Nuova* (after Dante) for soprano, tenor and orchestra (1951)⁴Goffredo PETRASSI, *Il cordovano* (1944-8)

Sergey PROKOFIEV, Symphony No. 7 (1951-2)

Silvestre REVUELTAS, *Homenaje a Federico Gracia Lorca* (1936)Erik SATIE, *Trois morceaux en forme de poire* (1903) or *Geneviève de Brabant* (1899-1900; orch.
Roger Désormière 1926)Henri SAUGUET, *La Rencontre* (1948)Arnold SCHOENBERG, *Five Pieces for Orchestra*, Op. 16 (1909)Alexander Scriabin, Piano Sonata No. 9 (1912-3), No. 10 (1912-3) or *Vers la flamme* (1914)

Dmitri SHOSTAKOVICH, Piano Concerto No. 1 (1933)

Karlheinz STOCKHAUSEN, to be determined

Heitor VILLA-LOBOS, to be determined

Anton WEBERN, Symphony, Op. 21 (1927-8)

4. The Situation of Music in the Twentieth Century

La Situazione della Musica nel XX Secolo

Congress of Composers, Performers, and Music Critics

<i>Auspices</i>	European Center of Culture in collaboration with the Congress for Cultural Freedom and UNESCO's International Music Council
<i>Location</i>	Concert Hall, St. Cecilia Academy
April 5 10.00 am	<p>Inaugural Session Denis de ROUGEMONT (chair)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words of welcome from Alessandro BUSTINI (President St. Cecilia Academy), Giulio RAZZI (Musical Director RAD), and Nicolas NABOKOV • Election of competition jury
April 6 10.00 am	<p>Panel I: Music and Contemporary Society Domingo SANTA CRUZ (chair) • Roland-MANUEL (paper) • Fedele D'AMICO • Massimo MILA • Darius MILHAUD • Alan RAWSTHORNE</p>
April 7 10.00 am	<p>Panel II: Aesthetics and Technique Paul COLLAER (chair) • Frederick GOLDBECK (paper) • Boris BLACHER • Elliott CARTER • Mario LABROCA • Riccardo MALIPIERO • Massimo MILA • Roman VLAD</p>
April 8 10.00 am	<p>Panel III: The Composer, the Performer, and the Public Aaron COPLAND (chair) • Roman VLAD (paper) • Jack BORNOFF • Yvonne LEFÉBURE • Edwar LOCKSPEISER • Goffredo PETRASSI • Erwin STEIN</p>
4.00 pm	<p>Panel IV: Music and Politics Nicolas NABOKOV (chair) • Rollo MYERS (paper) • Jacques de MENASCE • Roman PALESTER • Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT • Mario ZAFRED</p>
April 9 9.30 am	<p>Panel V: The Composer and the Critic Gian Francesco MALIPIERO (chair) • Virgil THOMSON (paper) • Henri GAGNEBIN • William GLOCK • Frederick GOLDBECK • Guido PANNAIN • Heinrich STROBEL</p>
12.00 pm	<p>Panel VI: The Future of Opera Sir James Steuart WILSON (chair) • Henri SAUGUET (paper) • Gottfried von EINEM • Hans Werner HENZE • Rolf</p>

LIEBERMANN • Gian Francesco MALIPIERO • Humphrey SEARLE

April 15
10.00 am

Closing Session

Prize-awarding ceremony at the Campidoglio (Capitoline Hill)
Salvatore REBECCHINI, Mayor of Rome (chair)

- Words of thanks from Denis de ROUEMONT and Nicolas NABOKOV
- Awarding of Contest prizes by STRAVINSKY
- Congratulatory words by Vittorio Badini CONFALONIERI, Under-Secretary of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs

5. Conference Participants

(a) composer • (b) performer • (c) conductor • (d) critic

Argentina Leopoldo HURTADO (d)

Australia Alphons SILBERMANN (d)

Austria Theodor BERGER (ac) • Karl BOEHM (c) • Gottfried von EINEM (a) • Helmut FIECHTNER (d) • Willi REICH (d) • Egon SEEFELNER (b) • Alexander SPITZMÜLLER (d)

Belgium Franz ANDRÉ (c) • Paul COLLAER (director Radio Brussels) • Marcel CUVELIER (artistic director) • Suzanne DANCO (b) • André GERTLER (b) • Marcel POOT (a; director Brussels Conservatory)

Brazil Luis Heitor CORREIA DE AZEVEDO (UNESCO delegate)

Chile Domingo SANTA CRUZ (d; UNESCO delegate)

Cuba Albert BOLET (c)

Denmark Niels BENTZON (d) • Knudage RIISAGER (a)

England Jack BORNOFF (IMC-UNESCO delegate) • Peter Racine FRICKER (a) • William GLOCK (d) • Kyla GREENBAUM (d) • Arthur JACOBS (d) • Cynthia JOLLY (d) • Natasha LITVIN (b) • Edward LOCKSPEISER (d) • Alan RAWSTHORNE (a) • Edmund RUBBRA (a) • Humphrey SEARLE (d) • Stephen SPENDER (d) • Erwin STEIN (d) • Michael TIPPETT (a) • Rollo H. MYERS (d) • Sir Steuart WILSON (d)

France Georges AURIC (a) • Yves BAUDRIER (a) • Nadia BOULANGER (abc) • Pierre CAPDEVILLE (director Radio France) • André COEUROY (d) • Claude DELVINCOURT⁵ • Hervé DUGARDIN (editor) • Nicole HIRSCH (d) • Jacques IBERT (a) • Henri-Louis de LA GRANGE (d) • Yvonne LEFÉBURE (b) • Darius MILHAUD (a) • Francis POULENC (a) • Roland-MANUEL (ad) • Henri SAUGUET (a) • Robert SOETENS (b)

Germany Maria BERGMAN (b) • Boris BLACHER (a) • Wolfgang FORTNER (a) • Karl Amadeus HARTMANN (a) • Hans Werner HENZE (a) • Gertie HERZOG (b) • Giseler KLEBE (a) • Hans ROSBAUD (c) • Josef RUFER (a) • Karl Heinz RUPPEL (d) • Hermann SCHERCHEN (c) • Karlheinz STOCKHAUSEN (a) • Heinrich STROBEL (d) • Hans Heinz

STUCKENSCHMIDT (d) • Wladimir VOGEL (a) • Erich WINKLER (Northwest German Broadcasting)

Hungary Magda LÁZLÓ (b)

Israel Bernd BERGEL (a) • Garry BERTINI (a) • Peter GRADENWITZ (a) • Frank PELLEG (b) • Menashe RAVINA (d) • Josef TAL (ac)

Italy Franco ABBIATI • Fedele d'AMICO (d) • Ferdinando BALLO (d) • Angiola-Maria BONISCONTI (d) • Alfredo BONACCORSI (d) • Riccardo BRENGOLA (b) • Valentino BUCCHI (a) • Alessandro BUSTINI (a; President St. Cecilia Academy) • Franco CARACCILO (b) • Auguste CARTONI (d) • Domenico CAUSATI (Rome official) • Teodore CELLI (d) • Alessandro CICOGNINI (ad) • Luigi COLACICCHI (d) • Gino CONTILLI (a) • Luigi della CORTE (a) • Luigi CORTESE (a) • Mario CORTI (ab; Artistic Secretary St. Cecilia Academy) • Nicola COSTARELLI (a) • Piero DALLAMANO (d) • Luigi DALLAPICCOLA (a) • Adelmo DAMERINI (d) • Vincenzo DAVICO (a) • Renate FASANO (a) • Giorgio FAVARETTO (b) • Pietro FERRO (a) • Guido GATTI (d) • Cleliz GATTI (b) • Giorgio Federico GHEDINI (a) • Antonio GHIRINGHELLI (director La Scala Opera, Milan) • Remo GIAZOTTO (d) • Matteo GLINSKY (d) • Gino GORINI (b) • Giorgio GRAZIOSI (d) • Guido GUERRINI (a) • Mario LABROCA (b; RAI) • Lino LIVIABELLA (a) • Dimitri LOPATTO (b) • Roberto LUPI (a) • Bruno MADERNA (a) • Luigi MAGNANI (d) • Gian Francesco MALIPIERO (a) • Riccardo MALIPIERO (d) • Carlo MARINELLI (d) • Mme. Igor MARKEVITCH (b) • Massimo MILA (d) • Virgillio MORTARI (a) • Jacopo NAPOLI (a) • Luigi NONO (a) • Cesare NORDIO (a) • Gino ORLANDINI (b) • Guido PANNAIN (d) • Adriana PANNI (director Filharmonica) • Domenico De' PAOLI (ad) • Renado PARODI (a) • Mario PERAGALLO (a) • Goffredo PETRASSI (a) • Alessandro PIOVESAN (d) • Antonino PIROTTA (d) • Mascia PREDIT (b) • Fernando PREVITALI (c) • Antonino PROCIDA (d) • Ornella PULITI SANTOLIQUIDO (b) • Armando (b) • Giulio RAZZI (Musical Director, RAI) • Mario RINALDI (d) • Lodovico ROCCA (a) • Luigi ROGNONI (d) • Renzo ROSSELLINI (d) • Claudio SARTORI (d) • Ferruccio SCAGLIA (c) • Pietro SCARPINI (b) • Bonaventura SOMMA (b) • Gian-Luca TOCCHI (a) • Camillo TOGNI (a) • Fausto TORREFRANCA (d) • Guido TURCHI (a) • Cesare VALABREGA (d) • Gioconda de VITO (b) • Romand VLAD (abd) • Gian Franco ZAFFRANI (RAI) • Mario ZAFRED (d) • Emilia ZANETTI (d) • Adone ZECCHI (a) • Carlo ZECCHI (b)

Japan Hidekazu YOSHIDA (d)

Luxembourg Henri PENSIS (c; Radio Luxembourg)

Mexico Giorgio SZERING (b)

Netherlands Jurriaan ANDRIESSEN (a) • Henk BADINGS (a) • Sem DRESDEN (a) • Frederick GOLDBECK (d) • Ro KOSTER (b) • Theo OLOF (b) • Wouter PAAP (d)

Spain Gasparo CASSADOS (b) • Osar ESPLA (a) • Carlos SURINACH (bc)

Sweden Karl BLOMDAHL (a) • Moses PERGAMENT (a)

Switzerland Conrad BECK (a) • Victor DESARZENS (c) • Henri GAGNEBIN (a) • Rolf LIEBERMANN (a) • R. Aloys MOOSER (d) • Willi SCHUH (d)

Turkey Bülent AREL (a) • İlhan USMANBAŞ (a)

United States of America Samuel BARBER (a) • Elliott CARTER (a) • Aaron COPLAND (a) • Robert CRAFT (c) • Joseph FUCHS (b) • Herbert HANDT (b) • Lou HARRISON (a) • John LESSARD (a) • Sylvia MARLOWE (b) • Jacques de MENASCE (a) • Nicolas NABOKOV (a) • Leontyne PRICE (b) • Ned ROEM (a) • Igor STRAVINSKY (a) • Virgil THOMSON (a) • Ben WEBER (a)

Invited but not attending⁶

Jean ABSIL (Belgium) • Theodor W. ADORNO (BRD) • Franco ALFANO (Italy) • Volkmar ANDREAE (Switzerland) • Hans Erich APOSTEL (Austria) • Menachem AVIDOM (Israel) • Henry BARRAUD (France) • Thomas BEECHAM (UK) • Karl BÖHM (Austria) • Benjamin BRITTEN (UK) • John CAGE (USA) • Sergiu CELIBIDACHE (Rumania) • Carlos CHÁVEZ • Paul DESSAU (East Berlin) • Olin DOWNES (USA) • Henri DUTILLEUX (France) • Alfred FRANKENSTEIN (USA) • Wilhelm FURTWÄNGLER (BRD) • Jascha HEIFETZ (USA) • Arthur HONEGGER (France) • André JOLIVET (France) • Dmitry KABALEVSKY • Herbert von KARAJAN (BRD) • Aram KACHATURIAN (USSR) • Zoltán KODÁLY (Hungary) • Hans-Joachim KOELLREUTTER (Brazil) • Olga KOUSSEVITZKY (USA) • Ernst KŘENEK (Austria/USA) • René LEIBOWITZ (France) • Robert MANN (USA) • William MANN (UK) • Bohuslav MARTINŮ (USA) • Karl MENGELBERG (Netherlands) • Gian Carlo MENOTTI (USA) • Olivier MESSIAEN (France) • Marcel MILHALOVICI (France) • Donald MITCHELL (UK) • David OISTRAKH (USSR) • Carl ORFF (BRD) • Andrzej PANUFNIK (Poland) • Peter PEARS (UK) • Henri POUSSEUR (Belgium) • Willi REICH (Switzerland) • Elsa RESPIGHI (Italy) • Artur RODZIŃSKI (USA) • Claude ROSTAND (France) • Arthur RUBINSTEIN (USA) • Victor de SABATA (Italy) • André SCHAEFFNER (France) • Florent SCHMITT (France) • Ernst SCHNABEL (West Berlin) • Dmitry SHOSTAKOVICH (USSR) • Nicolas SLONIMSKY (USA) • Pierre SOUVTCHINSKY (France) • Leopold STOKOWSKI (USA) • Denise TUAL (France) • Edgar VARÈSE (USA) • Heitor VILLA-LOBOS • Bruno WALTER (USA) • William WALTON (UK) • Egon WELLESZ (UK)

¹ The candidates were selected from a slate of twenty prepared by the Executive Committee and their submissions were performed anonymously. The following composers were selected as standbys in case one of nominees would not be able to accept the invitation: Hans Erich Apostel (Austria) and Mátyás György Seiber (a Hungarian refugee residing in the UK) for the first category, Ricardo Malipiero (Italy) and Heimo Erbse (Germany) for the second category, and İlhan Usmanbaş (Turkey) and Jurriaan Andriessen (Netherlands) in the third category. Winner in the first category was Peragallo, in the second category Vogel and Klebe (shared prize), and in the third category Harrison and Martinet (shared prize). It is noteworthy that originally, Henri Dutilleux instead of Yves Baudrier was listed in the second category. The reason for the substitution is unclear. Perhaps Dutilleux had to turn down the invitation because of lack of time, but one could also imagine that his membership in the Communist Party emerged as a problem. In early 1953, however, Nabokov wrote that he would “strongly urge to put high up on our list [of] candidates Dutilleux. I heard his new ballet [*Le loup*] yesterday and found it very good.” Nabokov to Thomson, March 20, 1953, Thomson Papers, 29-69-16.

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- ² The jury was elected from, and by, the assembly of composers, performers, and music critics attending the inaugural session of the conference.
 - ³ Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Rome Conference, April 18 and September 6-7, 1953, CCF, III-6-7.
 - ⁴ This suggestion came from Markevitch, but Nabokov insisted that none of his works be performed during the Conference.
 - ⁵ Claude Delvincourt died in a tragic accident on his way to Rome; he was to chair the “Music and Politics” session.
 - ⁶ Invitation list as of February 4, 1954, CCF, III-5-9. Apart from those addressed to Communist countries, most of the time invitations were declined for reasons of illness or unavailability.

Tradition and Change in Music

(Tradizione e Rinnovamento)

Venice, September 16-23, 1958

Festival of Contemporary Music, Venice Biennale 1958
(Convegno Internazionale di Musica Contemporanea)

1. Organization
2. Concerts and Operas
3. Symposium
4. Participants

1. Organization

Musical Program • Alessandro PIOVESAN (Venice Biennale) and Rolf LIEBERMANN (NDR)
Symposium • Nicolas NABOKOV (CCF) in collaboration with Vittore BRANCA (Cini Foundation)

2. Concerts and Operas

September 16
 Palazzo Ducale

Inaugural Session: Music and Speeches

Hamburg Radio Orchestra
conductor Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt

- Giovanni Battista GABRIELI, Sonata Pian' e Forte (1597)
- Gian Francesco MALIPIERO, "Tradition and Change"
- W. H. AUDEN, "The Pattern and the Way"
- Guido PIOVENE, "Creation and Expression"
- Béla BARTÓK, Concerto for Orchestra (1943)

September 17
 Teatro la Fenice

Symphonic Concert I

Hamburg Radio Orchestra
conductor Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt

- Johann PACHELBEL, Canon and Gigue in D Major
- Paul HINDEMITH, Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50 (1930)
- Alban BERG, Violin Concerto (1935)
soloist Christian Ferras
- Johann Sebastian BACH, Brandenburg Concerto No. 2 in F Major (BWV 1047)

September 18
 Teatro la Fenice

Symphonic Concert II

Orchestra of the Teatro la Fenice

Symphony concert inspired by jazz

September 19
 Teatro la Fenice

Stravinsky Concert I

Hamburg Radio Chorus and Orchestra
conductor Igor Stravinsky

- *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913)
- *Oedipus Rex* (1927)

September 20
Teatro La Fenice

Choral Concert
Chorus of the Hamburg Radio

Works by Josquin des Prez, Gesualdo and other sixteenth-century composers

September 21
Teatro La Fenice
Orchestra

Choral and Instrumental Concert
Ensemble of the Hamburg Radio Chorus and

Works by Flemish and English Masters of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, orchestrated by Stravinsky and other contemporary composers as well as works by the youngest generation of polyphonic composers

September 22
Teatro La Fenice

Symphonic Concert IV
RAI Orchestra

First performance of works by Italian contemporary composers

September 23
Scuola di San Rocco

Stravinsky Concert II
Hamburg Radio Chorus and Orchestra
conductor Igor Stravinsky

- *Symphonies d'instruments à vent* (1920)
- Bach/Stravinsky, Chorale Variations "Vom Himmel hoch da komm' ich her" (1956) for choir and orchestra
- *In Memoriam Dylan Thomas*, dirge-canon and song for voice, string quartet and four trombones (1954)
tenor Richard Robinson
- *Threni—id est Lamentationes Jeremiae Prophetiae* (premiere)
soprano Ursula Zollenkopf · *contralto* Jeanne Deroubaix · *tenor 1* Hugues Cuenod · *tenor 2* Richard Robinson · *bass 1* Charles Scharbach · *bass 2* Robert Oliver

3. Tradition and Change in Music

Tradizione e Rinnovamento

Symposium of Composers and Music Critics

<i>Auspices</i>	Cini Foundation in collaboration with the Congress for Cultural Freedom
<i>Location</i>	Cini Foundation, Island of St. Giorgio
<i>Chair</i>	Nicolas NABOKOV
September 17	Panel I “Continuity and Discontinuity of Musical Tradition” Roman VLAD
September 18	Panel II “The Tradition of Constant Change” Virgil THOMSON
September 19	Panel III “Problems of the Preservation of Traditions” Alain DANIELÉLOU
September 20	Panel IV “Traditions, Dissonances, Composers” Frederick GOLDBECK
September 22	Panel V “Invention versus Tradition” Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT
September 23	Closing Panel

4. Conference Participants

Wystan H. AUDEN • Alain DANIELÉLOU • Frederick GOLDBECK • Massimo MILA • Gian Francesco MALIPIERO • Nicolas NABOKOV • Guido PIOVENE • Claude ROSTAND • Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT • Virgil THOMSON • Roman VLAD • Mario ZAFRED

East-West Music Encounter
International Conference and Festival of
Eastern and Western Music
Tokyo, April 17–May 6, 1961

1. Organization
2. Concerts, Recitals, and Ballets
3. Earlier or Unrealized Proposals
4. Conference
5. Participants

1. Organization

Honorary Committee

Zentarō KOSAKA, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Masuo ARAKI, Minister of Education

Ryōtarō AZUMA, Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Executive Committee

Japan Kōgorō UEMURA (KBK President) • Shun'ichi SUZUKI (Vice-Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government) • Katsujirō BANDŌ (Secretary General KBK) • 45 other representatives from Japanese cultural and musical life

US/Europe Nicolas NABOKOV (Secretary General CCF) • Ian HUNTER (Festival Manager) • Alain DANIELÉLOU (Conference Coordinator)

International Cooperative Committee

Leonard BERNSTEIN (Conductor, New York Philharmonic) • Alain DANIELÉLOU (Advisor to UNESCO's IMC) • Broadus ERLE (concert master Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra) • Julius FLEISCHMANN • Shintarō FUKUSHIMA (KBK Standing Director) • William GLOCK (Controller of Music, BBC) • Frederick GOLDBECK (music critic) • George HAREWOOD (President English Opera Group) • Keizō HORIUCHI (member the Japan National Commission for UNESCO) • Ian HUNTER (Managing Director, Harold Holt Ltd.) • Hidemaru KONOYE (Conductor of the ABC Symphony Orchestra) • Mario LABROCA (President UNESCO's IMC) • Rolf LIEBERMANN (General Manager, Hamburg State Opera) • Nicolas NABOKOV (Secretary-General CCF) • Motoo ŌTAGURO (Member of the Board of Education, Tokyo Metropolitan Government) • Claude ROSTAND (Vice-President ISCM) • Egon SEEFELNER (Secretary-General, Vienna Opera) • Nobutaka SHIKANAI (KBK Managing Director) • Heinrich STROBEL (President ISCM) • Shun'ichi SUZUKI (Vice-Governor of the Tokyo Metropolitan Government) • Virgil THOMSON (composer and music critic) • Kōgorō UEMURA (KBK President) • Akeo WATANABE (Conductor, Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra)

Sponsors

Tokyo Metropolitan Government

Society for International Cultural Exchange (KBK)

Congress for Cultural Freedom

Supporters

Ministry of Education of Japan • Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan • Japanese Broadcasting Company (NHK) • Japan Cultural Forum (CCF affiliate) • International Music Council of UNESCO • Ministry of the Fine Arts Department of Thailand • Ministry of Scientific Research and Cultural Affairs of India • Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Department of Israel • Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Department of the Federal Republic of Germany • Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Department of Belgium • Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Department of France • Cultural Relations Department of the Foreign Department of Italy • National Radio and Television Network of Italy (RAI) • Italian Council • British Council • London

Times • The Royal Ballet • American National Academy and Theater (ANTA) • Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) • Asia Foundation • Catherwood Foundation • Farfield Foundation (\$20,000) • Ford Foundation (\$25,000) • Rockefeller Foundation (\$18,0000) • Council on Economic and Cultural Affairs (\$15,000) • Frederick R. Mann, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (two participants from Israel)

2. Concerts, Recitals, and Ballets

April 17 (morning)

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Inaugural Ceremony

Music Department of the Imperial Household

- Gagaku: Kangen
Netori in Hyōjo
Saibara *Ise no umi* (The Sea of Isé)
Etenraku (Heavenly Music)
- Greetings, congratulations, and introduction
- Giovanni Battista GABRIELI, Sonata Pian' e Forte (1597)

April 17 (evening)

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Ballet I

The Royal Ballet · Imperial Philharmonic Orchestra
conductor Emanuel Young

- Adolphe ADAM, *Giselle* (1841)
choreography Nicholas Sergeyev (after Jean Coralli and Jules Perrot) · *design* Peter Rice · *cast* Margot Fonteyn, Michael Somes, Shirley Bishop, Henry Legerton, Gordon Aitken, Lorna Mossford, David Boswell, Lynn Seymour, Brian Shaw, et al.

April 18

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Ballet II

The Royal Ballet · Imperial Philharmonic Orchestra
conductor Kenneth Alwyn

- *Les Sylphides*, orch. Roy Douglas (1909/1936)
choreography Michel Fokine (revived by Serge Grigoriev and Liubov Tchernicheva) · *design* Alexandre Benois · *cast* Beryl Grey, Bryan Ashbridge, Elizabeth Anderton, Anya Linden, Dorothea Zaymes, et al.
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *Dances Concertantes* (1940-2)
choreography Kenneth MacMillan · *design* Nicholas Georgiadis · *cast* Doreen Wells, Desmond Doyle, Audrey Farriss, Robert Mead, Phyllis Spira, Donald Britton, Ian Hamilton, Adrian Grater, et al.
- Arthur BLISS, *Checkmate* (1937)
choreography Ninette de Valois · *design* Edward McKnight Kauffer · *cast* Valerie Taylor, Gordon Aitken, Desmond Doyle, David Boswell, Beryl Grey, Barbara Remington, Henry Legerton, et al.

April 18

Nōgaku-do

April 19

Metropolitan Festival Hall

April 20

Metropolitan Festival Hall

April 21

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Japanese Traditional Music INō, *Hagoromo* [The Feathered Robe]**Symphonic Concert I**

Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra and the Tokyo Mixed Voices Choir

conductor Akeo Watanabe

- Virgil THOMSON, *Missa pro defunctis* [Requiem Mass] (1960)
- Yoritsune MATSUDAIRA, *Metamorphoses on Themes of Saibara* (1953)
- Luigi DALLAPICCOLA, *Canti di Prigionia* (1938-41)
- Akira MIYOSHI, *Trois Mouvements Symphoniques* (1960)
- Kiyoshige KOYAMA, *Kobiki-Uta* [Woodcutter's Song] Variations for Orchestra (1957)

Recital I*violin* Isaac Stern, violin · *piano* Alexander Zakin

- Giuseppe TARTINI, Sonata in G Minor ('Devil's Trill') (1713-ca. 1750)
- Béla BARTÓK, Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano, Op. 21 (1921)
- Johann Sebastian BACH, Violin Sonata No. 1 in G Minor, BWV 1001 (1720)
- Ernest BLOCH, *Baal Shem Suite* (1923/1939)
- Maurice RAVEL, *Tzigane* (1924)

Oriental Evening I

Music and Dance from South India

Performers of the Kerala Kala Mandalam

- T. VISWANATHAN, flute (Carnatic)
raga Mandari · *tala* Adi
T. Ranganathan, *mridangam*
S. Narasimhulu, *tanpura*
- T. BALASARASWATI
Alarippu
tala Khandam
S. Narsimhulu (voice), K. Ganesan (*nattuvangam*), T. Ranganathan (*mridanagam*), T. Viswanathan (flute), S. Dhanalakshmi (*tanpura*)
Varnam
raga Todi · *tala* Rupakam
- Unnayi VARIYAR, *Nala and Hamsa* from the Kathakali drama *Nalasharitam*
K.G. Vasudevan (Nala) and T.T. Raman Kutty Nair (Hamsa)

S. Gangadharan (voice), M. Subramaniam Namboodari
(*chenglam elatalam*), K.P. Achunni Poduval (*chenda*), N.
Narayan Nambissan (*madalam*)

- K. P. CHANDRIKA, *Cholkettu: Mobini Attam*
ruga Chakravakam · *tala* Adi
S. Gandagharan (voice and *talam*), K.P. Achunni Poduval
(*edakkka*)
- T. BALASARASWATI
Tiliana (Bharatnatyam)
S. Narsimhulu (voice), K. Ganesan (*nattuvangam*), T.
Ranganathan
Prabalad Charitam (Kathakali)
T.T. Raman Kutty Nair (Sukracharya) and K.G.
Vasudevan (Hiranyakasipu), K. Velayudhan
(Pralaladan), E.G. Sundaranarayanan
(Narasiiham)
S. Gangadharan (voice), M. Subramaniam Namboodari
(*chenglam elatalam*), K.P. Achunni Poduval (*chenda*), N.
Narayan Nambissan (*madalam*)

Thai Traditional Music and Dance

Performers of the Imperial Household

- The Alphabet Dance
- Ranad Ek Solo *Pleng Cherd Nork* (xylophone)
- Pole versus forearm sticks (weapon dance)
- Dancing to the *Lao Phaen* tune
- *Forn Ngiao* (dance)
- *Chui Chai* (Thotskan's dance)
- *Chui Chai Brahm* (dance)
- *Ram-Sat Chatri* (dance)
- *Ram Kratob Mai* (dance)
- 'The Abduction of Sita' (scene 1) and 'The Battle' (scene 2) from *Khon* (masked drama)
- *Virajai Senayaksh* [War Dance of Demons] from *Khon*
- War Dance of Monkey Warriors from *Khon*
- Rama versus Thotskan Combat from *Ramakian* (Thai epic)
- The Presentation of the White Monkey from *Ramakian*

April 22

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Chamber Music

Ensemble Européen de Musique de Chambre¹

conductor Bruno Maderna · soprano Helga Pilarczyk

- Adam de la HALLE, Rondeaux (arr. Bruno Maderna)
- Igor STRAVINSKY, Concerto for Two Pianos (1932-5)
soloists Aloys and Alfons Kontarsky

April 23

Metropolitan Festival Hall

- Anton von WEBERN, Songs, Op. 13 (1914-18) and Op. 14 (1917-22)
- Three pieces for solo flute
soloist Severino Gazzelloni
Claude DEBUSSY, *Syrinx* (1913/1927)
- Olivier MESSIAEN, *Le merle noir* (1951)
- Edgard VARESE, *Density 21.5* (1936)
- Luciano BERIO, *Différences* for Five Instruments and Tape (1958-9)

Chamber Music I

Juilliard String Quartet

- Wolfgang Amadeus MOZART, Quartet in C Major, K. 465 (1785)
- Anton von WEBERN, Five Movements for String Quartet, Op. 5 (1909/1929)
- Elliott CARTER, Quartet No. 2 (1959)
- Béla BARTOK, Quartet No. 4 (1928)

April 24

Imperial Palace, Music Hall

Classical Music of Japan II

Gagaku

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Classical Music and Dance of Japan III

Music Department of the Imperial Household

Bugaku (Dance Performance)

- *Totenraku* (Ascending Heavenly Music)
- *Konju* (Ko Tribe Drinking Man)
- *Taiheiraku* (Profound Peace)

April 24

Hibiya Public Hall

Symphonic Concert II

Japan Philharmonic Symphony Orchestra

conductor Bruno Maderna

Program unknown

April 25

Kabuki-za

Classical Music and Dance of Japan IV

Kabuki

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Chamber Music II

Ensemble Européen de Musique de Chambre

conductor Bruno Maderna

- Johann Sebastian BACH, Suite in B Minor for flute and strings (1717-29)
- Elisabeth LUTYENS, Six Temperaments for Ten Instruments (1957)

- Maurice RAVEL, Introduction and Allegro for harp and six instruments (1905)
soloist Francis Pierre
- Pierre BOULEZ, *Structures 1a-c* for two pianos (1951-2)
pianists Alfons and Aloys Kontarsky
- Karlheinz STOCKHAUSEN, *Zyklus* for one percussionist (1959)
soloist Christoph Caskel
- Karlheinz STOCKHAUSEN, *Kontrapunkte* (1953)
- André JOLIVET, *Cinq Incantations* for solo flute (1936)
- Igor STRAVINSKY, Septet (1952-3)

April 26

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Symphonic Concert III

New York Philharmonic

conductor Leonard Bernstein

- Roy HARRIS, Symphony No. 3 (in One Movement) (1938)
- Béla BARTÓK, Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta (1936)
- Maurice RAVEL, Concerto in G Major for Piano and Orchestra (1929-31)
soloist Leonard Bernstein
- Maurice RAVEL, *La Valse* (1919-20)

encores Aaron COPLAND, “Hoe-Down” from *Rodeo* (1942) and Sergey PROKOFIEV, second movement from Symphony No. 5 (1944)

April 27

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Chamber Music III

Juilliard String Quartet

- Leon KIRCHNER, Quartet No. 1 (1949)
- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN, Quartet in F Major, Op. 135 (1826)
- Alban BERG, Lyric Suite (1925-6)

April 28

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Oriental Evening II

Indian Traditional Music²

- Tanjore Viswanathan, Carnatic flute
T. Ranganathan (*mridangam*)
S. Narasimhulu (*tanpura*)
- R. L. Roy, vocal khyal
Chatur Lal (*tabla*)
Nasir Faiyazzudin Dagar (*tanpura*)
- Ali Akbar Khan (*sarod*)
Chatur Lal (*tabla*)

Nasir Faiyazzudin Dagar (*tanpura*)

- Dagar Brothers (vocal *dhrupad*)
Purushotamdas (*pakhawaj*)
Nasir Faiyazzudin Dagar (*tanpura*)

April 29

Recital II

baritone Hermann Prey · *piano* Mitio Kobayashi

- Johann Sebastian BACH, Songs from *Shemelli Liederbuch*
- Gustav MAHLER, *Songs of a Wayfarer* (1883-5)
- Wolfgang FORTNER, *Five Hölderlin Songs* (1933)
- Hans Werner HENZE, *Five Neapolitan Songs* (1956)

April 30

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Contemporary Japanese Traditional Music V

- Ryuta ITO, Quartet for Shakuhachi, Koto and Jushichigen
- Chyojuro IMAFUJI, *Uguisu* (song for choir accompanied by traditional instruments)
- Taro FURUKAWA, Duet for Biwa and Koto
- Kin'ichi NAKANOSHIMA, Suite for Kotos and Sangens (Shamisens) (1956)
- Mamoru MIYAGI, Small Suite for Koto Duet
- Shinichi YUIZE, A Small Piece for Two Flutes (transverse and vertical) and Two Shamisens (1960)
- Seiho KINEYA, Quartet for Sangens
- Hiroyuki NAKADA, *Haniwa* (after a poem by Kansuke Naka)
- Mojibei TOKIWAZU, A Small Piece for Two Flutes (transverse and vertical) and Two Shamisens (1960)
- Bondai FUJII, Composition for Japanese Musical Instruments (1960)

Chamber Music

Pro Musica Antiqua

conductor Safford Cape

Works of thirteenth to sixteenth centuries (program not specified)

May 1

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Vocal Concert

Gruppo Polifonico Vocale di RAI

conductor Giovanni Antonellini

- Gregorian chant, *Alleluja, justi epulentur*
- Greek-Byzantine chant, *Crucifisso col ladrone e strofetta dell' Inno acatisto in onore della Beata Vergine*
- *De la crudel morte di Cristo* from Laudario 91 of Cortona
- Guillaume de MACHAUT, Kyrie from *Messe de nostre dame*
- Josquin des PREZ, Sanctus from *Missa Mater Patri*
- Giovanni Pierluigi da PALESTRINA, *O Beata et Gloriosa Trinitas*
- Marc'Antonio INGEGNERI, *Tenelirae factae sunt*
- Alessandro SCARLATTI, *Exultate Deo*
- Luigi DALLAPICCOLA, *Il coro delle malmaritate* and *Il coro dei malammogliati* (1933)
- Roman VLAD, *Colinde transilvane* (1957)
- Hikaru HAYASHI, Cantata No. 1 [Scenes from Hiroshima] (1958)
- Goffredo PETRASSI, *Nonsense* (1952)

May 2

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Symphonic Concert II

Orchestra of TOHO Conservatory

conductors Hideo Saito · Satoko Takemae · Tadashi Mori

- Antonio VIVALDI, 'Summer' from *The Seasons* (1725)
- Arnold SCHÖNBERG, *Verklärte Nacht*, Op. 4 (1917)
- Yoshiro IRINO, Concerto Grosso for Double Orchestra, Percussion and Wind Instruments (1957)

May 3

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Chamber Music

Pro Musica Antiqua

Works of thirteenth to sixteenth centuries (program not specified)

Chamber Music

Modern Jazz Quartet

drums Connie Kay · piano John Lewis · bass Percy Heath · vib Milt Jackson

- John LEWIS, *Bel*
- Benny GOLSON, *I Remember Clifford*
- Milt JACKSON, *Bluesology*

Sankei Hall

- John LEWIS, *Midsummer*
- Medley
 - Charlie PARKER, *Now's the Time*
 - Thelonious MONK, *Round Midnight*
 - Dizzy GILLESPIE, *A Night in Tunisia*
- John LEWIS, *New York 19*
- Milt JACKSON, *Bag's Groove*
- John LEWIS, *No Sun in Venice Suite*

May 4

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Recital*soprano* Zinka Milanov · *piano* Bozidar Kunc

- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN, *Die Ehre Gottes in der Natur* (c. 1801-02)
- Robert SCHUMANN, *Widmung* (1840)
- Johannes BRAHMS, *Am Sonntag Morgen* (1868)
- Hugo WOLF, *Über Nacht* (1878)
- Richard STRAUSS, *All Soul's Day* (1885), *Dream in the Twilight* (1895), *Dedication* (1885)
- Milo CIPRA, *Rondo*
- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN, *Ah, Perfido!* (1796)
- Antonin DVORÁK, "O Lovely Moon" from *Rusalka* (1901)
- Richard HAGEMAN, *Do Not Go, My Love* (1917)
- Blagoje BERSA, *All Soul's Day*
- Bozidar KUNC, *Longing* (1937-41)
- Josip PAVCIC, *The Shepherdess*
- Bozidar KUNC, *Job in Desolation* (1960), *The Favorite Fairy Tale, Album Leaf No. 7* (1960), (pieces for piano)
- Giuseppe VERDI, "Pace, Pace, mio dio!" from *La Forza del Destino* (1862)

May 5

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Symphonic Concert

New York Philharmonic

conductors Leonard Bernstein and Seiji Ozawa

- Paul HINDEMITH, *Concert Music for Strings and Brass, Op. 50* (1930)
- Alban BERG, *Three Orchestral Pieces, Op. 6* (1914-5)
- Carlos CHAVEZ, *Sinfonía India* (1935-6)
- Toshirō MAYUZUMI, *Bacchanale* (1954)
- Aaron COPLAND, *El Salón México* (1932-6)

encores Maurice RAVEL, "General Dance" from *Daphnis et Chloé*, Suite No. 2 (1909-12) and Leonard BERNSTEIN, *Overture to Candide* (1956)

May 6

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Symphonic Concert

New York Philharmonic

conductor Leonard Bernstein

- Charles IVES, *The Unanswered Question* (1934)
- Charles IVES, *Symphony No. 2* (1907-9)
- Igor STRAVINSKY, *Le Sacre du printemps* (1913)

encore Igor Stravinsky, 'Kaschei' from *Firebird Suite* (1919 version)

Tokyo Kosei Nenkin Kaikan

Recital: Zinka Milanov

piano Bozidar Kunc

- Ludwig van BEETHOVEN, *Die Ehre Gottes in der Natur* (c. 1801-02)
- Richard STRAUSS, *All Soul's Day* (1885), *Dream in the Twilight* (1895), *Dedication* (1885)
- Antonín DVOŘÁK, "O Lovely Moon" from *Rusalka* (1901)

Intermezzo for piano

- John Alden CARPENTER, *Polonaise Americaine* (1933)
- Claude DEBUSSY, *Feux d'artifice* (1912-13)
- Bozidar KUNC, *Dance vision*, Op. 64, No. 5
- Giacomo PUCCINI, "Addio di Mimi" from *La Bohème* (1898) and "Vissi d'Arte" from *Tosca* (1899)
- Richard HAGEMAN, *Do Not Go, My Love* (1917)
- Bozidar KUNC, *The World is Empty* and *Quivering*
- Josip PAVCIC, *The Shepherdess*
- Boris PAPANDOPULO, *Contradanza* (1931)
- Bozidar KUNC, *In a Balkan Inn* (piece for piano)
- Giuseppe VERDI, "Pace, Pace, mio dio!" from *La Forza del Destino* (1862)

Metropolitan Festival Hall

Symphonic Concert

NHK Symphony Orchestra

conductor Wilhelm Schüchter

- Johann Sebastian BACH, *Ricercata* (arr. Anton von Webern, 1934-5)
- Paul HINDEMITH, *Concert for Horn and Orchestra* (1949)
soloist Kaoru Chiba
- Boris BLACHER, *Concertante Musik*, Op. 10 (1937)

- Arthur HONEGGER, Concertino for Pianoforte and Orchestra (1924)
soloist Kazuko Yasukawa
- Rolf LIEBERMANN, Concerto for Jazz Band and Symphony Orchestra (1954)
jazz combo Nobuo Hara with Sharps and Flats

3. Earlier or Unrealized Proposals

Suggestions made at the EWME pilot meeting, April 24-28, 1957³

Western component

- One major orchestra from the West: the Boston Symphony, the Philadelphia Symphony, the New York Philharmonic, the Berlin Philharmonic, or the Lamoureux Orchestra
- One small opera company: the Piccola Scala Company or Benjamin Britten's English Opera Company
- One ballet troupe: the Sadler's Wells Ballet, the New York City Ballet, or the Jerome Robbins Ballet
- One choral society: the Coro Polifonico of the Italian Radio or the Polyphonic Chorus of Osnabruck
- Several chamber music ensembles: the Juilliard Quartet, the chamber music ensemble of Boulez's Domaine Musical, or the woodwind ensemble of the French Radio Orchestra
- Several ensembles specializing in the performance of Medieval and Renaissance music: the Brussels-based Pro Musica Antiqua, William Shaw's Renaissance choir, and/or a group trained in Gregorian and Byzantine chant from the Vatican
- One jazz band: Marshall Stern's Band, the Juilliard Students Jazz Band, the Brubeck Jazz Band, or the Modern Jazz Quartet
- Several soloists: the sopranos Elisabeth Schwarzkopf or Leontyne Price, the baritone Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau, the violinists Yehudi Menuhin or Joseph Fuchs, the harpsichordists Aimee van de Wiele, Ralph Kirkpatrick, or Sylvia Marlowe, the pianists Motoyo Iguchi or David Tudor, and/or the guitarist/lutenist Julian Bream.

Eastern component

- Javanese gamelan with shadow play (*wajang*)
- Balinese gamelan with dancing
- Japanese theater (*kabuki* and *no*), court music with dancing (*gagaku*), and traditional soloists and ensembles (*koto*, *shakubachi*, *shamisen*, etc.)
- Dance-drama (*katbakali*) and classical dance (*bharata natyam*) from South India
- Traditional soloists and ensembles (*veena*, *sarod*, *sitar*, *tabla*, etc.) from North India
- Chinese opera from the PRC, Hong Kong or Taiwan
- Instrumental soloists from Burma
- Dancing from Ceylon
- Orchestra and dancing from Thailand
- Orchestra and *Ramayana* drama from Laos
- Court music from (South) Korea.

- The Middle East was only tentatively considered with Persian and Arabic instrumental and vocal music, Hebrew cantorial singing, Yemenite dancing, and West African drumming.

Affiliated Concerts⁴

- Experimental music by Toshirō Mayuzumi, Tōru Takemitsu, and others (Sōgetsu Art Center)
- Kazuo Fukushima, Sonate for Alto Flute and Piano (house concerts at Frank and Marian Korn's)
- Electronic music and 'musique concrète' by Tōru Takemitsu, Minao Shibata, Luciano Berio, and others (German Culture Institute)
- Demonstration Chinese music by Tsai-ping Liang
- Listening session of recording of musics from Indonesia, Pakistan, et al.

4. East West Music Encounter

Congress of Composers, Performers, and Music Critics

April 17

Inaugural Session

April 18

Panel I The Difference in Musical Notions of the East and the West

9-12 a.m.

The Eastern Musical Tradition Explained

- Thakur J. SINGH and Alain DANIÉLOU, "The Music of India"
- Mantle HOOD, "The Music of Indonesia"
- Sukehiro SHIBA and Robert GARFIAS, "The Music of Japan"

1.30-4.30 p.m.

Music as a Liberal Art: Its Place in Western Life

- Yoshio NOMURA and Hans Heinz DRAEGER, "Liturgical and Religious Music"
- Peter CROSSLEY-HOLLAND and Leo SCHRADE, "Operatic and Ballet Music"
- Kazuyuki TOYAMA and Fred GOLDBECK, "Concert Music"

April 19

Panel II Mutual Interaction between the East and the West

9-12 a.m.

Western Studies of Eastern Music

- Henry COWELL, "Oriental Influence on Western Music"
- Tran VAN KHÉ and Shinichi YUIZE, "Problems of Sino-Japanese Musical Traditions Today"

- Colin MCPHEE, “Problems of Indonesian Musical Traditions Today”
- Tanjore VISWANATHAN and Alain DANIELLOU, “Problems of Indian Musical Traditions Today”

1.30-4.30 p.m.

Western Music in the East

- Keisei SAKKA, “Western Music in Japan”
- Vanraj BHATIA, “Western Music in India”
- José MACEDA, “Western Music in the Philippines”
- Sadao BEKKU and Masao HIRASHIMA, “The Composer in Japan Today”

April 20

Round-Tables on the Listener and Music Education

9-12 a.m.

Music and the Listener

- The Type and the Psychology of the Listener
- Opera, Operetta, Ballet
- Recording, Radio and Television
- The Role of Music Festivals
- Music as a Recreation (Choral Societies, Jam Sessions, Amateur Chorales and Chamber Music Groups)
- Today’s Best (Opera in Germany, Radio in Europe, Symphony Orchestras in the United States)
- The Psychology of the Musician with regard to the Listener

participants William GLOCK · Roman VLAD · Dragutin GUSTUSKI · Takeo MURATA · Yoshihiko ARISAKA · Kapila VATSYAYAN · Willi SCHUH

1.30-4.30 p.m.

Instruction in Music as Part of General Education

participants Daigoro ARIMA · Dragotin CVETKO · Alfred V. FRANKENSTEIN · R. L. ROY, Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT

April 21

Panel III Expression and Technique in Contemporary Music

9-12 a.m.

Renewing the Musical Language

- Elliott CARTER, “Extending the Classical Syntax”
- Luciano BERIO, “Multiple Row Composition”
- Makoto MOROI, “Electronic Composition”
- Yannis XENAKIS, “Uses in Composition of Chance and Probabilities”
- Lou HARRISON, “Refreshing the Auditory Perception”
- Virgil THOMSON, “The Philosophy of Style”
- Mamoru MIYAGI, “An Eastern View”

1.30-4.30 p.m

Patronage of Music

- Ko'ichi NOMURA and Kapila VATSYAYAN, "Patronage of Music in the East"
- George HAREWOOD and Egon SEEFEHLNER, "Patronage of Music in the West"
- Thakur J. SINGH and Trần Văn KHÊ, "Presenting the Eastern Tradition under Conditions of Mass Distribution"
- Masakuni KITAZAWA and Milko KELEMEN, "Situation of Creative Art in the Industrial Society"

April 22

Critics' Forum

- Frederick GOLDBECK, "Whom Do We Write For?"
- William GLOCK, "What is Our Duty to the Establishment?"
- Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT, "Do We Form Opinion or Are We Merely Informative?"
- Hidekazu YOSHIDA, "What Do We Owe the Mass Public?"
- Hans Heinz RUPPEL, "What is Our Duty Towards the Artist (Performer and Composer)?"
- Willi SCHUH, "May We Cooperate Privately with Artists and Producers?"
- Roman VLAD, "What Are the Ethics of the Composer-Critic?"
- Virgil THOMSON, "Are Critics a Part of the Musical Profession?"

The proceedings of the EWE Conference have been published as *Music—East and West: Report on the 1961 Tokyo East-West Music Encounter Conference*, edited and published by the Executive Committee for the 1961 Tokyo East-West Music Encounter (Tokyo: Kogusuri, 1961).

5. Conference Participants

(a) composer • (b) performer • (c) conductor • (d) critic • (e) musicologist • (f) music administrator

Austria Gottfried von EINEM (a) • Egon SEEFEHLNER (f)

Argentina Enzo VALENTI-FERRO (f)

Brazil H. J. KOELLREUTTER (ac) • L. C. VINHOLES (ade)

England Peter CROSSLEY-HOLLAND (aef) • William GLOCK (df) • George HAREWOOD (f) • Ian HUNTER (f)

France Alain DANIELOU (e) • Yvette GRIMAUD (be) • Claude ROSTAND (d)

Germany Boris and Gertie BLACHER (abf) • Hans Heinz DRAEGER (e) • Karl Heinz RUPPEL (d) • Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT (e)

Greece Yannis XENAKIS (a)

India Vanraj BHATIA (a) • R. L. ROY (b) • Thakur Jaideva SINGH (ef) • Kapila VATSYAYAN (f) • Tanjore VISWANATHAN (b)

Iran Mehdi BARKESHLI (e) • Zaven HACOBIAN (e)

Israel Paul BEN-HAIM (a) • Y. Spira (f) • Josef TAL (a)

Italy Luciano BERIO (a) • Bruno MADERNA (c) • Massimo MILA (de) • Roman VLAD (ae)

Japan Daigoro ARIMA (e) • Yoshihiko ARISAKA (df) • Sadao BEKKU (a) • Ikuma DAN (a) • Yoshie FUJIWARA (f) • Naohiro Fukui (f) • Masao Hirashima (d) • Keizo HORIUCHI (d) • Motonari IGUCHI (bf) • Tomojiro IKENOUCI (a) • Yoshiro IRINO (a) • Kan ISHII (a) • Masakuni KITAZAWA (d) • Takemi MASUZAWA (ad) • Toshiro MAYUZUMI (a) • Mamoru MIYAGI (a) • Akira MIYOSHI (a) • Makoto MOROI (a) • Saburo MOROI (af) • Takeo MURATA (d) • Kin'ichi NAKANOSHIMA (a) • Koichi NOMURA (d) • Yoshio NOMURA (e) • Shinjiro NORO (d) • Motoo OTAGURO (df) • Hideo SAITO (c) • Keisei SAKKA (d) • Sukehiro SHIBA (a) • Kazuyuki TOYAMA (d) • Akeo WATANABE (c) • Kazuko YASUKAWA (b) • Hidekazu YOSHIDA (d) • Shin'ichi YUIZE (ab)

Korea (South) Hye-ku LEE (e)

Mexico Vicente MENDOZA (ef)

Philippines José MACEDA (e) • Eliseo M. PAJARO (a)

Spain Cristóbal HALFFTER (a)

Switzerland Constantin REGAMEY (a) • Leo SCHRADE (e) • Willi SCHUH (d)

Taiwan Tsai-ping LIANG (e)

Turkey Ahmed Adnan SAYGUN (a) • İlhan USMANBAS (e)

United States of America Elliott CARTER (a) • Henry COWELL (a) • Broadus ERLE (b) • Alfred V. FRANKENSTEIN (d) • Robert GARFIAS (e) • Lou HARRISON (a) • Mantle HOOD (e) • Colin MCPHEE (ae) • Nicolas NABOKOV (af) • Isaac STERN (b) • Virgil THOMSON (ad)

Vietnam (South) Trần Văn KHÊ (e)

Yugoslavia Joze BREJC (e) • Dragotin CVETKO (e) • Dragutin GUSTUSKI (a) • Milko KELEMEN (a)

Invited but unable to attend due to former engagements or health reasons⁵

Henry BARRAUD (France) • Nadia BOULANGER (France) • Pierre BOULEZ (France) • Benjamin BRITTEN (United Kingdom) • Earle BROWN (USA) • Carlos CHÁVEZ (Mexico) • Solange CORBIN (France) • Luigi DALLAPICCOLA (Italy) • B. R. DEODHAR (India) • Hervé DUGARDIN (France) • Giulelmo ESPINOZA (Columbia) • Alfred V. FRANKENSTEIN (USA) • Pedro de FREITAS BRANCO (Portugal) • Frederick GOLDBECK (France) • Peter GRADENWITZ (Israel) • Hans Werner HENZE (West Germany) • André JOLIVET (France) • Jaap KUNST (Netherlands) • Mario LABROCA (Italy) • Rolf LIEBERMANN (West Germany) • Narayana MENON (India) • Olivier MESSIAEN (France) • Darius MILHAUD (France) • Goffredo PETRASSI (Italy) • V. V. RAGHAVAN (India) • Manuel ROSENTHAL (France) • Roger SESSIONS (USA) • Aman SHILOA (Israel) • Prince Prasidh SILAPABANLENG (Thailand) • Heinrich STROBEL (West Germany) • Ramon TAPALES (Philippines) • Michael TIPPETT (United Kingdom) • Fuad TURKAY (Turkey)

¹ This was an ad hoc ensemble compiled from musicians affiliated to the *Domaine Musicale*, which the French government could not bring in its entirety to Japan.

² Nabokov and Daniélou had asked the Indian Embassy to include in its delegation the soloists Bismillah Khan (*shehnai*) and Vidushi Kasi Vishalakshi (*veena*), but the Embassy insisted that the Indian participation be limited to twenty-five persons. Nabokov to Bandō, October 6, 1960, CCF, III-38-2.

³ “A Plan for a Conference-Festival of World Music to be Held in Tokyo, Japan, in April 1959,” report on the 1957 EWME pilot meeting, Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398.

⁴ Minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee of the Rome Conference, April 18 and September 6-7, 1953, CCF, III-6-7.

⁵ Nabokov, “Report on the East-West Music Encounter in Tokyo,” Appendix A, CCF, III-40-3.

Tradition and Change in Music
International Conference and Festival
New Delhi, February 12-17, 1964

1. Organization and Sponsorship
2. Concerts and Recitals
3. Conference

1. Organization and Sponsorship

Congress for Cultural Freedom • Indian Council for Cultural Relations • Sangeet Natak Akademi • Delhi Music Society • Max Müller Bhavan

2. Concerts and Recitals

Bismillah KHAN (*shehnai*) • Ali Akbar KHAN (*sarod*) • Ravi SHANKAR (*sitar*) • Bharatanatyam dancer T. BALASARASWATI, Vilayat KHAN (*sitar*) and Imrat KHAN (*surbabar*) • M. S. SUBBULAKSHMI, P. M. IYRE, and K. V. NARAYANASWAMY (Carnatic vocalists) • STUDIO DER FRÜHEN MUSIK (Munich) • DROLIC QUARTET (Berlin) • Yehudi MENUHIN (violin)

3. Conference

Evolution in Music

Alain DANÉLOU (IICMSD) • B. R. DEODHAR (Banaras Hindu University) • Amir KHAN • Ernst Hermann MEYER (GDR) • P. SAMBAMOORTHY (Sangit Vidyalaya) • N. N. SHUKLA (All India Radio)

The Differences and Similarities in Musical Structures of Indian and Western Music

Hans-Joachim KOELLREUTTER (Goethe Institute, Munich) • Roger ASHTON (United Kingdom/New Delhi) • Hans Heinz STUCKENSCHMIDT (Technische Universität, Berlin) • Manfred M. JUNIUS (University of Allahabad) • Lothar LUTZE (FRG/New Delhi) • Rossette RENSHAW (University of Montreal) • János KÁRPÁTI (Library of the Academy of Music, Budapest)

The psychology of the Musician and the Listener

Peter CROSSLEY-HOLLAND (IICMSD) • Dragotin CVETKO (Ljubljana University) • V. V. SADAGOPAN (University of Delhi) • Antonín SYCHRA (Charles University, Prague)

Traditional Music Facing Industrial Civilization

Robert GARFIAS (University of Washington) • M. Subramania IYER (could not attend) • Tran VAN KHÉ (Vietnam/France) • Geeta MAYOR (Bombay) • Ravi SHANKAR • N. S. RAMACHANDRAN (All India Radio) • R. L. ROY (University of Delhi) • Thakur Jaidev SINGH • T. VISWANATHAN

Non-presenting delegates

T. BALASARASWATI (*bharatnatyam* dancer) • Nicholas GOLDSCHMIDT (Canada) • Z. HACOBIAN (University of Tehran) • George HAREWOOD (Edinburgh Festival) • Mantle HOOD (UCLA) • Bismillah KHAN (*shehnai* player) • Palghat Mani IYER (*mridangam* player) • Narayana MENON (Sangeet Natak Akademi) • Yehudi MENUHIN • Nicolas NABOKOV (CCF) • C. S. PANT (University of Delhi) • Antonio E. SPADAVECCHIA (USSR)

The proceedings of this conference have been published as *Music East and West* (Indian Council for Cultural Relations, 1966).

Sources of Latin American Music

International Conference and Festival

Rio de Janeiro, August 18-September 11, 1963

Bahia, September 8-19, 1963

UNREALIZED

1. Festival in Rio de Janeiro
2. Festival in Bahia
3. "Rencontre noire"

By the time of the Festival's cancellation, Nabokov had secured the participation of the Orchestre National de la Radio-Télévision Française, the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, the complete Deutsche Oper (Berlin), the Chilean National Ballet, the Melos Ensemble (London), the Quartetto Italiano, the Bahia Chamber Music Orchestra, Pro Musica (New York), the Miles Davis Jazz Band, Christa Ludwig & Walter Berry, Gérard Souzay, Claudio Arrau, Géza Anda, Arthur Grumiaux, Michèle Auclair, Henryk Szeryng, Carlos Chávez, and Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft.¹ The following programs present the planning as of 8 September 1962.²

1. Festival in Rio de Janeiro

August 18

Stadium Maracanã

Inaugural Concert

São Paulo State Symphony
conductor Eleazar de Carvalho
soloist Jacques Klein

- Heitor Villa-Lobos program

August 19+21

Opera I

Deutsche Oper, Berlin

- W. A. MOZART, *Così fan tutte* (1790)

August 20+22

Opera II

Deutsche Oper, Berlin

- Alban BERG, *Wozzeck* (1914-22/1925)

August 23+24

Stadium Maracanã

Symphonic Concert I

Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra

August 25

Ballet I

Ballet Deutsche Oper, Berlin

August 27

Recital I

piano Claudio Arrau

August 28

Chamber Music I

Quartetto Italiano

August 29

Recital II

soprano Christa Ludwig · *piano* Walter Berry

August 30+31

Chamber Music II

Bahia Chamber Music Orchestra

September 1

Symphonic Concert II

To be determined
conductor Igor Stravinsky

September 2+3

Chamber Music III

Melos Ensemble, London

September 4	Recital II <i>violin</i> Arthur Grumiaux
September 5+6	Ballet II Ballet Chile
September 7+8	Symphonic Concert III Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française
September 10	Recital III <i>violin</i> Michèle Auclair
September 11	Closing Concert • Manuel de Falla, <i>Atlántida</i> (1920s-1930s/1962)

2. Festival in Bahia

September 8	Inaugural Concert • Igor STRAVINSKY, <i>Mass</i> (1944-48)
September 10	Chamber Music I Quartetto Italiano
September 11	Stravinsky Soirée <i>conductors</i> Igor Stravinsky and Robert Craft • <i>Les Noces</i> and other works
September 12+13	Chamber Music II Bahia Chamber Music Orchestra • Works showing the influence of African traditions on Western music
September 14	Chamber Music III Miles Davis Band
September 15	Chamber Music IV Pro Musica, New York • <i>Le jeu de Daniel</i> (twelfth century)
September 17	Chamber Music V Pro Musica, New York • A cappella, music from the Renaissance and contemporary repertoires
September 18	Chamber Music VI To be announced • Avant-garde music
September 19	Closing Concert

conductor Eleazar de Carvalho

- Heitor Villa-Lobos program

3. “Rencontre Noire”

As for the contributions from West Africa, Nabokov visited various tribes and villages in Senegal, Guinea, Ghana, Dahomey [Benin], and Nigeria in early August 1962. (For a report, see Josselson Papers, 23-2.) In the end, he would select from Senegal a group of stilt dancers, a balafon ensemble, and a traditional griot; from Dahomey (Benin) the “Ballet of Princesses” (10-15 persons); and from Nigeria the Yoruba Popular Opera (ca. 15 persons) and music from the group *L’Horloge de Sable* [Sand-Glass] (6-7 persons).

¹ Nabokov, memorandum “State of Preparation of the Festival of Rio de Janeiro,” undated, Josselson Papers, 23-2.

² Nabokov, memoranda “Festival of Rio de Janeiro” and “Conference et Festival de Bahia,” September 8, 1962, Josselson Papers, 23-2.

This Is Our Culture

Nicolas Nabokov

Communiqué about the *L'Œuvre du vingtième siècle* Festival
at the luncheon of the Anglo-American Press Association¹

Paris, February 1952

We live today in the aftermath of war, in a world where war is still no stranger, in a world plagued by fears of a renewal of war on a world-wide scale. In such a world our sleep is a troubled one, our days are harried by the mutual irritants which we in our state of emotional and nervous tension generate. The land heals far more readily than mankind, or the works of man. Today, the scars of war are erased from the fields and hedgerows of Normandy, from the Alsatian Plain, from the fields and forests of most of Europe. Only in the ruined cities, which man built and by his own hand destroyed, do the scars remain. Only there, and in the mind of man.

Wherever one probes into European society, one sees the unhealed wounds and still raw scars of war. Our concern, the concern of many of my friends, is for the wounds that the intellectuals of Europe have suffered, and for a means of removing the scar tissue that blinds many of them to realities.

Europe's intellectuals, and to some extent those of the United States, suffer from political dislocation, political disorientation compacted of the disillusionments of the past and of fears for the future in an unsettled world. Many have succumbed to sterility, the fruit of pessimism. Others have sought an easy solution in the totalitarian condemnation of our great Western liberal tradition as the source of the evil that faces the world.

Thus we have been left with a great middle layer of intellectuals, the politically homeless who have lost faith in the creative forces of the West. Particularly in France and Italy, there are many who proclaim with bitterness that our culture is dead, that our civilization is sterile and decadent, that the fruits of our creative impulses lack meaning in today's world.

Then there are those who have made a negative choice. Convinced that the world is divided into two imperialistic camps, they have reached the conclusion that our side is the most belligerent and the least cultured and so have embraced

the totalitarian idea. [Particularly, they seek to disassociate American culture from the great cultural tradition of Europe. They regard American culture with suspicion and disdain.]

We, the members of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, do not agree. [We believe that American culture has its roots in the ancient cultures of Europe and that it is an integral part of Western culture today. We do not believe that it is the dominant culture in the west, nor do we wish to impose it elsewhere. However, we believe that it has made a rich contribution, and so must be dealt with in any survey of culture today.] We believe that the productive genius of thinking men during the first half of the twentieth century has made a rich contribution to world culture. But above all, we believe that great cultural achievement is possible only in a climate of freedom, a climate which has been and is being threatened by the rise and spread of totalitarian doctrine.

We believe that our writers, philosophers, poets, painters, composers have created in these fifty years represents and impressive intellectual harvest. We are willing to stand by their accomplishments. (We believe that what we have created speaks for itself. It is not necessary for us to confine ourselves to polemics about artistic freedom. We have only to exhibit the product of that freedom to win our argument.²)

That is why we are holding in May our international exposition of the arts, "Masterpieces of the Twentieth Century." Of course, we cannot in the short space of one month present all the masterpieces of our time. If we could, we would have little, really, to boast of. What we hope rather to do is to present a cross-section, a selection of the outstanding achievements of this century, the finest possible interpretation and the noblest possible frame.

This, we believe, will be the first positive effort by the West to answer the propaganda which seeks to indict our culture as "decadent," "degenerate" and "cosmopolitan," and which has reached a crescendo in recent months.

Next follows an enumeration of the main attractions planned for the Festival, including the Boston Symphony Orchestra ("an orchestra which, in the so-called 'uncultured' United States, plays forty-seven weeks of concerts each year, probably the fullest schedule of any orchestra in the world"); George Balanchine's New York City Ballet; and a production of Virgil Thomson's and Gertrude Stein's "remarkable [American] opera" Four Saints in Three Acts, to be presented "with a cast of Negro singers." In the English version of his speech, Nabokov emphasized that the Exposition would be "far from an American show," explaining that "our part will be small when compared with the contributions from other countries," such as the Covent Garden production of Benjamin Britten's new opera Billy Budd; a production of Alban Berg's Wozzeck by the Vienna State Opera and the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra ("important to us as a prime example of what the Soviet critics like

to call “decadent,” “degenerate” music); and concerts by the *Orchestre de la Suisse Romande*, the orchestra and chorus of the *St. Cecilia Academy of Rome*, and the *RIAS Symphony from West Berlin*. In addition, Nabokov announced the return to Paris of Stravinsky, who would come to conduct the first of two performances of his opera-oratorio *Oedipus Rex*, staged and narrated by Jean Cocteau. In addition, Nabokov went on at great length relating how his team managed to track down a copy of a score of Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* that had escaped Stalin’s 1936 order that all scores of the discredited work be returned to the Soviet Union—a discovery that enabled him to put a concert version of the opera on the program. Finally, Nabokov briefly mentioned the preparations for an art exhibition, a literary forum, and a number of theater performances.

Thus we will say to those who have lost faith: this is our culture, in all its richness and its poverty, in its contradictions and its unanimity, its strength and its weakness. These are the products of free minds in a free world, open to acceptance or rejection, praise or criticism, freely and openly. These are the things that we cherish, not for themselves, but as evidences of our vital growth, as a promise for the future which lies open before us. This we believe to be true artistic achievement, true cultural value as opposed to the gradual eclipse of culture behind the iron curtain.

Look upon it now, and judge.

¹ Published in *Counterpoint: Magazine of Music and Allied Arts* [San Francisco] 17/5 (May 1952): 13–15. The bracketed passages are not included in the version published for French audiences, in *Les Amis de la Liberté* [Paris], No. 8–9 (January–February 1952): 2, 19. A draft version of the speech is located in the Records of the Congress for Cultural Freedom, III-2-6.

² This sentence did not make it into either the published English or French version.

Music in the Twentieth Century

Nicolas Nabokov

Promotion text *La Musica nel XX secolo* Festival¹

Should not *composers*, today, welcome, and even look for, contact and debate with their fellow composers? Everyone's style and endeavor may be ever so personal—yet in their private studies, and in the world's Concert Halls and Opera Houses, all are confronted with the same problems, spiritual and material, aesthetic and economic.

Should not *performers*, today, admit that to stand aloof from their own time's music would jeopardize their musicianship? Music is no museum, but a living continuity. None but perennial values make the musical past worth revisiting; and the touchstone of such values is not to be found except in the various debatable and dramatic aspects of the musical heritage at its present stage.

Should not *music critics*, today, stress and defend the indivisibility of the realm of music? This century cannot afford to be provincial. Yet several forms of provincialism are still lingering in the practice of music. A certain *provincialism in time* keeps “music until 1900” on one side of the program and “the modern province” on the other. A certain *professional provincialism* keeps, too often, the activities of composers, virtuosos, chamber music players, opera directors and musicologists neatly separated. And some musicians even indulge in *aesthetical provincialism*: believers in one style, one method, one school—ignorant (if not contemptuous) of all things attempted or achieved along other lines...

Encounter, debate, free exchange of musical values and of musicians' experience—this Conference in Rome aims at nothing else.

¹ Prospectus *Music in the Twentieth Century: International Conference of Contemporary Music*, 1954, Thomson Papers, 29-39-23.

East-West Music Encounter

Report Pilot Meeting¹
April 24-28, 1957

In no field of culture have the civilizations of the Middle East and Far East encountered that of Europe and the Americas more dramatically than in music. Though seemingly opposed at every other point, the East and the West have long shown for each other's music an irresistible affinity. Twentieth-century music in the West has rejuvenated itself by the introduction of Eastern scales and rhythmic concepts. At the same time Western music has permeated Eastern life to such an extent that today the traditional musics of the East are in danger of dying out from neglect on the part of the newer generations.

From the time of Debussy, who first heard the music of Java at the Paris Exposition of 1889, through the early career of Stravinsky, who brought Slavic tunes and rhythms to France in the years just before World War I, Eastern influences were the chief element of novelty in Western music. Since that time, there have been important studies of Gregorian, Greek Orthodox, and Islamic chant; and Chino-Japanese musical procedures have been grafted onto Western roots through the music of Henry Cowell and Edgar Varèse. Also, Olivier Messiaen and Andre Jolivet, among others, have frankly adopted Indian ragas and Indian rhythmic freedoms. All these Eastern influences have radically enlarged the methods and the expressivities of the West.

At the same time, Eastern acquaintance with our popular music and Eastern students of our classical tradition have implanted in the Asians so great a desire to adopt our music that today there are five symphony orchestras in Tokyo alone and upwards of twenty more in the Japanese islands. Radio stations, moreover, all over Asia broadcast constantly Western symphonic and chamber music. The Asian market for Western gramophone recordings is very large indeed. And Western performing organizations, such as orchestras, ballet troupes, opera companies and jazz bands—not to speak of solo artists—are nowadays received with an enthusiasm of public demonstration scarcely believable to those who have not witnessed it.

The time is ripe, it would seem, to supplement all these vigorous but still somewhat superficial interchanges with an East-West musical encounter of more systematic preparation. We wish to show the East our whole tradition—choral, instrumental, operatic and choreographic—so that it can be viewed as a

whole and compared with the Eastern traditions that it seems to contradict but that in reality it stems out of. We wish to show also to Western musicians the finest flowers of Eastern music and musical theater, exposing incidentally India and Indonesia and Islam to China, Korea, and Japan (and vice versa) at the same time that we submit ourselves to their delights and influences.

It will not be sufficient for this purpose merely to gather together composers and performers. Historians, specialists of tuning and timbre and comparative aesthetics and other technicians of music will be asked to contribute public explanations and to lead forum discussions of all the musical usages and beliefs that seem to differentiate so basically the East from the West.

The advantages of cultural exchanges among peoples require no brief. Indeed, the acceleration of these exchanges is a subject of particular care on the part of virtually all governments. It is our conviction that an East-West music festival carried out right now on the highest professional level would have world-wide influence and would offer a model to succeeding festivals for world-wide understanding such as has not previously existed in the music field.

Western music has for centuries been characterized by evolution, both of its principles and of its techniques; the music of Asia, on the other hand, has aimed at continuity and at the perfection of highly refined idioms within seemingly static forms. Asian musical systems, moreover, often appear to untrained Western ears as a series of sounds without syntax. For Eastern listeners, excepting those familiar with Western methods, the music of the West is so foreign that it appears to them not even as another province of the same art, but as a completely different art. There is no denying the fact that Easterners highly trained in Western music tend to lose interest in their own tradition.

It is because of these considerations, and of many others, that a mutual understanding of Eastern and Western musical systems is urgent. Most important of all, such mutual understanding may lead, it is hoped, to the formulation of a general aesthetic theory capable of encompassing without implications of inferiority or superiority both the Eastern and the Western musical traditions. It is a regrettable fact that while this type of universal rapprochement has been evolving in literature, painting, and sculpture, it has scarcely started in the field of music. What development there has been in this direction has been primarily historical and sociological in its emphasis and has rarely been based on direct musical confrontation. Among musicologists, historians, and artists—both the composers and the performers—there is a growing realization of the need to reevaluate our experiences and our assumptions about the music of other cultures, to develop a more broadly inclusive outlook and, if possible, to evolve a terminology of aesthetics suitable

for expressing the multiplicity of music's traditions in all their national and regional aspects, and also in their essential unity.

The choice of Japan as the site for this East-West music encounter was determined by the fact that Japan is the only country in the world where both Eastern and Western music have reached a high degree of development simultaneously. The City of Tokyo, moreover, with its large halls, its cultured public and enthusiastic audiences, is magnificently prepared to receive an international conference on the subject of music.

Members of the pilot meeting

- Pierre CRENESSE, representative of the French Broadcasting Company (RTF)
- Marcel CUVELIER, director of the Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels, and Founder/President of Les Jeunesses Musicales
- Alain DANIELÉLOU, professor at the French Institute of Indian Studies, Pondicherry
- Ian HUNTER, impresario and former director of the Edinburgh Festival
- Mario LABROCA, program director at the Italian Broadcasting Company (RAI)
- José MACEDA, professor at the Philippine Women's University, Manila
- Nicolas NABOKOV, secretary-general of the Congress for Cultural Freedom
- Herbert PASSIN, anthropologist at Ohio State University and Tokyo University
- William SCHUMAN, director of the Juilliard School of Music
- Ravi SHANKAR, sitarist and former program director at All-India Radio (AIR)
- Morio TATENNO, representative of the Japanese Broadcasting Company (NHK)
- Virgil THOMSON, composer.

¹ Rockefeller Foundation Archives, Record Group 1.2, Series 01.0002/100.R, 52-398.

Scary in Red and Lavender

Nicolas Nabokov's FBI File

Nicolas Nabokov was twice the subject of thorough FBI investigations: the first time in 1943, in connection with his part-time appointment as intelligence translator at the Justice Department; the second time in 1948, in connection with his application for turning his temporary appointment as editor-in-chief of the Russian desk of the Voice of America into a tenured position.¹

When FBI Director J. Edgar Hoover commissioned the 1948 investigation on Nabokov's "character, reputation and loyalty," he instructed that special attention be paid to the occurrence of the composer's name in an address book belonging to Myra Jordan, a United Nations officer who was allegedly related to Ignacy Zlotowski, a Polish nuclear scientist and former member of the UN Atomic Energy Commission who was being suspected of espionage (justly, as it turned out in retrospect).² After a month of inquiry into Nabokov's circle of intimates, acquaintances and (former) colleagues, the FBI New York Field Office concluded that the appearance of Nabokov's name in Jordan's directory was not of "sufficient significance" to pursue the case. Indeed, Sergey Koussevitzky ensured Hoover's 'G-men' that Nabokov was to be considered as "more appreciative of [the] American form of government than most native-born Americans, because he knows what it is not to have the American freedoms."³

With this conclusion Nabokov's case was not closed, however. The FBI's informants frequently commented on Nabokov's indulgent night life and "way with the ladies," alluding to his extramarital affair(s) at Wells College. Some even rumored that Nabokov was suffering from a drug addiction or venereal disease. If these "offenses"—some of which were real, others imagined—left Nabokov's investigators rather unconcerned, there was one "offense" which they could/would not ignore at a time when conservatives ruled Congress: his affiliations to "notorious homosexuals," if not signs in his own behavior that would seem to indicate that he himself was afflicted by this "sexual abnormality."

What had happened? Nabokov's name had popped up in an FBI investigation on Charles W. Thayer, the veteran diplomat with whom Nabokov had set up the Russian Desk of the Voice of America. Thayer had become a high-profile

target of conservative Congressmen who tried to oust him from power by exposing him as a security risk on account of his political connections (in the 1930s, he had worked at the US Embassy in Moscow) and alleged “sexual immorality.” That Thayer and Nabokov had shared an apartment for a while after the latter had divorced his first wife (Natalya Shakhovskaya) aroused the conservative imagination. One of Nabokov’s former colleagues at the VOA, “a self admitted homosexual [who] believes he can recognize one when he sees one,” imparted that Nabokov had “the general reputation of being a pervert because of his actions, manner of speech; [he] frequently runs his hand through the hair of his acquaintances, [and] uses feminine terms of endearment when speaking to them,”—an impression that was shared by another colleague: “N. acts and talks like a hs [homosexual].... He waves his hands with a Continental but nevertheless an effeminate manner and he ‘swishes’ when he moves about.” For John H. Finlator, the officer in charge of the internal screenings of State Department personnel and a self-defined specialist in interviewing applicants suspected of being gay, it was beyond question that Nabokov was a homosexual, not only because he would give “all outward indications of being one” and attend “parties at which only perverts were in attendance,” but also because Nabokov himself allegedly admitted to him that he had “associated with homosexuals all his life,” including “notorious ones” like Sergey Diaghilev, Jean Cocteau, Edward E. Cummings and Virgil Thomson.⁴ That Nabokov had already come to his third wife, Patricia Blake, at the time of this investigation apparently did not stand as proof for his sexual orientation, and a clearance was not granted. Nabokov, who assumed his investigators were confusing him with Sergey Nabokov, Vladimir Nabokov’s openly homosexual brother, complained about the affair to George F. Kennan, who vouched for the political and sexual integrity of his friend together with Charles Bohlen, who was to become a target of the homosexual purge himself. Not being in a position to judge the legality of Nabokov’s dismissal, Kennan advised his friend to keep the honor to himself and give up “any attention of working for the U.S. Government at this time” as by its “ill-conceived, short-sighted, and unjust” behavior, it had “forfeited any right to use your advice.”⁵

Speculations about Nabokov’s affinity with homoeroticism were not new: at the time of his collaboration with Diaghilev on the ballet *Ode* (1927-8), Prokofiev wrote to Myaskovsky that “the attraction seems to lie in the spiciness of the Nabokov-Diaghilev combination.”⁶ Evidence did not go beyond rumors and unverifiable testimonies, however. Nevertheless, although it remains unclear for what reason(s) Nabokov in the end did not receive clearance, these rumors might have been sufficient for the State Department to draw its conclusions. For an in-depth analysis of the disturbing political and sexual inquisition in Cold War US politics, also known as the Red Scare and Lavender Scare, see Robert D. Dean, *Imperial Brotherhood: Gender and the Making of Cold War Foreign Policy* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

Incidentally, Frances Stonor Saunders suggests (without giving a reference) that the 1948 investigation was conducted in connection with an application Nabokov would have filed “for a job in the government,” which in effect would mean a job in intelligence (as future CIA director Allen Dulles would have been involved in this application). I have not come across any such application, which is not to say that it might not have existed: Nabokov was (still) intensively looking for ways to advance the concerns and interests of exiles, émigrés, and refugees from Soviet Russia and its satellite states, and he was discussing this matter frequently with Kennan and Bohlen. But contrary to what Saunders suggests, it cannot be determined from Kennan’s aforementioned letter to Nabokov whether the application concerned a continuation of the VOA job or a different position.⁷

¹ The FBI file on Nabokov (105-HQ-165742) has been released to this author under the conditions of the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA).

² J. Edgar Hoover, FBI Director, to the Special Agent in Charge, New York, June 14, 1948.

³ FBI reports dated June 29, 1948 (Boston Field Office) and 22 July 1948 (New York Field Office).

⁴ FBI report dated July 20, 1948 (Washington Field Office).

⁵ Kennan to Nabokov, July 14, 1948, Nabokov Papers, 1-2.

⁶ Prokofiev to Myaskovsky, September 23, 1927, in *Selected Letters of Sergei Prokofiev*, ed. Harlow Robinson (Boston, MA: Northeastern University Press, 1998), 269–70.

⁷ Saunders, *The Cultural Cold War*, 43-44.

Citations

from Non-English Sources

CHAPTER/FOOTNOTE

- 0/85 NICOLAS NABOKOV
 [J]e suis un artiste exilé de la culture stalinienne, un citoyen de la République des Arts, en somme, un homme qui aime la liberté totale de son art, qui a horreur de toutes les frontières, des barrières géographiques et spirituelles et qui n'accepte aucun autre commandement que celui de sa conscience artistique et de son intelligence.
- 0/98 NICOLAS NABOKOV
 Je suis un compositeur de musique, un Américain d'origine russe, qui, pendant de longues années d'exil a vécu dans la plupart des pays d'Europe. En somme, je suis ce qu'on appelle dans le langage du *Führer* Staline et de son [*G*]auleiter, feu le général Idanov, un "sale rejeton bourgeois," un "décadent," un "apatride," un "sans-passeport" et souvent un "sans-culotte," un "cosmopolite au service de Wall Street et des fomentateurs capitalistes de la guerre."
- 1/23 HARRY KESSLER
 Nabokow macht trotz dieses etwas unreifen, überschwänglichen katholischen Radikalismus den Eindruck eines wirklich genialen jungen Riesen.
- 1/26 NICOLAS NABOKOV
 [Cette] "Vocalise" (ou "Mélodie") est écrite dans le désir de faire renaître dans un nouvel aspect harmonique et dans un colorit mélodique plus ou moins russe le principe de la long[u]e mélodie. C'est une œuvre écrite dans un désir de polyphonie linéaire et d'un classicisme de forme.
- 2/43 *AUFBAU*
 Wir alle, die wir im Geiste der Humanität das neue demokratische Deutschland aufbauen wollen, brauchen das hohe Symbol der künstlerischen Vollendung, das uns nach dem barbarischen Rückfall des Nationalsozialismus ein Weckruf zur deutschen Selbstbesinnung ist. Darum brauchen wir, darum braucht Deutschland den Künstler Wilhelm Furtwängler.

- 2/56 WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER (emphases in original)
 ...einer der wenigen Juden, dessen Tätigkeit, seit ich ihn kenne (seit über 15 Jahren) *ausgesprochen aufbauend* war, und der stets eine echte *innere Wahlverwandtschaft mit der deutschen Musik* bekundet hat.
- 2/58 WILHELM FURTWÄNGLER
 Es ist die politische Funktion der Kunst—gerade in unserer Zeit—überpolitisch zu sein.
- 3/47 ARNOLD SCHOENBERG
 Wiesengrund verdient Züchtigung, schon allein wegen der Gemeinheit, mit der er sich gegen Strawinsky benimmt. Aber auch wegen der Gemeinheit gegen mich.
- 3/51 HANNS EISLER
 Der Neoklassizismus ist ein großbürgerliches Phänomen. Er hat keine Beziehung mehr, weder geistig noch musikalisch, mit dem großen Erbe des revolutionären Bürgertums. Er hat Frechheit und Kälte gegen den kleinen Mann. Er ist der Musikstil der guten Gesellschaft...Beide Meister [Schoenberg and Stravinsky] können gewissermaßen nur durch Schlauheit, Tricks, Kunststücke das zerfallende Material zusammenhalten.
- 3/78 NICOLAS NABOKOV
 Encore un mot sur la “Musique pour amateurs.” Il ya en avait beaucoup, mais pour ainsi dire pas de musique. Ce fut un fiasco complet. Car, non seulement la musique était de qualité médiocre, l'idée elle-même est une idée inutile, funeste et malheureuse. Pourquoi écrire une “musique pour les amateurs”? Est-ce là une nécessité esthétique? Toute œuvre véritablement belle est accessible aux amateurs sous une forme quelconque. Ou bien est-ce là une manifestation contre le “musicien d'orchestre”? Encore de la politique?! Pourquoi vouloir faire une musique simpliste et se mettre à la merci d'un dilettantisme de basse classe? Voici de nouveau une idée sociologique comme point de départ pour une œuvre d'art.
- 3/82 RENE LEIBOWITZ
 Il me semble que peu de gens se soucient de réfléchir sérieusement sur la question suivante: les critères selon lesquels on a jugé les mesures du Comité Central ont-ils encore une valeur aujourd'hui? En d'autres termes: les valeurs morales qui nous font condamner la “politique musicale” russe ont-elles encore quelque part une réalité concrète, ou sont-elles simplement des souvenirs d'un autre âge, des formes de pensées périmées, bref des abstractions...C'est un fait qu'en Russie, on persécute certains compositeurs. Cela signifie que ces compositeurs ne peuvent plus sauvegarder leur liberté, leur indépendance, leur renom et leur prestige, s'ils ne se soumettent pas aux “prescriptions” de l'Etat, s'ils n'adoptent pas l'attitude que l'on exige d'eux. Plus concrètement encore, cela signifie que

ces compositeurs ont le choix entre une existence *artistiquement pure* qui s'accompagne d'obscurité (sinon d'éloignement), de pauvreté matérielle, voire de difficultés "officielles" de toutes sortes, et un *compromis artistique* qui leur assure une existence matérielle aisée, voire la célébrité....On objectera que le compositeur occidental est tout de même libre de choisir, plus libre, en tout cas, que son confrère soviétique. C'est possible, mais ce n'est pas là l'essentiel. Nous ne contesterons pas un instant que l'attitude du compositeur dépend toujours et essentiellement du choix libre et conscient du compositeur lui-même. Et c'est précisément parce que nous en sommes convaincus que nous ne voulons et ne pouvons établir des différences fondamentales entre leurs libertés respectives. De deux choses l'une: ou l'homme est toujours libre quelle que soit la pression que l'on exerce sur lui, dans quel cas le compositeur soviétique possède le pouvoir de dire *non* à ceux qui veulent l'aliéner (et cela au même titre que le compositeur occidental), ou, si l'on admet que de telles pressions arrivent effectivement à aliéner la liberté de l'artiste, le compositeur occidental est, à peu de choses près, autant à plaindre que le compositeur soviétique.

3/97 SERGEY BARSKY

Eben dieser Gedanke—diese Aufgabe eine Kunst für das Volk zu schaffen, eine Kunst, die des Volkes würdig ist, bestimmt den ganzen Gehalt, die ganze Bedeutung dieses Dokuments. Dieses Ziel überdenkend, kommen wir notwendig zu einer noch nicht erwähnten These zurück, die in dem Beschluß dargelegt ist—zu der These von der inneren Verwandtschaft der kritisierten Mängel im sowjetischen Musikschaffen mit den Erscheinungen, die charakteristisch sind für die Strömungen des Individualismus und des Verfalls in der modernen Kunst des bürgerlichen Westens—für eine Kunst, die nicht nur jeden Kontakt mit dem Volke verloren hat, sondern die sich dem Volk entgegenstellt, manchmal sogar gegen das Volk wirkt; eine Kunst, die, wie es so treffend in dem Beschluß heißt, zur Liquidierung der Kunst, zur Zerstörung ihres eigentlichen Wesens und ihrer Substanz führt....Die Tatsache daß als Folge des schöpferischen Fehlgriffs des Komponisten Muradeli das Zentralkomitee der Kommunistischen Partei eine Beratung von Vertretern der sowjetischen Musikwelt einberief...ist eine klare Bestätigung der Aufmerksamkeit und Fürsorge von der der Künstler in der Sowjetunion umgeben ist. Der sowjetische Künstler steht nicht allein. In jedem Berufskollegen sieht er nicht einen Konkurrenten, sondern in erster Linie einen Mitkämpfer bei der großen und hohen Aufgabe, die demokratischste Kunst in der Welt zu schaffen.

3/98 ROMAN PERESVETOV

Von welcher Seite die Musik bedroht sein sollte, darüber brauchte er sich wohl nicht lange den Kopf zu zerbrechen. Alle Gefahren wälzen sich wie bekannt nur aus einer Richtung, "dem Osten," heran, wo sich die böswilligen Kräfte verbergen, die der Welt angeblich einen schrecklichen Feldzug androhen: eine Offensive auf die moderne Musik....[Die Neue

Zeitung und *Der Tagesspiegel*] versuchen...die berechtigte Empörung über die tatsächlich erfolgte Maßregelung von in Amerika lebenden Künstlern, wie z. B. den fortschrittlichen Komponisten Hanns Eisler, der bekanntlich verhaftet und dann aus Amerika ausgewiesen worden ist, ganz zu schweigen von der beträchtlichen Zahl der filmschaffenden Künstler Hollywoods, die nach einem Verhör wegen "unamerikanischer Tätigkeit" aus ihren Stellungen entlassen worden sind, zu übertönen....Nicht da, wo die Musik auf ihre menschlich-künstlerische Substanz zurückgeführt wird, ist sie in Gefahr, sondern dort, wo sie ohne Halt und Bindung sich im leeren Raum ästhetizistischer Abstraktionen verliert.

3/100 SERGEY BARSKY

Der Beschluß des ZK ist keine Feststellung, sondern eine Einschätzung verschiedener Erscheinungen im sowjetischen Musikleben und stellt zugleich eine Reihe von Richtlinien seitens der Kommunistischen Partei über die Entwicklung der sowjetischen musikalischen Kunst dar...."Gut oder schlecht" sind keine Begriffe für die Einschätzung der Kunst. Deswegen sind in diesem Beschluß auch nicht ein einziges Mal diese Worte genannt....Man bedient sich in der Sowjetunion solcher faschistischer Begriffe wie "unerwünscht und verboten" überhaupt nicht.

3/101 HANS HEINZ STUCKENSCHMIDT

Auf uns deutsche Avantgardisten [hat der vieldiskutierte Erlaß des Zentralkomitees der Kommunistischen Partei vom 10. February 1948] wie eine eisige Dusche gewirkt. Sie stimmen nicht nur sachlich bis in Einzelheiten der Formulierung mit den Kunst-Maximen der nationalsozialisten überein, von deren geistem Terror wir gerade erst drei Jahre lang befreit sind. Sie diffamieren ach dieselben großen Führer der zeitgenössischen Musik, die im Hitler-Reich verboten waren und, soweit sie in Deutschland lebten, zur emigration gezwungen wurden. "Zersetzung," "Volksfremdheit," "Subjektivismus," "atonale Mißklänge" waren die Dinge, um derentwillen man die Auführung von Werken Paul Hindemiths und Alban Bergs verbot und allen den Krieg bis zur Vernichtung erklärte, die sich für dergleichen einsetzten. Und der Feldzug wurde ebenso im namen des Volkes geführt, im Namen der Millionen werktätiger Menschen, denen die l'art-pour-l'art-Spielereien eines Häufleins intellektueller Snobs unverständlich seien. Es hat etwas Erschütterndes, drei Jahre nach dem Tode Joseph Goebbels seine Kunst-Doktrinen fast lückenlos in der *Weltbühne* wiederzufinden. Man fragt sich, wozu der Kampf um die moderne Kunst geführt worden ist, wozu eine Elite deutscher Künstler und Intellektueller die Leiden der Verfolgung, des Verbots, der Emigration auf sich genommen und durchgestanden hat, wenn heute haargenau dieselben Argumente von weithin sichtbarer Warte aus gegen sie ins Treffen geführt werden. So hätte also Hitler in künstlerischen Dingen recht gehabt, der dieselben Geister entartet nannte, die heute als Repräsentanten westlich-bürgerlicher Dekadenz beschimpft werden?

- 3/110 DIETER SATTLER
Die Kunstpflege auf allen Gebieten (Film, Funk, Konzert, Theater, Literatur, Museum, Ausstellung usw.) ist eines der Hauptgebiete des kalten Krieges.
- 5/01 NICOLAS NABOKOV
...je voulais vous parler sérieusement d'un tas de choses...[sic] choses tristes, affreuses et dangereuses qui nous menacent nous tous. D'après moi la guerre est *inévitabile* et si ce n'est pas le printemps prochain que les Sovièts la déclencheront, ce sera dans un an mais pas beaucoup plus tard. L'Amérique pourrait encore arrêter ce courant tragique par une guerre préventive, c'est-à-dire par un bombardement atomique de l'Union Soviétique, mais il n'y a aucun doute que les Américains ne se décideront *jamais* de le faire. Donc il faudra subir une guerre affreuse totale et surtout une guerre dont le moment de déclenchement sera choisi *par eux*. Il faudrait (et je vous parle en toute confiance, en ami et en...[sic] qualité de quelqu'un qui connaît un peu plus sur ce qui se passe que l'homme dans la rue: tachez de venir l'été prochain ou l'hiver prochain. L'Europe sera menacée par l'aviation américaine car *toute* l'Europe sera occupée. Je sonne comme un affreux alarmiste mais je ne crois pas que j'ai tort. Venez, si vous pouvez. Acceptez l'offre de Koussevitzky pour Tanglewood, je vous le conseille de tout cœur...Je vous écris tout ceci bien naturellement en toute confiance et n'en parlez à personne...
- 5/48 ALEXANDER DYMSHITZ (on Melvin Lasky)
...eines der gefährlichsten Subjekte der Gegenwart, eines Anstifters zu einem neuen Krieg...
- 6/8 RENE LEIBOWITZ
Aux États-Unis, la musique, du moins si l'on ne considère que celle des compositeurs américains proprement dits, n'est encore qu'à l'état naissant. Il n'y a pas eu de leur part (qu'il s'agisse du présent ou du passé) participation véritable à la tradition européenne...Chez nous, on semble croire que dès qu'un de nos artistes traverse l'Atlantique, le résultat ne peut être que néfaste. Il est vrai que nous connaissons beaucoup de cas où des ambitions méprisables ont remplacé des soucis artistiques authentiques. Il est vrai aussi que certains éléments de la vie sociale américaine sont bien faits pour encourager de telles ambitions. Il est toutefois absurde d'en faire retomber la faute avant tout sur l'entourage. Si nous sommes de bonne foi, il nous faut, en premier lieu, accuser l'artiste lui-même, car enfin, c'est bien de lui qu'il dépend de se laisser, ou non, dominer par les circonstances. Si le pays de la publicité et des affaires arrive à lui faire adorer ces valeurs, si, effectivement, il en veut à être occupé plutôt d'argent et de célébrité que des vrais problèmes que pose son travail, *tant pis pour lui!* Son cas peut nous intéresser ou nous laisser indifférent, nous chagriner ou provoquer notre

mépris, en fin de compte c'est lui seul qui restera responsable. Artiste est toujours libre de choisir une autre manière de se situer par rapport aux "idoles" de l'Amérique, libre aussi de lutter contre leur influence. Il est libre de faire son possible pour rester fidèle à sa morale "européenne" et tenter de l'imposer à son entourage....[L]'Amérique—pays sans tradition, pays des idoles—ait provoqué chez nos compositeurs une réaction violente dans le sens de l'approfondissement des problèmes compositionnels et de l'affermissement de la tradition... Justement à cause de son incertitude culturelle, l'Amérique est à présent la proie d'un étrange phénomène de mauvaise foi, complexe d'infériorité et de supériorité à la fois. Le sentiment d'infériorité à l'égard des artistes européens, qui a dominé longtemps et qui domine encore la conscience de la plupart des artistes américains, se renverse à présent en volonté d'auto-affirmation. L'artiste américain a tendance à s'affirmer indépendant à l'égard des influences d'outre-Atlantique, ou même supérieur. De là un certain chauvinisme dans le domaine artistique, latent la plupart du temps, manifeste quelquefois. Les différentes organisations dont nous avons parlé *soutiennent* tout particulièrement les compositeurs américains, non pas à raison de leur valeur musicale, mais parce qu'ils se trouvent être *Américains*. Et, ce qui est pire encore: on constate, depuis peu, une tendance, représentée surtout par des compositeurs comme Aaron Copland et Roy Harris (et quelques autres moins célèbres), à composer une musique "spécifiquement américaine," et à créer ainsi un style véritablement "national." Il va de soi que toutes ces tentatives sont dues précisément à des musiciens sans maturité. Il va de soi aussi que ces tentatives superficielles rencontrent auprès du public un accueil plus favorable que des efforts plus sérieux et plus difficiles....Le "système clos" de la vie musicale américaine trahit une *pétrification* qui se remarque dans presque toutes les situations musicales contemporaines. A cet égard il apparaît donc clairement que l'Amérique, bien que son effort culturel et artistique soit récent, a réussi déjà non seulement à rattraper les pays européens, mais même à les dépasser. La pétrification est l'un des obstacles majeurs au déploiement d'une activité artistique vivante, au sein de laquelle la tradition puisse continuer à se développer et à s'enrichir. L'une des conséquences principales de cet état de choses est que les consciences compositionnelles contemporaines se "banalisent" et s'obscurcissent par oubli ou par ignorance des problèmes fondamentaux de la composition musicale et passent à l'attitude académique, rétrospective, folklorisante.

6/153 NICOLAS NABOKOV

J'étais très déçu du morceau de Boulez que [Roger] Désormière a dirigé. Je trouve cela vieux, fabriqué, à formules désuètes de l'Europe centrale de l'époque weimarienne. Ce que je ne comprends pas c'est l'espèce d'émotions qu'un truc pareil puisse créer dans la salle. Il faut bien que les gens soient désintégréés eux-mêmes par admirer de l'étoffe musicale qui tombe en poudre quand on la touche par l'oreille.

6/184 PIERRE BOULEZ

J'ai refusé son invitation en lui [Nabokov] envoyant une lettre où je le remets proprement à sa place de valet vénal.

7/101 HANS PISCHNER

Tatsächlich wäre es für uns auch politisch von großer Bedeutung, auf dem Wege über die Musik und das erstklassige Orchester in der japanischen Öffentlichkeit politisch Fuß zu fassen....Diese Konferenz wiederum soll sich ganz in den Händen des 'Kongreß für Freiheit der Kultur' befinden. Dabei soll geplant sein, demonstrativ auf internationalem Forum den Beweis zu erbringen, daß nur in der 'freien Welt' eine neue fortschrittliche Musik zur Entwicklung kommen kann.

7/107 SIEGFRIED WAGNER

Das East-West-Music-Encounter wurde veranstaltet vom sogenannten Rat für Kulturelle Freiheit, an dessen Spitze der weißrussische Emigrant Nabukow [*sic*] steht, der von der fortschrittlichen japanischen Presse als Agent des CIC entlarvt wurde. Nach dem Scheitern des Planes, das Gewandhausorchester zu zwingen, am East-West-Music-Encounter teilzunehmen, wurde kurzfristig die New Yorker Philharmonie eingeladen. Zahlreiche maßgebliche Persönlichkeiten Japans sagten sich von diesem Unternehmen los. Sie alle nahmen am Empfang der DDR in Tokio teil.

7/109 GINJI YAMANE

Ich war von der Interpretation der Werke Beethovens durch das Gewandhausorchester tief beeindruckt. Hier wurde mit vollendeter Technik, in musterhaft stilgetreuer Wiedergabe der Geist Beethovens zu klingendem Leben erweckt...Während uns das Gewandhausorchester mit einer stilvollen Wiedergabe von klassischer Ausgeglichenheit im Geiste der alten deutschen Traditionen entzückte, brachten die New Yorker unter der Leitung von Leonard Bernstein Bartóks *Musik für Saiteninstrumente, Schlagzeug und Celesta* in einer jazzähnlichen Interpretation und Ravels *La Valse* mit übertriebenen rhythmischen Verschärfungen zur Aufführung. Das Klavierkonzert G-Dur von Ravel, mit Bernstein als Solisten, artete zu einer Show aus, die den Dirigenten auch gleichzeitig als Pianisten glänzen lassen sollte. Zweifellos ist das Spiel der New Yorker Philharmoniker präzise und farbenprächtig, aber es wirkt mechanisch und ungeistig. Wenn man die beiden Orchester vergleicht, muß man sagen, daß die Leipziger wie ein Mensch, die New Yorker aber wie eine Maschine wirkten. Hier zeigte sich offensichtlich, daß das Gewandhausorchester der musikalische Repräsentant eines wahrhaft menschlichen, demokratischen Landes ist, während dem New Yorker Orchester der Stempel seiner Herkunft aus einem hochentwickelten, finanz-kapitalistischen Staate aufgedrückt war, einem Staate, in dem alle pseudo-kulturellen Bestrebungen nur im Dienste des Kapitalismus stehen und alle künstlerischen Äußerungen zu einer würdelosen und kommerziellen Show erniedrigt werden....Welches aber

waren die tieferen Gründe dafür, daß beide Orchester am selben Tag und genau um dieselbe Stunde auftraten? Dies war kein Zufall. Der "Kongreß für kulturelle Freiheit" veranstaltete in diesem Jahr das "1961 Tokio East-West Music Encounter" und versuchte, eine Lanze für die "Freiheit" zu brechen. Dieses Unternehmen hatte allerdings mit Demokratie überhaupt nichts zu tun, da ein gewisser Herr Nabokow als Leiter dieses ominösen "Kongresses für kulturelle Freiheit" alle Fäden im Auftrage seiner amerikanischen Geldgeber in der Hand hatte. Das sah nun praktisch so aus, daß die Kongreßleitung versucht hatte, das Gewandhausorchester nach Tokio einzuladen, um es im Rahmen seiner zweifelhaften Veranstaltungen spielen zu lassen. Aber das Gewandhausorchester hatte gemeinsam mit der japanischen Arbeiterklasse den richtigen Weg gewählt und dieses Ansinnen abgelehnt. Auf Grund dieser Absage wurde nun das New Yorker Orchester zur Unterstützung der amerikanischen Interessen nach Tokio beordert und provokatorisch an demselben Abend eingesetzt, an dem das Gewandhausorchester sein erstes Konzert in Tokio geben sollte. Man kann beim besten Willen nicht behaupten, daß dieses Störmanöver des "Kongresses für kulturelle Freiheit" ein Sieg war und die Antwort der japanischen Öffentlichkeit war ein unmißverständliches "Nein." Es wäre von diesem "1961 Tokio East-West Music Encounter" noch viel zu sagen, doch ist dies im Augenblick bedeutungslos angesichts des durchschlagenden Erfolges des Leipziger Gewandhausorchesters, der alles andere in den Schatten gestellt hat.

7/110 SIEGFRIED WAGNER

Durch die Tournee ist breitesten Kreisen der japanischen Öffentlichkeit klar geworden, daß es einen friedliebenden deutschen Staat, die Deutsche Demokratische Republik, gibt, [und] daß das kulturelle Erbe besonders in der DDR liebevoll gepflegt wird.

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RKK	Records of the REICHSKULTURKAMMER
SAPMO	Records of the STIFTUNG ARCHIV DER PARTEIEN UND MASSEORGANISATIONEN DER DDR
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KULTURBUND DER DDR (DY 27) • SOZIALISTISCHE EINHEITSPARTEI (DY 30)

Landesarchiv Berlin (LB)

B Rep. 014	Records of the SENATSVERWALTUNG FÜR WISSENSCHAFT UND KUNST (West Berlin)
B Rep. 149	Records of the BERLINER FESTSPIELE

The National Archives (TNA), Kew, Richmond, Surrey

BW	Records of the BRITISH COUNCIL
FO	Records of the FOREIGN OFFICE
WO	Records of the WAR OFFICE

The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD

Record Group 59	DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Record Group 84	FOREIGN SERVICE POSTS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE: OFFICE OF THE POLITICAL ADVISER FOR GERMANY, BERLIN
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Samenvatting

(Summary in Dutch)

Groot was de publieke verontwaardiging toen bijna vijftig jaar geleden, midden tijdens de Vietnamoorlog, kritische onderzoeksjournalistiek een netwerk van frontorganisaties blootlegde waarmee de CIA sinds het begin van de Koude Oorlog had getracht de wereldopinie voor het Amerikaanse standpunt te winnen. Een van deze organisaties was het Congres voor Culturele Vrijheid, opgericht in juni 1950 in West-Berlijn met als doel ‘zwevende’ intellectuelen in de wereld ervan te overtuigen dat het communisme geenszins een remedie bood voor de gebreken van het Westers politiek-economisch stelsel, al was het maar omdat onafhankelijk denken en vrije cultuuruitingen in het ‘Oostblok’ zichtbaar in de kiem werden gesmoord. Dit proefschrift demonstreert hoe de noties van culturele autonomie en apolitiek kosmopolitisme wapens werden in de ideologische strijd tegen de Sovjet-Unie. Centraal staan de internationale muziekfestivals die de Russische *émigré*-componist Nicolas Nabokov (een volle neef van de schrijver Nabokov) in de jaren vijftig en zestig organiseerde in zijn hoedanigheid als secretaris-generaal van het Congres voor Culturele Vrijheid: *L'Œuvre du vingtième siècle* (Parijs, 1952), *La Musica nel ventesimo secolo* (Rome, 1954), *East-West Music Encounter* (Tokio, 1961) en twee *Tradition and Change in Music*-seminars (Venetië, 1958 en New Delhi, 1964).

Hoofdstukken 1-4 analyseren en contextualiseren Nabokovs esthetische en politieke standpunten, evenals zijn betrokkenheid in de missie om de Truman-regering over te halen substantieel meer te investeren in de promotie van de Verenigde Staten als boegbeeld van vrijheid. Zo bepleitte hij als cultureel adviseur van Lucius Clay, de gouverneur-generaal van de naoorlogse Amerikaanse bezettingszone in Duitsland, een grotere aandacht voor het herstel van Duitslands cultuurleven. Op dit project liepen de Russen immers sterk voor op de Amerikanen, die aanvankelijk de denazificatie van de gehele Duitse samenleving prioriteerde. Pas toen de Sovjets een sterk antiwesterse propagandacampagne in hun bezettingszone lanceerde gaf Washington gehoor aan Nabokovs pleidooi voor een ‘representatieprogramma’ dat aan de Oude Wereld de culturele vitaliteit van de Nieuwe Wereld moest tonen en het heikele verwijt dat de Verenigde Staten ‘vrijheid’ predikte terwijl diverse groeperingen in de Amerikaanse samenleving geen ‘vrijheid’ genoten diende te pareren. Met veel moeite kwam een dergelijk programma van de grond, maar deze bleek nauwelijks opgewassen tegen het succes waarmee het Kremlin de Sovjet-Unie wist neer te zetten als baken van cultuur en waakhond van de wereldvrede tegenover het ‘oorlogszuchtige’ en ‘cultuurbarbaarse’ Westen. Daarnaast fungeerde de Sovjet-Unie voor vele Westerse intellectuelen en kunstenaars als een tegenbeeld voor wat zij zagen als het gebrek aan maatschappelijke betrokkenheid bij hun collega’s. De ondertekenaars van het Manifest van het Tweede Internationale Congres van Componisten en Muziekcritici in Praag (mei 1948) bijvoorbeeld verwachtten meer sociaal-politiek

engagement van componisten en musici, eveneens als zij die Dmitri Sjostakovitsj welkom heetten als een van de Sovjetgezanten voor het Culturele en Wetenschappelijke Congres voor Wereldvrede in New York (maart 1949). Terwijl deze congressen gewoonlijk worden opgevat als instrumenten van Moskou's propagandamachinerie, betoog ik dat deze congressen voortkwamen uit de ongemanipuleerde gemeenschappelijke zorgen van 'zwevende' Amerikanen en Europeanen over de vercommercialisering en toenemende politisering van cultuur in Oost *en* West.

Rond 1950 was weliswaar de Truman-regering ervan overtuigd dat de Verenigde Staten de Sovjet-Unie met haar eigen retoriek en wapens diende te bestrijden, maar niet het Amerikaanse Congres. De wetgeving die in de hectiek van de voorgaande jaren had geleid tot de oprichting van de Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) voorzag in de mogelijkheid om een cultureel tegenoffensief te lanceren zonder raadpleging van het Congres. Hoofdstukken 5-8 reconstrueren de chaotische opkomst en verankering van een van de exponenten van dit tegenoffensief, het Congres voor Culturele Vrijheid. Nabokovs ambitie om scepsis ten aanzien van de vitaliteit van de Westerse cultuur te verdrijven middels een retrospectief op modernistische kunststromingen uit de eerste helft van de twintigste eeuw bleek te defensief te zijn: zelfs de pers van de gematigd linkse doelgroep was niet gediend van de politieke motieven achter het *L'Œuvre du vingtième siècle*-festival (Parijs, 1952). In de daaropvolgende festivals liet Nabokov de anticommunistische toon varen en trachtte hij een netwerk van intellectuelen en kunstenaars aan het Congres te binden door in te spelen op breed gedeelde zorgen in de 'vrije' of 'niet-gebonden' werelden over de gebrekkige overheidssteun voor artistieke ontplooiing en cultuurbehoud. Deze poging om over te komen als een onafhankelijke vereniging van gelijkgestemde geesten ten spijt, de verdenking van de verborgen hand van de Amerikaanse regering achter het Congres bleef bestaan.

De gedetailleerde casestudies van Nabokovs festival-conferenties tonen de tegenstrijdigheden tussen de kosmopolitische waarden die zij etaleerden en de lokale politieke verdeeldheid waarin zij verstrikt raakten. Ook laten zij zien hoe staatsgesubsidieerde vormen van kunstpatronage tijdens de Koude Oorlog bepaalde muziektradities—muzikale modernismes in het Westen en (elitaire) muziektradities in Afrika en Azië—bevoorrechtten ten koste van tradities die gehybridiseerd, vercommercialiseerd of gepolitiseerd werden geacht. Als zodanig werpt de studie vragen op over de idealen van artistieke autonomie en apolitiek kosmopolitisme waarvoor het Congres stond alsmede de heimelijke staatssteun waarmee deze idealen werden gepropageerd.

Curriculum Vitae

HARM LANGENKAMP (1980) started his studies at Utrecht University in 1998, and passed his *doctoraal* examination in two specialization programs: Musicology and Cultural History since the Enlightenment. Concurrently, he completed a minor program in Music Theory at the Conservatory of Amsterdam. Subsequently he enrolled in the same university's research master program in Musicology, as part of which he studied six months at the Musicology and Ethnomusicology Departments of the University of California, Los Angeles and the Music Department of the University of California, Berkeley. In 2007 he started his PhD project with a grant from the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO). He presented his research at various conferences in the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom, the United States, Hong Kong, Japan, and Taiwan. Currently he teaches in the Musicology program at the Department of Media and Culture Studies, Utrecht University.

PUBLICATIONS

- “Contested Imaginations of Collective Harmony: The Politics of ‘Silk Road’ Nostalgia in China and the West.” In *East-West Musical Encounters: Representation, Reception, and Power Politics in Sino-Western Musical Relations*, edited by Michael Saffle and Hon-Lun Yang. Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press, forthcoming.
- “Conflicting Dreams of Global Harmony in US-PRC Silk Road Diplomacy.” In *Musical Diplomacy from the Early Modern Era to the Present*, edited by Rebekah Ahrendt, Mark Ferraguto, and Damien Mahiet, 83-100. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.
- “(Dis)Connecting Cultures, Creating Dreamworlds: Musical ‘East-West’ Diplomacy in the Cold War and the War on Terror.” In *Divided Dreamworlds: The Cultural Cold War in East and West*, edited by Giles Scott-Smith and Joes Segal, 217-234. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2012.
- “Close Encounters of Another Kind: Strategies of Intercultural Composition, 1960s-2000s.” *Dutch Journal of Music Theory* 16/3 (2011): 180-201.

Around 1950, when the members of the anti-Nazi alliance found themselves locked into a political and ideological stalemate that none of them could afford to escalate into another 'hot' war, the notions of cultural autonomy and apolitical cosmopolitanism became weapons by which the Western Allies tried to steal a march on their ideological enemy, the Soviet Union. Focusing on the assemblies of musicians, composers, music critics, and (ethno)musicologists which the Russian émigré composer Nicolas Nabokov organized on behalf of the CIA-sponsored Congress for Cultural Freedom, this dissertation investigates how state-sponsored cultural patronage during the Cold War privileged particular music traditions—musical modernism(s) in the West and a selection of (elite) music traditions in Africa and Asia—at the expense of those that were considered to be hybridized, commercialized, or politicized. The example of the Congress raises questions about the concealed political discourse immanent to the notions of cultural autonomy and apolitical cosmopolitanism, as well as the ethics of covert state sponsorship by which these values were promoted.

Harm Langenkamp lectures in the Musicology program of the Department of Media and Culture Studies at Utrecht University. His research focuses on music's involvement in processes of (trans)national identity construction, in particular with respect to those on the Eurasian continent. Apart from on the topic of this dissertation, he has published on contemporary evocations of the 'Silk Road' in American and Chinese cultural diplomacy.