R O C K
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R E S E R V A T I O N

Songs from the Leningrad Rock Club
1981-86

Yngvar Bordewich Steinholt

MMMSP

Rock in the Reservation: Songs from the Leningrad Rock Club 1981-86 (1st edition).
© (text, 2004) Yngvar B. Steinholt.
New York and Bergen, Mass Media Music Scholars' Press, Inc.
viii + 230 pages + 14 photo pages.
Delivered in pdf format for printing in March 2005.

ISBN 0-9701684-3-8

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The text is a revised and corrected version of the identically entitled doctoral thesis, publicly defended on 12. November 2004 at the Humanistics Faculty, Bergen University, in partial fulfilment of the *Doctor Artium* degree. Opponents were Associate Professor Finn Sivert Nielsen, Institute of Anthropology, Copenhagen University, and Professor Stan Hawkins, Institute of Musicology, Oslo University. The pagination, numbering, format, size, and page layout of the original thesis do not correspond to the present edition.

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Cover illustrations by Nikolai Kopeikin were made exclusively for RiR.

Published by Mass Media Music Scholars' Press, Inc.
401 West End Avenue # 3B
New York, NY 10024
USA

Acknowledgements

This study has been completed with the generous financial support of The Research Council of Norway (Norges Forskningsråd). It was conducted at the Department of Russian Studies in the friendly atmosphere of the Institute of Classical Philology, Religion and Russian Studies (IKRR), Bergen University. The book has benefited greatly from the supervision of Professor Jostein Børtnes at IKRR, with his theoretic expertise and honourable openness to new fields of study. The musicological expertise of my assistant supervisor Professor Philip Tagg at the Faculté de Musique, Université de Montréal, has been invaluable, not to mention his inspiring enthusiasm and fund of practical advice. My second assistant supervisor, Dr. Hans Weisethaunet at the Grieg Academy, Bergen University, introduced me to relevant ethnomusicological theories and offered important guidance regarding the sociological part of the study. My warmest thanks to staff and colleagues at IKRR; to the Faculté de Musique, UdeM, for welcoming me as an *étudiant libre*; to academic staff and students at the Grieg Academy; and to the members and organisers of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM).

I also owe much gratitude to all participants in my musical analysis panel and to my team of advisers in Russian language and St Petersburg slang for their quick and extensive answers and insightful reflections; to the fieldwork interviewees and all the wonderful people who assisted me during my stays in St Petersburg; to the Norwegian University Institute in St Petersburg; to Andrei Usov for supplying me with historic photos and the cover illustration; to Sasha Startsev for the Roksi cd-rom; to David-Emil Wickström for his sharp feedback; to Ursula Phillips, who undertook the English language correction work (the responsibility for any remaining errors is exclusively mine); to Pjokken Eide for his stylish notation; and to my opponents Finn Sivert Nielsen and Stan Hawkins for good comments, just critique and enjoyable discussions.

Special thanks go to my friends and family. Cheers to the crew at my local Persian. Greetings to the merry guys at the St Petersburg MVD, who were always ready to add dramatic colour to events (rob me, beat me up, arrest my informant, or save my life). Finally, since the first vague plan began to take shape in winter 1997 until funding was granted nearly four years later, I received invaluable help and support from friends and academic contacts. They took the time to help me develop project descriptions and applications, publish articles or give lectures, or simply kept up my spirits. Thanks to Anna-Karin, Bente, Boy, Bror, Charlotte, Christoph, Dima, Erik H., Erlend, Eva, Finn, Geraldine & Christophe, Inge, IPM Liverpool, Jaouad, Karin, Mette, Mikko, Odd, Odd Inge, Olav, Pierre, Pippin, Samir, Torben, Tormod, Ulf, and apologies to those I have forgotten to list.

Notes on translation and transliteration

Translations of quotations into English are mine unless otherwise stated. French and German quotations are not translated. The original language of a translated quotation will appear from its entry in the bibliography. All emphases in quotations are those of the respective authors, none have been added.

This study applies the Library of Congress system of transliteration without diacritic signs. The soft and hard signs are marked with an apostrophe. Exceptions are made for family names which have become widely known in a different transliteration, thus the spelling *Vysotsky* is preferred to *Vysotskii*, *Gogol* to *Gogol'*. Similarly, words which have entered the English vocabulary with a different orthography, such as *glasnost*, may deviate from the transliteration standard. Russian words are normally set in italics followed by the italicised English translation in brackets. However, Russian key terms which demand special definition have been adopted, and appear in italics only until explained. The same applies to certain English special terms. Exceptions are made for Russian names (including band names), which are never italicised. However, song, album, book and article titles are set in italics. I have kept the Russian rule of only capitalising the first letter in non-personal names of two or more words, as in the band name Mashina vremeni. Certain key terms are explained and defined immediately below.

Definitions of key terms

Throughout this book, the word *rock* signifies rock music in its widest definition, as demonstrated by the reggae song included in the analyses. This wide definition of rock serves to avoid limting the stylistic spectrum represented in Leningrad rock. *Leningrad rock* is, unless otherwise stated, defined as the sum of rock music produced and performed by members of the Leningrad Rock Club (LRC) between 1981 and 1986. Similarly, the *Leningrad rock environment* or *rock community* signifies the entire rock network of Leningrad, from the LRC organisation and members to more or less independent critics, commentators and contributors during the corresponding period. *St Petersburg* signifies the city in the post-Soviet era including the time of the study's fieldwork. The term *western rock* is based on the dominant Russian insider notion of the *west* (*zapad, ne nash* [*not ours*]) as opposed to the Russian (*nash* [*ours*]), and thus not geographically defined. Rather, it refers to the contemporary rock canon dominant in Western Europe and the US, independently of the origin of bands that constitute this canon.

Since the Russian word *rok* signifies both *fate* and *rock*, many Russians prefer to talk about *rok-n-roll*. To avoid confusion the study uses *Rock-'n'-Roll* in the narrow sense of the specific rock style originating in the United States in the 1950s, and *rock and roll*, when speaking about mainstream rock in general. Correspondingly, use of the Russian term *rok-n-roll* is marked with square brackets in translations: *rock [and] roll*. To avoid confusion with Country and Western music, independent occurrences of the adjectives *western* and *eastern* are written in lower case throughout; with reference to the musical style, *Country* is capitalised.

Additional resources

The entire transcribed and translated manuscripts of seven of the fieldwork interviews conducted for this study are published on the internet address: *http://www.hf.uib.no/i/russisk/steinholt/RiR_files.html*

For information about the purpose of the attached audio cd, appendices containing notation, musical events in time, and original and transliterated Russian lyrics, please see 8.1.14, page 121. A table of the cd contents is supplied in Appendix 1, page 261.

Foreword

On the seventh of March 1981 a rock club opened in Leningrad. This happened five years before Soviet cultural authorities were prepared to acknowledge that rock music existed in the USSR. According to official ideology, rock was a symptom of the moral and cultural decay of western capitalist societies, and therefore by definition unsuitable for Soviet audiences. Half a decade later, rock music broke out of its Leningrad reservation and onto public stages to become the soundtrack of perestroika. Rock tapes were distributed and re-copied by the millions. The phenomenon received massive attention and generated fierce debates on home soil. Soon, western journalists and academics began arriving to study this curious phenomenon. By 1990, members of the rock community, regional cultural authorities, and the KGB were all claiming the honour of being the initiators of the Rock Club.

This book is the result of a long working process. The idea to do research on Russian rock music dates back almost exactly thirteen years. Ten years ago I started working on a Master's thesis in Russian literature. The subject was lyrics by the rock songwriter Konstantin Kinchev during the political changes of the mid 1980s to mid 1990s. Although my first thesis was reasonably well received, I felt that I had come up with more questions than answers. Moreover, I had become painfully aware of the reduction resulting from my unidisciplinary Literary-Studies approach to rock music. Unfortunately, similar kinds of studies are dominating research on Russian rock even today.

In 1997 I began working on the idea of an interdisciplinary study of the Leningrad rock community, its music and lyrics. The result is *Rock in the Reservation*, which concentrates on the first five years of the Leningrad Rock Club, from it's opening in 1981 until 1986, a turbulent year on the brink of perestroika. The reasons why I decided on this period are threefold:

- No available works seemed very illuminating when it came to accounts of the Leningrad Rock Club. Local sources have only recently begun to explain the phenomenon.

- Available western works often lacked the necessary historical perspective in their account of Russian rock, something which has tended to generate weaknesses and inconsistencies in their analyses and conclusions.

- Local sources agree that 1980 marked the end of a learning phase for Russian amateur musicians, a point when they had gained a codal competence of rock, which allowed them to begin stylistic experiments of their own. In other words, the opening of the Leningrad Rock Club coincided with a transition from rock in Russia to Russian rock.

Other important motives for investigating these formative years of Leningradian and Russian rock are more closely related to questions about its specific Russian characteristics. What makes Russian rock 'Russian'? Is there a musical side to its 'Russianness' or is it merely a function of its lyrics? These questions led me to the specific Russian ideas about rock lyrics and their role, and I found it a logical move to concentrate my examination of these questions on the start of the Leningrad rock wave of the 1980s.

Quite early in the preparations of this study it became clear that if it were to bring new results and contribute to any progress of this and similar fields, the approach would have to go beyond the confines of unidisciplinarity. The only alternatives to the risky approach would imply studying music without music, and reproducing existing, reductionist research formats:

I could either continue along the reductionist track of author-centered, intralyrical, and monological expert investigations. Been there - Done that - Not convinced. Or I could switch towards a uni-sociological approach to music communities, an approach which often tend to reduce musical practice to a question of author-initiaded and author-led socio-cultural and socio-political enterprise. Read that - Many a time - Not convinced.

Instead, *Rock in the Reservation* builds upon four ideals, to which I have tried my best to remain true during the research process:

Interdisciplinarity:
My attempt to comprise literary studies, sociology and musicology with no formal background in the two latter disciplines has been demanding, yet rewarding. On the practical level, interdisciplinary research often makes you feel like a kid trying to play in several different sandboxes simultaneously: He tends not to make himself very popular in any of them. However, his advantage is being able to pick the best from each box. *Rock in the Reservation* insists that doing research on a musical community demands an account of the actual music concerned, combined with descriptions of social context and lyrics. Some of the results will inevitably fail to match up to each discipline's special standards. But here the motto will have to be: "Half a failure equals half a success."

Audiocentricity:
To balance out the logocentric and scopocentric hegemonies in academia and contemporary media respectively, a study involving music should be able to account for how thought processes and interpretations in the study are influenced by music listening. Taking the sound-material at face value also implies offering the reader access to at least some samples of the music discussed.

Academic honesty:
Apart from music samples, the reader should also have access to as much as possible of the material and information that form the basis of arguments and conclusions. In this way, the readers are invited to form their own opinions, and to freely test statements and challenge findings on their own accord. A second aspect of this is to keep the study open to readers with various disciplinary backgrounds and fields of expertise: For what is basic or irrelevant to reader A might be food for reader B. Third, when dealing with music, it is important to avoid argumentation based on personal taste. Getting too personal at best leads to reduction, at its worst - it turns research into music journalism. One way of avoiding this is to let informants do the musical evaluation.

Priority to insider opinions and reflections:
It is regarded as a primary aim of *Rock in the Reservation* to describe the object of study through the stories and views of the members of the Leningrad rock community. Thus, fieldwork interviews and conversations, local writings and the songs of Rock Club bands, constitute the primary material. Of course, a community is made up by individuals with variuos, sometimes conflicting opinions. In the application of theoretic and analytic models, precedence must therefore be given to exposing complexity and variety. Insider opinions may be challenged, questioned, and tested, but never muted.

With its focus from below, *Rock in the Reservation* challenges common notions made by earlier sociological approaches which take their points of departure in macropolitics. Such works have a tendency to describe alternative cultural practices as united for a common cause, which they frequently associate with an agenda of dissent. Unfortunately, the ghosts of crude binary models from the cold-war era are still allowed to haunt many western academic works on the Soviet Union.

Evidently, not all academic research projects see their main arguments reflected in the realities of contemporary international developments. I would have been most indebted were it not for the frightening and macabre nature of the developments concerned. While conducting the research for this book I have witnessed how the discourse of complex international politics has been reduced to a language of primitive binaries, to a question of 'good' versus 'evil'. I have witnessed the very same binary models of oppression and resistance countered in this study being used as arguments for starting a war, bombing civilians, and torturing prisoners. Paradoxically, after consistently and appropriately criticising Soviet ideology for its foundation on crude binaries, western democracies (not to mention our corporate pseudo-democracies) are themselves growing alarmingly prone to ideological reductionism. In the shadow of calls to be either for or against 'evil' or 'terrorism', notions of complexity and relativity are sacrificed together with the very notion of differentiated analysis. Sound criticism and legal opposition suffer. It is my hope that, by focusing on the discrepancy between how we westerners choose to see others and how they choose to see themselves, this study can make a tiny contribution to a re-diversification of the past. With these humble wishes, let me bid you welcome to a 'cultural reservation' in an 'Empire of Evil'.

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. The aims of this study

This study is in many ways the logical progression of the work that began with my MA thesis (Steinholt 1996).[1] The MA thesis highlighted some of the limitations involved in uni-disciplinary approaches to popular music studies, as well as the reductionism involved in focusing on political motifs in the study of rock songs. Consequently, in the present study, an interdisciplinary approach is regarded as a fundamental premise. Another methodological premise has been the avoidance of potentially reductionist analytic perspectives. This means that *Rock in the Reservation* (*RiR*) seeks not only to contribute to a new and more nuanced understanding of rock music in Soviet Russia, but also to the development of interdisciplinary approaches to popular music and its cultural environments.

Until 1985, the Leningrad Rock Club (henceforth: LRC) represented a unique exception as an official rock organisation. It therefore had a major influence on the formation of what became known as Russian rock, which became tremendously popular in the Soviet Union during latter half of the 1980s. On one level this study aims to explain why and how a rock club was able to organise itself in Leningrad, and to examine and describe the conditions under which rock was practised. On another level it seeks to identify specific Russian musical and lyrical characteristics in the local adaptation of rock. The primary object of research object for *RiR* is the rock music community centred around the LRC, and its songs. The focal period of study is predominantly that before perestroika, from the LRC's foundation in March 1981 until 1986, when the Club's council split over a dispute between two generations of members.

1.2. Organisation of the book

1.2.1. Introductory part

Rock in the Reservation is organised into four main parts. The Foreword and Chapters 1 and 2 constitute the introductory section, which explains the study's aims and main theoretical basis. Chapter 2 is divided into a presentation of key theoretical concepts and an introduction to the practical approach of interdisciplinary music analysis. These initial presentations of theory and method are continued and developed in the relevant Chapters, 6, 7 and 8 respectively. The current state of research in the field is similarly spread between general theoretical approaches, relating to music, performance, communication and interpretation in Chapter 2; studies of rock music in the Soviet Union (and to some extent: eastern Europe) in Chapter 6; and the relationship between music and lyrics in Chapter 7.

1. The now abandoned Norwegian degree Candidatus Philologiae roughly corresponds to a Masters degree plus two semesters.

1.2.2. Part two: Socio-cultural context

The second part consists of Chapters 3, 4 and 5, which are devoted to the socio-cultural context of Leningrad rock. Chapter 3 deals with the historic development of popular music communities and rock music in Leningrad and Soviet Russia from the late 1950s until the foundation of the LRC in 1981. The historical survey seeks to explain the major tendencies in the relationship between rock musicians, music fans and the cultural establishment, and the shifts in cultural policies and creative strategies. The main part of Chapter 4 is devoted to the LRC, its history, organisation and procedures. A smaller part covers the rock fanzine Roksi and the AnTrop recording studio, which were respectively partly and wholly independent of the LRC. In Chapter 5, attention focuses on the biographies of the bands and songwriters, whose songs have been selected for analyses.

1.2.3. Part three: Investigation of problem areas

Initial accounts of the socio-cultural context of Leningrad rock in 1981-86 serve as background for a more thorough discussion of two significant problem areas. The first half of this third part, Chapter 6, considers the relationship between this study and earlier works in the field, makes a critical evaluation of counterculture approaches, and presents a more sophisticated model for explaining the Leningrad rock community's complex relationship with the various incarnations of Soviet power. Chapter 7 discusses the role of song lyrics from the point of view respectively of western academic research, and of insiders from the Leningrad rock environment, possibly identifying special characteristics of Russian rock lyrics, as well as ideas about how they function.

1.2.4. Part four: Song analyses

Chapter 8 contains the analyses, which constitute the most extensive part of the study. The practical and methodological approach to each level of the song analyses is extensively described in the chapter's introduction. The analyses of the four songs follow in 8.2 to 8.5, each beginning with an informant-based analysis of musical features and proceeding to a literary analysis of the lyrics.

1.2.5. Conclusions, additional resources and appendices

A general summary of the study's findings and a review of the song analyses are presented in Subchapters 9.1 and 9.2 respectively, while 9.3 contains an overview of the development of Leningrad rock. The book includes a 99-track compact disc, the *RiR cd*, which contains the four songs analysed and extracts from songs referred to by the informants (IOCM) and by myself during the lyrical analyses (LCM).[2] The full contents of the cd are listed in Appendix 1. Appendix 2 contains notation of the first verse and chorus, and a table of 'musical events in time' for each of the four songs. These may help the reader follow the discussion of musical features. Original and transliterated lyrics for the songs analysed are found in Appendix 3. Seven full-length interviews conducted for this study are published on the study's website (http://www.hf.uib.no/i/russisk/steinholt/rir_files.html). The interviewees are: Mikhail Borzykin, Anatolii Gunitskii, Andrei Burlaka, N.O.M.zhir (Andrei Kagadeev and Nikolai Kopeikin), Nikolai Vasin, Mikhail Feinshtein-Vasil'ev, and Andrei Tropillo.

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2. IOCM: Interobjective Comparison Material see 2.2.3, page 11. LCM: Lyrical Comparison Material, see 2.2.4, page 13.

1.2.6. Some notes on gender

The questions to which I have tried find answers in my study do not include the problem of gender. However, this choice is not meant to question the relevance of such an approach to rock in Russia or Leningrad. As earlier works in the field have observed, male dominance was nearly absolute in Leningrad rock performance from its very beginnings until the early 1990s. This tendency has changed only during the past decade with the most recent rock generation. The purpose of these brief notes is to provide the reader with some basic notions of Leningrad rock in relation to gender.

In Leningrad, rock authenticity has traditionally been associated with the absence of women on stage. When Zoopark included a male-female backing vocal group in their line-up for the 1986 LRC festival, the band was immediately accused by rock purists of flirting with the pop mainstream (*estrada*). Put in extreme terms, the prevailing dichotomy may be described as follows: Rock is linked to authenticity, poetry and masculinity, while estrada is associated with inauthenticity, banal love songs and femininity. This said, Leningrad rock songs were on the whole less infested with blatant male chauvinism than many western rock styles.

While men have concentrated their efforts on the creative and artistic level, women have been left with the far less glamorous tasks of organisational work. With the notable exception of male KGB curators and the LRC president, this is evident on the official level of Rock Club bureaucracy, as well as on the level of voluntary assistance, e.g. in the management and support of bands. With some well-justified cynicism, it could be said that in the Leningrad Rock Club, women would prepare the playground where the boys could unfold themselves, then retreat to cheer from the sidelines.

Chapter 2 The 'text-in-context': Theoretical approach

2.1. Key concepts

2.1.1. Introduction

To summarise very briefly, it could be said that the first years of Popular Music Studies have been characterised in principle by a polarisation between studies of text, involving Musicology and Literary Studies, and studies of context, conducted by researchers from the social sciences. Elements of this polarisation can still be observed in certain academic environments which prefer either to approach 'music as music,' without considering its relations to social realities, or indulge in ahistorical studies of cultural communities, while entirely ignoring music as cultural object. Fortunately, such approaches no longer constitute the main trends in research into popular music. The more than 400 papers presented at the two most recent international conferences of the IASPM indicate that fresh and ongoing studies utilise a large variety of interdisciplinary 'text-in-context' approaches to popular music and its cultural environments.[3] These works seek in various ways to establish a balance between what musicologist Philip Tagg has termed 'sterile formalism', on the one hand, and an 'unbridled application' of hermeneutics on the other (Walser 1993: 38).

In the following, certain key concepts essential to a balanced interdisciplinary 'text-in-context' approach to popular music will be presented, and their use in this study explained.

2.1.2. Music as performance and recorded medium

Social anthropologist Richard Bauman defines *performance* as follows: '[A]n aesthetically marked and heightened mode of communication, framed in a special way and put on display for an audience' (Bauman 1992: 41). Unlike speech performances, rock and other musical performances belong to the realm of cultural performance. They are planned events, restricted in time and place. Since it relies on the presence and interaction of an audience, a rock concert is a *coordinated public occasion* and a *heightened occasion* insofar as it produces an atmosphere of mutual enjoyment between audience and performers. Bauman regards performance as an active type or mode of communicative behaviour, in contrast to models or representations of such action. The tensions between playscript and performed play or between an item of folklore and its actual use are also highly relevant for music, where notation exemplifies the most obvious form of constructed representation. Since its mode of expression is heavily based on rhythm, sound-qualities, sound effects and noise, rock's musical code can only partly be represented by notation.[4] The problems of discrepancy between performances and their fixed representations are reflected in Mikhail Bakhtin's distinction between sentence and utterance, where the former is seen as representing the neutral code of an utterance, separated from its contextual modes of

3. The 11th and 12th conferences of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music (IASPM) were held in 2001 at Turun Yliopisto, Turku, and in 2003 at McGill University, Montréal, respectively.
4. For a discussion of advanced rock notation, see Walser (1993: 84 ff.)

signification (Bakhtin 1986: 82). Just as a sentence in this meaning of a code accounts mainly for what is technically said, notation accounts mainly for what is technically played. In contrast, a performed utterance or a performed song actively draws on context in its production of meaning.

Unlike sheet music, which dominated popular music before the sophistication of recording technology and the availability of domestic hi-fi systems, the principal commodity of the rock performance is the studio recording distributed on disc. A specially mediated performance of its own, the studio recording is an idealised representation of songs. Many rock recordings imitate performance to a certain extent, and a performed song and its recorded representation are usually relatively close. A recorded song is technically the same every time it is played, even if the listening medium, context and conditions vary. In a live concert, however, the song is freed of its static representation and two versions of it will never be identical. Therein lies what Bauman terms the *emergent quality* of performance: Every performance has the potential of adding something new. However, since an in-depth analysis of a performance as it happens is virtually impossible, access to recordings is in most cases a prerequisite for the study of performed songs.

2.1.3. Musical communication, metacommunication and speech about music

Music understood as a form of cultural performance in Bauman's sense of the term implies that it is a heightened mode of communication. Discussing music and communication, ethnomusicologist Steven Feld sees considerable limitations in semiotic approaches that presuppose an autonomous material level of musical text (e.g. Nattiez 1975). Feld defines communication as follows: 'Communication is a socially interactive and intersubjective process of reality construction through message production and interpretation' (Feld 1994: 79). He argues that the listening context plays a decisive role in the creation of musical meaning, and that music culture is based on communication on two levels: Musical communication and communication about music. He describes those levels as follows:

> Musical communication is a primary modelling system, to use John Blacking's (1981b) phrase, with unique and irreducible symbolic properties. These must be experienced and approached in their own right and, as Seeger said, empirically and conceptually freed from any notion that they simply translate or copy the speech mode. At the same time, speech about music clearly constitutes a source of parallel or exploratory information about metaphoric process, discourse, interpretive moves, and conceptual ideas or theories about sound (Feld, 1994: 94).[5]

Bauman's theory of performance reflects this role of musical communication by stating that all performances entail a dimension of metacommunication. It establishes a special interpretive frame for the understanding of enacted communication: '[T]he act of communication is put on display, objectified, lifted out to a degree from its contextual surroundings, and opened up to scrutiny by an audience' (Bauman 1992: 44). Performance thus becomes a mode of expression in its own right. It is reflexive, as opposed to reflective. As signification about signification it is *formally reflexive*, Bauman argues, built on a self-conscious manipulation of the formal structures of communication. Particularly relevant to rock is what Bauman terms the *social-psychological reflexivity* of performance, the performer's self-staging. In rock performances such self-staging can occur on several

5. In the RiR bibliography John Blacking's work is listed as 'Blacking 1981.' Feld refers here to musicologist Charles Seeger (1886-1979) a pioneer of American Musicology and Ethnomusicology.

levels. In addition to carefully structured self-images, rock singers frequently impersonate the protagonist of their songs, thus expanding the metacultural discourse to the interplay between culture, self and signification. Performance, then, is not merely a special mode of language use, but itself a reflection on and an implementation of communicative processes. It invites the listener to participate in these reflections and implementations. These observations apply also to recordings, with the notable absence of immediacy and emergent quality.

In their 1990 article on poetics and performance, Richard Bauman and his anthropologist colleague Charles Briggs describe the relation between musical communication and communication about music.[6]

> A given performance is tied to a number of speech events that precede and succeed it (past performances, readings of texts, negotiations, rehearsals, gossip, reports, critiques, challenges, subsequent performances, and the like). An adequate analysis of a single performance thus requires sensitive ethnographic study of how its form and meaning index a broad range of discourse types, some of which are not framed as performance (Bauman and Briggs 1990: 60-61).

For Feld this leads to the conclusion that the listener holds a key position in the study of music and music communities, since speech about music 'locates emergent processes of making meanings, and [since] it is as social engagement and accomplishment that talk must be studied' (Feld 1994: 93). Whatever their level of musical knowledge, people apply lexical and discourse metaphors in their talk about music, discussing what the music is like and unlike. This, Feld argues, recognises both that musical and verbal modes are non-translatable and that what music communicates is characterised by multiplicity and generality. Thus, Feld concludes, approaches which reduce musical communication to a question of how fully a listener receives a composer's or performer's intentions, are intrinsically unbalanced: '[M]usic's major messages are general and multileveled and concern expressive ideology and value, identity and character, and coherence of world sense' (Feld 1994: 94).

In rock this multiplicity and generality of musical communication frequently intensifies the music's persuasive qualities. Rock performance is often characterised by a strong appeal to the audience, an appeal with musically and theatrically kinetic aspects, which serve to convince the listeners and include them in the performance. On this level, the rock performance has obvious rhetorical qualities, a strong element of self-staging and a persuasive dimension. These qualities are closely connected to insider notions of rock's alleged 'authenticity' as opposed to the corresponding 'inauthenticity' and 'artificiality' of pop music.[7]

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6. Bauman and Briggs' approach shows significant similarities to Mikhail Bakhtin's perspective in his theory of speech genres (Bakhtin 1986). See 8.1.1, page 113.
7. The discussion of rock music in terms of authenticity has received, in a line of popular music studies during the 1990s, arguably more than its relevant share of attention. The two following quotes offer a definition of the concept: 'Authenticity is what is left in popular music when you have subtracted the commercial aspect. The essential contradiction between commercialism and authenticity in rock expresses itself in the music, in its production and its reception' (Michelsen 1993: 59). 'By claiming authenticity you insist that you are doing something "that matters." By avoiding the label of authenticity you are saying that it is not important whether you are doing anything that matters - but it can be important in another way' (Gudmundsson 1999: 57).

2.1.4. Musical interpretation

Turning to the role of the listener in musical communication, how does he or she engage in interaction with the sound object? Steven Feld (1994: 85-89) argues that the listener negotiates musical meaning through juxtaposing the new musical experience with a personal listening biography, a dynamic, constantly evolving background knowledge, a modified sum of previous listening experiences. This process is conducted more or less consciously through a series of interpretive moves. While listening, locational interpretive moves subjectively relate the new sound object to similar and dissimilar listening experiences. Categorical moves relate the sound object to a class of things; by associational moves it is related to visual, musical or verbal imagery; reflective moves represent a continuation of the associational, bringing in personal experiences, memories, or social and political relations. Finally, evaluative moves can be made, by which the listener measures the item according to personal taste and aesthetic preferences. At the other end of this communication process, the music can direct the listener's interpretive attention by way of 'boundaries' or 'frames,' related to qualities like expressive ideology, identity or coherence (Feld 1994: 90-91).

One major advantage with Feld's theory of musical interpretation is that it avoids reducing musical meaning to something that demands previous knowledge. Whether an individual listening biography includes previous knowledge of a musical style or not, the process of interpretation entails making meaning of the sound object, even when the new experience is dismissed as irrelevant. The listener need not necessarily master an *a priori* semiotic code in order to find music meaningful or receive pleasure from it. Simultaneously, the theory does not dismiss the significance of specialised listening biographies which can serve to heighten the awareness of meaningful generic features.

2.1.5. Performance contextualisation, entextualisation and recontextualisation

Performance approaches have been criticised both for overemphasising text and ignoring context and for the opposite. An excessively text-centred analysis runs the danger of overlooking crucial contextual links and factors that contribute to the meaning of the performance. With reference to Baudrillard (1981), Feld declares:

> The musical object is never isolated, any more than its listeners or producers are. Its position is doubly social; the object exists through a code, and through processes of coding and de-coding. These processes are neither pure nor autonomous; neither is encountered at a strictly physiological level of experience, no matter how perceptual or physical the implication of the label one applies to them (Feld 1994: 85).

Another extreme is reached in studies that become so absorbed with context that the performance itself disappears from view. Bauman and Briggs (1990: 68) also warn of the problem of false objectivity that often ensues from positivistic definitions of context. They note that when a researcher regards context as a 'set of discourse-external conditions' which exist independently from the performance, he or she decides what aspects should be included in its study. Bauman and Briggs suggest that a balance between the textual and contextual aspects of performance be found by studying the *contextual cues* of the performance. This involves studying how a text emerges in a context (*contextualisation*); the process in which the performance's discourse is rendered extractable (*entextualisation*); and how different performances of the same text involve processes of *decontextualisation* and *recontextualisation*.

In musical performances, then, musicians contextualise a new text through their performance. The listener entextualises the musical performance by interpreting it. Furthermore, when a text is removed from its original context, it takes with it a part of its history. Any repetition of the performance represents a decontextualisation and recontextualisation of the former performance. A listener can also entextualise the musical performance with a view to making his or her version of it, which implies decontextualising and recontextualising it. By examining how the performance develops in the cause of such processes, Bauman and Briggs argue, it becomes possible to identify and study 'the textual details that illuminate the manner in which participants are collectively constructing the world around them' (Bauman and Briggs, 1990: 69).

2.1.6. Interdisciplinarity and musicology

The focus on the listener combined with 'text-in-context' approaches are well suited to Ethnomusicology and Anthropology, whose object of study is music communities. In Musicology, by contrast, the musical text and musical code have traditionally been regarded as the primary objects of study. However, in recent years the field of musicology has increasingly turned towards context-oriented approaches. While musicologists are now more prepared to transcend the traditional boundaries of their discipline, scholars of other disciplines appear to find musicological approaches much less accessible. The British musicologist Allan F. Moore has attempted to lower the threshold of access to musicology by developing new musicological concepts and methods better suited to the research of rock music (Moore 1993). However, determined to make his musicology of rock accessible to non-musicologists, Moore has met with criticism from his own ranks for reducing musical complexity. Meanwhile, non-musicologists find themselves confronted by Moore's reluctance to incorporate the study of lyrics and social context into his method.

A different approach has been proposed by Philip Tagg, a British musicologist and pioneer of Popular Music Studies. Tagg has developed a method which also enables non-musicologists to consider musical meaning. Tagg's early works (Tagg 2000a, 2000b)[8] have been criticised for their 'hard science' rigidity. His initial focus on *musemes* (musical equivalents to phonemes, i.e. minimal units of musical meaning) has also been regarded by many as controversial. However, by including popular listeners as informants in his studies and analysing their *extramusical* and *intramusical* associations to a musical piece, Tagg manages to open his analyses to contextual features.[9] This also offers him the opportunity to consider the listeners' speech about music. Over the years, by investigating the manner in which his informants describe music, Tagg has been able to develop, diversify and modify his initially quite rigid concepts. This has led him in the direction of more dynamic interdisciplinary studies of musical gestures and their meaning (Tagg and Clarida 2003). Thus, while Philip Tagg's semiotics of music does not abandon the concept of musical code, it has come to offer a democratic and flexible approach to the study of popular music. These qualities make the method suitable for the current research project. Since, unlike the vast majority of musicological approaches, Tagg's method explicitly invites non-musicologists to have a go at it, I have chosen his approach at an early stage in my research. Thus, a discussion of potential alternative musicological approaches will have to wait for another occasion.

8. Recently published as books, Tagg (2000a) is referred to in other sources as Tagg (1979), and Tagg (2000b) as Tagg (1981).
9. The concepts of extra- and intramusical association are explained in 2.2.3, page 11 ff.

2.2. The *RiR* approach

2.2.1. An interdisciplinary 'matreshka doll'

In my attempt to identify aspects of 'Russianness' in LRC rock of the early 1980s, I wish to examine how rock has been recontextualised in Leningrad, in other words: how rock has changed in the process of becoming 'Russian'. My approach can be divided into three stages, where a study of the socio-cultural context serves as a framework for musical analyses, which together then provide a context for the lyrical analyses. A suitable metaphor would be a three-piece chinese box, or maybe more fittingly a matreshka doll, whose units all share a common design. In order to minimise the risk of false objectivity, the study of socio-cultural context is based on insider sources and supported by fieldwork interviews. Furthermore, the musical analyses are conducted by way of a panel of informant listeners, and each level of analysis is related to the other two. In the following, each level will be discussed in greater detail and related to the key concepts explained above.

2.2.2. Speaking about music: Socio-cultural context

In addition to a focus on insider discourse, it is important for this study to retain a historical perspective in accounting for the socio-cultural context. The legacy of ahistoric anthropology has considerably limited the argument of several previous studies in this field.[10] Attempts to explain the role and function of Russian rock in the perestroika years require an understanding of the changing conditions and official policies surrounding beat and rock music in the preceding two decades. Thus, while concentrating on the first five years of the Leningrad Rock Club, this study must consider rock's continuous development in the city since the mid-1960s.

While retaining a historical perspective, this study investigates the Leningrad discourse on rock, in other words: the rock environment's speech about music, during the first half of the 1980s on a socio-cultural level. The primary sources for this investigation are biographies, memoirs, handbooks and various collected material published since the early 1990s; the rock fanzine Roksi, published at irregular intervals during the focal period of the study; and the official LRC website. These sources have also provided background material for my fieldwork, which has been conducted on three levels: conversations, interviews and observation.

The conversations served two main purposes. First, they allowed a discussion of the study's key issues, suggesting a general outline of potential strategies and perspectives, background for interview planning, and current evaluation of the study from the point of view of the insiders. Second, conversations helped find and select candidates for interviews, especially as it became apparent that the rock environment was still split to a certain extent, partly as a result of internal conflicts originating in the mid-1980s. Eventually, one main contact was established within each 'camp', who provided interviewees representing both sides. As far as was practically possible, extensive conversations with interviewees before the actual interview were avoided. Some conversations were initially intended as formal interviews, but failed, in some cases because the interviewee preferred a less formal mode of conversation. A few interviews failed through being unsuitable, for various reasons, for publication. Unlike quotations from interviews, citations from conversations have been reduced to a minimum.

10. See my comments on 'ahistoric anthropology' in 6.1.2, page 84.

The initial goal was to conduct interviews with one band member from each of the four bands selected for this study, and with rock journalists, sound engineers and members of the LRC council. For various reasons, band members were the least readily available, and only two interviews, with one songwriter and one musician, are among the eight interviews eventually conducted.[11] Seven of the interviews were found suitable for publishing in English translation on this study's website. Kvale (1996) served as a handbook in qualitative interviewing. However, the small number of interviews necessitated a more individual approach to each interviewee. The first four interviews were conducted without recording equipment. Three of these four interviews were subsequently reviewed and corrected by the interviewees, and edited accordingly. With the availability of recording equipment, the interview technique developed from a set of concrete questions to allowing the interviewee to speak more freely on a set of key topics. This resulted in broader and more extensive responses and gave clearer ideas about which issues each interviewee considered important.

One of the purposes of the observation part of the fieldwork was to gain the best possible overview of the St Petersburg rock scene today. A total of fifty-four live performances were attended, including one performance by the current members of Akvarium, and two by Televizor. Performers who have been active since the early 1980s were seen and heard as well as bands of younger generations, and the concerts provided rich opportunities for conversations and discussions with the audiences, performers and concert organisers. Of course, the first-hand impressions provided by these performances were fifteen to twenty years late, when compared to the focal period of the study. As such, they offered only very limited possibilities for comparison. However, the observations were also made with a view to future works on the St. Petersburg music scene. One project which has benefited from this is Austrian film-maker Elisabeth Guggenberger's forthcoming cinema documentary on Russian rock.

2.2.3. The second level of analysis: Music

In turning from the socio-cultural context to the rock songs, from context to 'text-in-context,' the interdisciplinary approach is confronted by my own insufficient musicological schooling. Fortunately, however, this does not leave me devoid of any and all kinds of musical knowledge. Traditional musicology has had a tendency to focus on constructional competence and authorial intention in its study of musical meaning, and those are not necessarily the most central aspects for this study:

> [I]t is sometimes necessary to jettison traditional 'muso' understanding of musical structure because what the builder or architect may need to know about your house is not necessarily what is most important to you when you live in it (Tagg 1999: 23).

11. Limitations in band member interviews can be summed up as follows. Akvarium: Two of the 1982 members are dead, one refuses to speak about his involvement with the band, while the band leader and songwriter has an extremely tight schedule. The bass player, who occasionally performed with both Zoopark and Kino as well, was interviewed. Zoopark: Two of the original members including songwriter Naumenko are dead, another was in prison at the time of the fieldwork, and the fourth has left St Petersburg. Conversations were made with friends of Naumenko and one of his biographers. Kino: Songwriter Tsui is dead and the rest of the band's new line-up was just emerging by the time the 1984 album was recorded. A conversation with Tsui's widow Marianna, who managed the band at the time, did not take the form of a full interview. Televizor's songwriter was interviewed, and also notably sound engineer Tropillo, who worked with all four bands at different stages.

Having defined musical competence as knowledge, Tagg & Clarida (2003: 9) distinguish between music as knowledge (knowledge *in* music), with the two variants constructional and receptional competence; and metamusical knowledge (knowledge *about* music), with the two variants metatextual and metacontextual discourse. None of these knowledge types exclude the other. Constructional competence (creating, originating, producing, composing, arranging or performing music) is taught at conservatories and music colleges, but such knowledge can also be based on popular competence alone. Receptional competence (recalling, recognising, distinguishing between musical sounds, their culturally specific connotations and social functions), is a popular competence, mainly acquired through an individual and social relationship with music and listening practices. The realm of musicology departments and music academies is metatextual discourse: 'music theory', music analysis, and the identification and naming of elements and patterns of musical structure. Finally, metacontextual discourse (explaining relationships between musical practices, culture and society) is the home ground of social sciences, literature and media studies, and popular music studies, and includes approaches from semiotics, acoustics, business studies, psychology, sociology, anthropology, and cultural studies.

This way of understanding musical knowledge is encouraging from the point of view of this study. It already suggests that it is possible to include a relatively advanced discussion and analysis of several musical features, provided that the researcher is prepared to consult people who hold the competence he or she lacks. In my case, a number of amateur musicians, experienced in various rock styles, and an expert musicologist familiar with rock, would make a good start.

LRC rock was, like most rock music, essentially an amateur musical form. Formally schooled musicians constituted a minority in the Leningrad rock environment. Thus, the constructional and receptional competences employed were largely of the popular kind. On the basis of the key concepts presented in subchapter 2.1 above, one might make two assumptions. First, that musicians through processes of interpretive moves, entextualise existing musical styles in order to recontextualise them. Second, that they combine and add to these to create new styles for local contextualisation. Consequently popular receptional competence can be applied as an analytic tool by utilising the listening biographies of a group of listeners. Admittedly, such an approach will be able to account for musical meaning only partly. On the other hand it should offer a sufficient basis for considering how the LRC bands use and combine western musical styles, and how and to what extent their recontextualisation of rock styles creates particular local styles.

In the third edition of his article *Introductory notes to the Semiotics of Music* (1999), musicologist Philip Tagg outlines and refines a method for analysing music in its societal context. He also runs a seminar for non-musicologists based on this method, which he explains in the paper *Music analysis for 'non-musos'* (Tagg 2001: 9-14). Recordings of the songs selected as objects for analysis are distributed to a panel of informants, who listen to them and report back their associations. Musicians with experience in performing similar musical styles can draw on their technical memory as performers, which make them valuable as informants. It may also be beneficial to include players of different instruments among the respondents, as musicians tend to focus on the instruments they play themselves. The survey is conducted on two levels, an *intersubjective* and an *interobjective*, which can be defined as follows:

> If an analytical approach establishing consistency of response to the same piece of music played to different listeners is called intersubjective, then an interobjective approach is one which establishes consistency of structure between different pieces of music (Tagg 1999: 35)

The intersubjective part of the responses focuses on the listeners' paramusical field of association and comparison (PMFA/PMFC), concerning aspects of a song's atmosphere to more specifically associated objects or scenes. It gives the researcher a good idea of how the particular participating listeners respond to particular musical pieces in a particular time and socio-cultural context. It thus provides information on the basic communication process, enabling the researcher to posit hypotheses about the intended message of the song. The interobjective part of the responses concerns associations to other songs, artists, instruments and composers. The sum of these responses makes it possible for the researcher to establish a body of structurally similar musical works, Interobjective Comparison Material (IOCM), which enables a study of the song's musical self-referentiality. Subsequently, by examining and comparing the various pieces of IOCM, structural similarities and shared paramusical expression can be identified (Tagg 1999: 33-37).

While music might well be meaningful for a listener with no initial knowledge of its cultural field, the information generated by such listeners will be of little value to a 'text-in-context' analysis. The interobjective comparison should therefore be kept within the realm of a given intramusical and sociomusical context, and the informants should have knowledge and experience of this context. A study concerned with rock music, then, should preferably chose its informants from rock audiences. By employing amateur musicians as respondents the study can also benefit from their tactile memory.

Tagg's method offers an opportunity for the non-musicologist to include musical analyses in diverse research into musical communities and practices. It may be adapted to suit various approaches, made to serve a variety of analytic aims, and the amount of work required need not be disproportionate. For researchers and readers who do not master notation, graphic representations of musical events in time and by instrument can supply or replace it. However, as Tagg stresses, the 'non-muso' approach reaches its limits when it comes to denoting tonal structures, such as harmony, key, and modality. To be able to address such questions, Tagg recommends that the researcher consult musicologists.

Since its music analyses deal primarily with the question of the recontextualisation of rock styles in a Russian context, this study does not apply Tagg's method to the full extent of its capacities. It does not aspire to account fully for musical meaning. A closer investigation into musical meaning in Russian rock songs would have to be conducted using larger panels of informants, preferably both Russian and western, with more emphasis on the respective panels' paramusical fields of association. This, however, is beyond the capacity of this book.[12] The practical application of Tagg's method is explained in greater detail in Subchapter 8.1.

2.2.4. The third level of analysis: Lyrics

The lyrics will be subject to close readings, initially from within the confines established by an analysis of socio-cultural context and music respectively. The lyrics will be analysed in terms of formal structure; of thematics, characters and motifs; and of their use of language, expressions and metaphors. The emphasis will be on opening up the text and revealing its potential spectrum of meaning. In the same way, the main aim of the lyric analyses is to investigate how the lyrics relate to western rock lyrics and to the Russian literary tradition respectively. The IOCM of the musical analyses is taken as the point of

12. For comparison, Tagg and Clarida (2003) analyse ten 30-second pieces of film and television music, employing from 150-650 respondents. The book is 898 pages and took ten years to write.

departure in the search for a lyrical comparison material (LCM) for each song analysed. Western songs which correspond to the Russian songs on both musical and stylistic levels, as well as the lyrical, will be given preference. Finally, findings from the lyrical level of analysis will be discussed in relation to the socio-cultural and musical levels. For a more detailed account of the practical approach to the analysis of song lyrics, see Subchapter 8.1.

Chapter 3 Before the Rock Club: A historical survey

3.1. Introduction

3.1.1. Sources

A comprehensive history of rock music in Leningrad or the USSR in the 1950s - 1970s has yet to be written, and such a work will inevitably face a number of major obstacles, a few of which are discussed below. This short survey is based on a variety of sources, primarily Russian. Among the western sources, the vast information compiled by Ryback (1990) has proven useful, although the work is, quite understandably, imprecise due to its enormous scope (covering eastern Europe and the USSR from the 1950s to the 1980s). Information in Ryback which is not confirmed, at least in part, by other sources is thus not included. In its coverage of popular culture in general, Stites (1992) provides and confirms material on the 1950s and the *stiliagi*.[13] A more detailed guide to *stiliaga* life is Slavkin (1996), in part a play, in part a documentary, as well as a collection of *stiliaga* lore.

Alongside the series of articles by Rokotov (1985), Troitsky (1987) covers the beat scene in Moscow during the mid-to-late 1960s, but information on the scene in Leningrad during the same period is scarce. By combining information from Rekshan (1999) with more sporadic accounts from Romanov (2001), Smirnov (1999), and the primary source on band biographies, Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991), I have attempted to fill in the gaps. However, this attempt would be incomplete without the rich and enthusiastic lecture submitted by interviewee Nikolai Vasin (in Steinholt 2002a). Of the western sources, Barrett and Hansen (1993) offers some supporting information and Yoffe (1991) an extensive account of Soviet hippies.

The same sources (not including Rokotov, Troitsky and Yoffe) provide, along with Rybin and Startsev (2000), richer material on Leningrad rock in the 1970s. The interviews with Mikhail Feinshtein-Vasil'ev (in Steinholt 2002b) and, not least, Andrei Tropillo (in Steinholt 2002c) add, among other things, invaluable insight into the relationship between rock and the *estrada*, and of *magnitizdat* and concert staging respectively.[14] The main sources on the events at Spring Rhythms in 1980 are Romanov (2001) and Smirnov (1999).

3.1.2. Limitations, subjectivity and the 'star perspective'

It is beyond the bounds of this study to give an exhaustive account of the development of rock in the variety of scenes that eventually emerged across the Soviet Union. In my presentation I concentrate on Moscow and Leningrad until the early 1970s. From then on, as the Leningrad rock scene develops, I focus more narrowly on Leningrad bands.

To give a well-balanced and objective account of the early history of rock music in Russia is no straightforward task. There is little or no access to recordings, and although a considerable proportion of urban youth from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s were affected by Beatlemania, those active in local music production and concert organising were

13. *Stiliagi*: see 3.2.2, page 17 ff.
14. *Estrada*: Collective term denoting officially approved popular music in the Soviet Union. *Magnitizdat*: see 3.4.8, page 29 ff.

relatively few and divided into small groups, between which interaction was initially limited and sporadic. Beat music was not recognised by the Soviet cultural authorities as 'proper' culture, and thus gained virtually no access to public media or events. It remained at a low level, with 'fame' seldom extending beyond a local network of enthusiasts.

It follows from this that attempts at historical overviews vary considerably depending on the sources. Neither written sources nor this study's interviewees offer more than purely subjective estimates of the size, scale and importance of rock and beat music production and consumption among 1960s Soviet youth. However, there is no doubt that in the major cities, most notably among students in Moscow and Leningrad, the beat-craze was alive and visible.

During the 1970s, some of the most creative and determined groupings of rock enthusiasts established contacts with enthusiasts in other cities. What started out as groups of friends with a common interest in music developed into more solid networks organising home concerts and occasional gigs at bigger venues. Yet, it is difficult to judge which scenes and bands were the most important at the time. Akvarium for instance, a band founded in the early 1970s that gained all-Union fame in the 1980s, may well have been unique in their persistence. In their early years, however, they were merely examples of a breed of romantically inclined teenagers, that kept dreaming, writing songs and dragging instruments around to perform for friends and acquaintances. Reading the success stories of the Russian rock stars, then, does not tell the whole story.

On the other hand, the endurance of Akvarium and their creative network earned them a place at the centre of the developing Leningrad rock scene. They were among the first to join the Leningrad Rock Club and they campaigned for others to follow, which helped many musicians overcome their initial suspicion. Eventually, those who remained outside the Rock Club in order to preserve their creative independence were the ones who were marginalised, while the leading LRC members gained the opportunity to build a career.

In reading the following account it is important to bear in mind that the band names mentioned include anything from widely known pop ensembles to rock bands that were unknown to wider contemporary audiences. Akvarium is included in the account, especially in connection with the events of 1980, but it will be dealt with in more detail below as one of the four bands selected for closer study .[15]

3.2. The 1950s

3.2.1. Jazz and rock

Rock-'n'-Roll first came to Russia as occasional numbers in the repertoires of jazz bands. Rock bands did not emerge until well into the 1960s and I shall here restrict myself to give a summary of the most important aspects of the 1950s as background to the beat era. With Khrushchev's thaw ex-convicts returned home from the camps and saxophone players returned to jazz bands. Saxophones had been banned from dance bands since 1946 and jazz music was formally legalised again only in 1955.[16] Bearing in mind that Brezhnev expressed concern about the impact of The Beatles and other 'jazz kings' as late as 1969, it is not surprising that rock got no immediate following as a style of its own. Moral

15. See 5.2, page 60 ff.
16. For sources on jazz in the USSR, see Starr (1983), Stites (1992), and the interviews with Aleksei Kozlov in Barrett and Hansen (1993).

indignation in the 1950s was triggered first and foremost by jazz and dance fashions. Khrushchev expressed his disgust for 'indecent wriggling of certain parts of the anatomy'. Still unfamiliar with the rhythm and loudness of rock music, the authorities were worried about indecent dances, above all the twist.

3.2.2. The quest for decent dances

Not since the RAPM attacked the foxtrot and accused the tango of 'impotence' in the early 1930s had a new dance caused so much furore in the USSR as the twist.[17] Ironically the cause of moral panic was not the excessive body contact between the dance partners, but precisely the opposite: dancing apart. Music patrols of Komsomol activists would check dance halls and expel couples who danced apart, along with the outrageously dressed *stiliagi* (see below), who risked having their ties and forelocks cut off and their tight trouser-legs ripped. In order to contain the twist craze, several attempts were made by Soviet and east-European composers to construct decent alternatives. From the GDR came the Lipsi, from the Soviet Union the Moskvichka, the Progulka and several other 'all-contact' dances. They all failed to excite anyone beyond the media and the inner circles of the VKLSM, who dutifully organised dance courses.[18] For all their well-constructed dynamic movements, the 'proper' dances could never compete with the 'real thing' and were regarded as helplessly comical, not only by young people.[19]

3.2.3. *Stiliagi*

Members of the Soviet Union's first youth subculture were labelled *stiliagi* (roughly: *style hunters*) by a series of scornful and sarcastic articles in the satirical journal *Krokodil*. The first stiliagi drew inspiration from American movies and jazz music that had reached the Soviet Union before the crackdown on western culture began in 1946. From the late 1940s to the early 1960s, stiliagi attempted to adopt a dress code and lifestyle based on fragmentary and romantic conceptions of America, hence descriptions of stiliaga aesthetics tend to vary. Descriptions of male stiliagi regularly include tight-legged trousers, pointed shoes, brightly coloured shirts and wide ties, kerosene wax used as *ersatz* chewing gum, cigarettes stored in boxes adorned with the names of American tobacco brands, and the adoption of names such as 'Bob' or 'Bill'. Moscow's Gorky prospekt (now Tverskaia) was referred to by stiliagi as the 'Broadway' [*Brodvéi*]. There were also a few, bold stiliaga girls and their dress code, including high-heeled shoes, was no less striking in the 1950s Soviet setting. However, the greatest passion of the stiliagi was jazz music, and they would dance apart at every opportunity.

Somewhat paradoxically, given the proximity of the stiliagi to intelligentsia circles and the urban elite, 'decent' citizens tended to treat them as walking insults, if not traitors. They were shouted at, rebuked in public, even spat at by 'proper' Soviet men and women. If stiliaga boys were regarded as traitors, stiliaga girls were a moral disgrace. All they were doing, however, was living out their utterly imaginary conceptions of America, gained from

17. RAPM: *Rossiiskaia Assotsiatsiia Proletarskikh Muzykantov* (*The Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians*) established 1923, banned 1932.
18. *Vsesoiuznyi Leninskii Kommunisticheskii Soiuz Molodezhi* (*Lenin's All-Union Communist Union of Youth*), less formally abbreviated as *Komsomol*, the Party's youth organisation.
19. Even one of the leading figures in the campaign against the twist, the choreographer Igor Moiseev, had to admit that the whole array of new Soviet dances had failed: 'Two Years after declaring war on the twist, Moiseev recalled watching a sample dance lesson on television. [...] Moiseev confessed that he and his colleagues "literally wept with laughter"' (Ryback 1990: 54).

jazz records and fond memories of movies like *Sun Valley Serenade*. The last generation of stiliagi was still hanging out on Moscow street corners as Voice of America started their broadcasts in 1955 and the 6th International Festival of Youth brought fresh rhythms to the Soviet capital in the summer of 1957. During the first half of the 1960s they were overshadowed by the space-age-obsessed generation of the *bitniki* (*'beatniks'*). A marginal group, the stiliagi were almost exclusively a taste movement and made no music of their own, but they did clear the way for future youth culture in at least two ways: In their example of daring to stand out from the crowd, and in their keen trade in recordings of western music.

3.2.4. *Rentgenizdat* – recordings on bones

Reproduction and distribution of jazz and early Rock-'n'-Roll records demanded a cheap and easily accessible substitute for vinyl. Old x-rays were being disposed of in large quantities by hospitals, could be collected at little risk, and offered suitable surfaces for phonograms.[20] One major x-ray record plant with a vast distribution network was uncovered by the police in 1959. Its tentacles extended into the main Soviet department store GUM in Moscow, where *rentgenizdat* (*x-ray publishing*) records were being sold from under the counter. The network could supply customers from all over the Soviet Union by mail order. One such flexi single could cost up to half a month's average wage. The two main organisers behind that particular network were sentenced to two years imprisonment and their financial backer to one year of hard labour (Ryback 1990: 33). The relatively complex process of re-pressing records in this fashion was made obsolete by the introduction of tape recorders onto the Soviet market. Tape recorders would revolutionise home copying within a few years and create highly versatile networks of unauthorised music distribution, termed *magnitizdat*.[21]

3.3. The 1960s

3.3.1. Roach-'n'-Roll: The beat(le) bands

The question of which Russian rock band was the first is a matter of some dispute, but that it played cover songs of The Beatles is beyond doubt. Arguably, the first rock concert in the Soviet Union took place at Moscow's Lomonosov University in 1963, when the beat group Tarakany (*The Cockroaches*) entered the stage. All band members but one, Aleksandr Gradskii, who was taken on as lead singer because of his strong voice and wide register, were Polish exchange students. The first band with an all-Russian line-up was Brazers (*Brothers*, transliterated), who emerged during the same year and re-formed in 1964 as the more enduring Sokol (*Falcon*). In 1964 Gradskii also founded a new band, the Slaviane (*Slavs*) and by 1966 he was sharing his time between four different groups: He performed Beatle-covers with Slaviane, rock instrumentals with Skify (*Scythians*), dance numbers with Los Panchos and started experimenting with rock and elements of Russian folklore in his most successful and influential band, the Skomorokhi (*Jesters*). The Skomorokhi were active well into the 1970s. Gradskii went on to complete his formal music education and released his first records as a solo performer on Melodiia in 1974.[22]

20. There is evidently more to tales of Elvis singles on pelvis bones than mere sensation. A particularly fine specimen adorns the wall of Nikolai Vasin's 'Beatle museum' in St Petersburg.
21. *Magnitizdat*: See 3.4.8, page 29 ff.
22. The double LP *Razmyshleniia shuta* and the LP *Romans o vliublennykh*, his first two of five releases in the 1970s. For more details on Soviet and Russian popular music record releases in the 1970s and 1980s, see Churliaev (1998).

Although Gradskii began early with cover songs in Russian, Sokol's *Gde tot krai* (*Where's that place*) is arguably the first self-composed rock song performed in the Russian language. Rock sung in Russian was at first received as somewhat awkward and comic:

> Before 1972 I wasn't able to imagine that one could write a Rock-'n'-Roll song in the Russian language [...] [B]ecause, phonetically, to me, the Russian language seem[ed] to be unfit for that kind of melody, that kind of rhythm (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 3-4).

> Some tried to sing in Russian, but that was uninteresting, boring, and we regarded it as, well like what, like parody, you see. Parodies of The Beatles. That people just wanted, but were unable to. And only towards the end of the 1970s good bands started emerging over here. By the mid-to-late 1970s we were already listening to bands that sang in Russian and were more or less bearable (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 4-5).

At the time rock or beat music was held to be inseparable from the English language, but the innovation of singing in Russian must have been a relief for performers who had been hard put to sound Liverpudlian. Most of the early Russian beat bands were short-lived. They either split up early or changed their style. Sokol were active until 1969, when all their precious home-built electronic equipment was stolen or confiscated. Most of the members of Skomorokhi, on the other hand, went on playing in other rock or pop bands throughout the 1970s.

In Leningrad bands took a little longer to emerge, but by 1966 beat ensembles were performing in the city.[23] Vasin lists Argonavty, Lesnye brat'ia (*Forest Brothers*), Flamingo, Q-69, Favority and Metastazy (in Steinholt 2002a: 5). Several were officially approved dance bands (so-called VIAs or Vocal-Instrumental Ensembles, see below). Argonavty were active until the mid 1970s, when they played 'hard rock.'[24] Another band, Galaktika (not to be confused with the 1980s Moscow band by the same name), was approached in the late 1960s by Vladimir Levi, a young bard from Baku who had started performing with his guitar for students at Leningrad University. Levi performed with Galaktika for a few years and wrote several songs for them - in Russian. One of the more enduring early names in Soviet rock history, Mify (*The Myths*), entered the stage at a school party in 1967 as the soon to be re-named Red Roosters. By 1969 they had a stable line-up and a well-practised set, exclusively made up from cover versions of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones and other western hitmakers. Two of the founding members were still performing in the band at the end of the 1980s.

3.3.2. DIY sound technology

Early rock bands faced serious difficulties in obtaining instruments and equipment. There were East German electric guitars, but they were scarce in the USSR and prices were far beyond what a normal salary, not to mention a student's wallet, could afford. The cheapest option was a standard acoustic guitar, but there were two standard models on the Soviet market. Akvarium flautist Andrei Romanov recalls:

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23. Barrett and Hansen mention the Stranniki (1964) as the very first Leningrad beat ensemble (Barrett and Hansen 1993: 50).
24. The 'hard rock' of VIAs was considerably 'softer' than that of western bands, see 3.4.3, page 24.

> In those years the Lunacharsky Musical Factory produced six- and seven-string guitars in equal numbers and that was a problem. Which to chose or simply: 'Which to begin with?' Well, decide for yourself – all our predecessors, who were ten years older and liked singing something about 'Grazhdanka Nikanorova' or about 'Porvali parus, kaius', kaius', kaius'...' used exclusively seven-strings, [...] And nobody, anyhow, could answer the most natural question: -And on how many strings do *The Beatles* play? (Romanov 2001: 10).

Once the acoustic six-string had been chosen, it could be 'electrified'. Pick-ups could be picked from public phones. The extent of the use of telephone microphones for musical purposes could be measured by the number of people queuing by booths that were still operational. Other young guitar heroes reputedly had access to a kind of hi-fi microphones that were meant for use in international hotels. Piano strings could be used for bass sound while home stereo units were made to serve as PAs. Most bands at the time had their own engineers, often students of electronics, who built and maintained electronic equipment. Vladimir Rekshan, leader of the band Sankt-Peterburg, testifies that electric fires and blown tubes threatened to become an integral part of the stage show. Ear-witnesses describe the sound of such set-ups as anything but beautiful. The low-fidelity noise produced offers an audio-technical explanation for the severe lack of recordings of Russian beat and rock bands of the 1960s and early 1970s. But this was as close to the real thing as one could get, and so, whatever sound they made, the instruments had to look right:

> [T]he boys made their own guitars. That is they took a panel of a sofa, cut it into the shape of a guitar, with the proper horn-shapes and made a neck from some strong wood, took strings from a piano, strung them onto the guitars and started playing [laughs]. I was even told a story about some such DIY-ers, that they put their entire house on end, sawing all the time in their flat. They sawed, the neighbours complained to the militsiia. The militsiia comes and finds in their flat an entire guitar-building workshop! [laughs] And on all [such guitars] they painted 'Rickenbacker', 'Muzima' and everything they wrote in proper English letters. [...] [A]nd they even learned how to make the strings. People who worked in factories were already using their benches to make strings. You see, the Russian DIY-ers [could] make everything, but unfortunately they couldn't make good music for a long time to come (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 4).

3.3.3. Beat cafes

In the relatively relaxed atmosphere of the early-to-mid 1960s, Beatlemania was most commonly seen as a passing fad of youth, and few measures to control it were introduced. If the authorities had any strategy for containing the beat craze at this early stage, it was merely to avoid encouraging it and watch it pass. After all, unlike the stiliagi, the *bitnikí* ('*beatniks*') dressed more 'decently' and constituted a much larger proportion of urban youth. The offspring of privileged, high-level party officials, often referred to as the *zolotáia molodezh* (*golden youth*), was also strongly represented among the bitniki. To listen to The Beatles or The Rolling Stones was not necessarily at odds with active participation in the VLKSM.

In Moscow and Leningrad beat bands were able to perform in cafes run by local branches of the Komsomol. The early beat-era practice was to hire amateur beat bands to play in cafes or at institute dances. Expenses were shared between the initiators and eventually paid by the audience, and included rent of equipment, fees for musicians and, not uncommonly, compensation for the patience and discretion of officials. When such

procedures became more widely known, the Komsomol was 'motivated' to bring matters under proper control. As a result *bit-kluby* (*beat clubs*) were formed from 1967.[25] Among the informally run 'beat cafes' were *Molodezhnoe* and *Siniaia ptitsa* in Moscow and *Sonety* in Leningrad.[26]

Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991) do not mention *Sonety* in Leningrad, but state that *Siurpriz* was a popular music cafe in the mid-1970s and *Evrika* another important meeting place in the late 1960s, that saw the launch of many careers. If the beat cafes increasingly came under the control of the Komsomol bureaucracy, then there were still grassroot organisations at work using less fixed venues:

> [S]ometime in 1971 I arranged my first underground concert. [...] I had met some new friends and we met to discuss the subject. We went through it all and decided to make a first gig. And so I became something like a foreman of this underground club. They chose me, the meeting was a proper, solid one, but held carefully, of course. Without anything official, without documents, without any papers. We didn't write anything. But we met and decided to start an underground rock club, [...] We made concerts for all groups. Who wanted to, could come and play. We didn't demand anything from anyone, see? [...] [B]ack then we didn't set up any restrictions for anyone [...] We made agreements with these school caretakers [*zavkhozy*], some sort of directors in their own right. Gave him a little bit of money, made home-made tickets, we drew them ourselves, those tickets, and sold them for a miserable price. Then, after concerts, we'd make banquets. Our bands from Piter played, of course. The concert would go on for a couple of hours, afterwards people went silently home and that was all (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 7).[27]

In addition to low-key enterprises like Vasin's, concerts at bigger venues and institute dances continued to be arranged, but on this level stricter control of repertoires and styles was soon being enforced. Control proceeded along the lines of the *VIA* system, introduced in 1966.

3.3.4. Beat domestication - The *VIA* system

As beat cafes increasingly came under the control and formal organisation of the Komsomol, concern among cultural officials as to the morally corruptive nature of rock and beat music again came to the fore. What the authorities had assumed to be a quickly passing beat fad developed and intensified. As a consequence, ridicule of amateur beat bands as incompetent musicians gave way to more serious concerns: The young were forgetting their roots and exchanging healthy, Soviet pseudo-folklore for decadent western dance music. The rhythms of beat and rock tunes were seen as a return to primitive, pre-civilised society and the lyrical messages were, if politically innocent, as at least stupefying and attention-diverting. In addition, boys' hair was growing longer and behaviour at concerts, both on and off stage, started to seem like a threat to law and order.

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25. Note that the Russian word *klub* at this time still referred to an association rather than a 'hangout.'
26. This paragraph is based on information from Rokotov (1985) and Ryback (1990: 108), who both concentrate on the Moscow scene. However, Rekshan (1999) gives the impression that similar venues were organised in Leningrad in the late 1960s.
27. *Piter* is an old and still common nickname for the city of Leningrad / St Petersburg.

To engage in musical activities full time was difficult. Unemployment was illegal and could lead to prosecution. The *grazhdanskii pasport* (*citizen's passport*), carried by every Soviet citizen, stated the holder's profession. If a student dropped out of school because of his band activities, he had limited time to start other studies or find a job. There were of course ways in which he could work 'pro-forma' or find less demanding occupations, like being a nightwatchman, a job that limited workdays (or rather –nights) to two or three a week. Anyway, two years of army service would be awaiting him, and later, with his education completed, he would be sent off somewhere to work. The choice of workplace and -town depended on a candidate's results. In due course, family concerns usually required their fair share of attention as well. No wonder, then, that rock bands were generally short-lived and that their line-ups were prone to constant change.

Clearly, playing in an amateur rock band was initially a case of priorities. On top of this, concerts were occasionally interrupted by the police and instruments and electronic equipment confiscated. But the authorities did offer an alternative: If you re-formed your band as a Vocal-Instrumental Ensemble (*Volkal'no-Instrumental'nyi Ansambl'*), cut your hair, dressed in uniforms, added some folk instruments to your line-up and played optimistic and constructive material, you could receive training as a professional musician, go on tours, maybe even release records if you were reasonably successful. Even a small percentage of foreign songs was allowed in a VIA's repertory.[28] Prior to concerts or tours, the VIA's set list would be examined by a curator or culture official to ensure it was of the prescribed artistic standard.[29]

In other words, if you were a member of a VIA, you would be treated as a professional musician. The other side of the coin was that rock elements were fairly marginal. Most VIAs were middle-of-the-road estrada acts which had all their songs written and composed, not only supervised, by members of the Union of Composers. Some managed quite well, though. Early VIAs, like Poiushchie Gitary (*The Singing Guitars*), or Veselye Rebiata (*Happy Guys*), easily distinguishable from amateur bands by their demonstratively positive names, were rewarded with success, privileges and big money.

The bands which agreed to the VIA deal lost credibility with idealistic rock fans and performers, who considered them part of the Soviet estrada. Nevertheless, the VIAs, each and every time they were able to sneak in a few powerchords, did an important job in accustoming broad audiences to rock aesthetics. The uniformed and meek-sounding VIAs thus did their part in preparing Russian citizens for rock's major breakthrough in the mid-1980s.

28. Sources operate with very different numbers when referring to the permitted percentage of songs from non-socialist countries that could be included in a VIA repertoire. This is most probably because the rules varied according to time, place and performer. During the rock repression in the mid-1980's, for instance, the permitted percentage of western songs was cut drastically. Yet, rules were not always consistently adhered to, thus the same VIA could have more freedom of choice when playing at dances than when playing at concerts.
29. See 3.4.7, page 29.

3.4. The 1970s

3.4.1. Festivals

If the monitoring of amateur rock intensified into the 1970s, it was neither consistently practised nor impossible to evade. While concerts were sporadically stopped and instruments confiscated in Moscow cafes, festivals for amateur rock bands and VIAs were being held in the Baltic Republics or in other peripheral parts of the Union. Leningrad was close to the Baltic Republics, where cultural activities were less strictly controlled. Both Riga and Tallinn had thriving rock communities and Russian bands were occasionally invited there. A 'rock only' Latvian music festival was held as early as 1969. It lacked nothing in comparison with the most riotous western events of the 1960s: slashed seats, smashed windows and visibly stoned teenagers bore witness to the high spirits of the event. It could hardly have reassured the authorities as to the innocence of western-inspired youth culture.

An even more extraordinary event was the Yerevan Festival, which was held in the Armenian capital for four consecutive years from 1969-72. The initiator of the festival, Rafael Mkrchian, built a lucrative enterprise on the booking of bands and managed to get the cooperation of the local Komsomol in attracting big names such as Gradskii to the festival. According to Ryback (1990: 111), as many as eight to ten thousand music fans attended already in the first year, but the arrest and ten-year imprisonment of Mkrchian for speculation put an end to the fun immediately after the 1972 event.

Music festivals in the Soviet Union always involved an element of competition. There would be diplomas for best performance, songwriter, composer and instrumentalists. Amateur bands sometimes had the opportunity to win a title, ousting even well-equipped VIAs. The competition between bands continued to be a major feature of the Leningrad Rock Club's annual festivals, and similar practices may still be observed in some Russian music festivals today.

3.4.2. Hippie life Soviet style

Unlike in the West, the lifestyle of Soviet hippies was not associated with political activism or back-to-nature farming collectives. It was more a question of standing out from the crowd by way of dress and long hair, minimising participation in society, and nurturing a beatnik-like obsession with long-distance travelling. Hippie activities included hitch-hiking across the Soviet Union, especially to the far east, smoking pot in Transcaucasian or Central Asian republics, and taking on casual jobs in order to finance further travel. In addition to long hair, blue jeans were mandatory.[30] The degree of wear in a hippie's *dzhinsy* was a tribute to his idealism. After the rock opera *Jesus Christ Superstar* made its impact on the Soviet Union, *Dzhisus* (*Jesus*) became internal slang for a fellow hippie, a tribute to his status among the long-haired. Soviet hippies regarded Christianity with as much positive interest as they did Hinduism or Buddhism. After all, in the Soviet Union, Christianity was at least as subversive as far-eastern religions, in contrast to the west, where it was regarded as a part of a narrow-minded and intolerant patriarchy. This more friendly attitude to religion is also reflected in Russian rock music, especially during the Soviet era:

30. Growing long hair was one thing, keeping it was a different matter. Many hippies had their hair forcefully cut by the police, by *druzhinniki* (voluntary guards at schools, institutes, larger workplaces or cultural venues), or by less organised gangs with a dislike of non-conformists.

> This is something I realised a very long time ago: Western rock as such, most significantly American rock, is founded on an opposition to the official church. And that might count for God as well. But Russian rock [and] roll holds the diametrically opposite position where this question is concerned, because it emerged during the time of Soviet power (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 8).

The hippie culture was far more enduring in Russia than in the west and, religion or not, John Lennon was another guiding light for the long-haired flock. After Lennon's murder on the morning of the 8th of December 1980, the practice of 'Lennonism' intensified. Lennon's birthday and the day of his murder were marked in Moscow by gatherings on the Lenin heights, near MGU (Moscow University), where people would perform Lennon songs, light candles, and carry portraits of the late Beatle and slogans with Lenin's name replaced with Lennon's. Usually, the ceremonies were brief and were forcefully disbanded by the police, but the tradition prevailed. Leningrad had another tradition. The leading local *bitloman* Nikolai Vasin began inviting friends and bands to celebrate every Beatle-birthday, a practice still alive today:

> [T]he next concert coming up now is Paul McCartney's birthday. In five days. We'll meet by the Bay of Finland, we have already met there every year for 20 years around the fire, we put a white tablecloth on the ground. Everybody brings something and puts it on the tablecloth [...] Afterwards when everyone has had something to eat and feels relaxed, the music begins. The boys bring guitars and we start singing Beatle-songs. And the socialising goes on, someone would like to take a walk, someone would like to swim, see? [...] [T]hat's how our birthday celebrations have been held for about 30 years now. And in town too, we sometimes hold concerts on the birthdays of John and George Harrison, that is, in winter and we hold the concerts in a concert hall. And in summer we are outside (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 7-8).

3.4.3. Rock opera

Rock operas fulfilled another important role in the development of Russian rock. The fact that many VIAs, including so-called 'hard-rock' bands, were employed at trade union theatres may have contributed to the popularity of this genre.[31] From the perspective of official culture monitoring, rock opera had, as a stage act, the advantage of following a script. Thus, unlike a rock concert, where subversive messages could be conveyed at any point, a rock opera was easier to restrict within moral and ideological bounds.

Of course, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, which became immensely popular far beyond the rock environment, treated a subject too controversial for the cultural authorities, but it was of great significance for the popularity of the format. Several amateur performances were staged, and the soundtrack album circulated in thousands of *magnitizdat* copies.[32] It went far. In 1977 it even reached TV in the form of a jingle for the evening news broadcast, *Vremia*. This is a prime example of how rock entered the official sphere of Soviet culture during the 1970s. Locally staged rock operas attracted crowds and thus rock music aesthetics, albeit in somewhat artificial, high-brow VIA packaging, reached a broader audience.

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31. Informants (e.g. Nikolai Kopeikin, personal communication, St Petersburg, June 2002) confirmed that the 'hard rock' of VIAs like Araks was 'hard' in little more than name.
32. See 3.4.8, page 29 ff.

3.4.4. The VIA decade

The specific stylistic, aesthetic and, to a lesser extent, ideological demands that had to be met by VIA bands, favoured certain rock styles. In many cases rock elements were too marginal for the music to qualify as rock at all, but some VIAs played rock more or less consistently. The 'philharmonic'[33] rock styles that dominated western 1970s rock before the impact of punk, were also preferred by VIAs: Hard rock, fusion, jazz rock, and progressive rock were styles whose approaches to composition and instrumental virtuosity frequently reflected 'high-culture' aspirations. For VIAs who had reasonably good access to proper instruments and equipment, the sound standards demanded by such styles were more or less within reach. Instrumental pieces were not unusual, especially in fusion, jazz- and prog-rock, and could allow for greater creative freedom on the musical level, since they had no lyrics that had to pass the censors.

Some bands, like the Moscow 'hard rockers' Araks, had periods as an amateur band, slipping in and out of the official scene. For a few years they were employed by a Moscow Komsomol theatre. For other bands, especially those who preferred playing cover songs of Anglo-American rock hits or saw rock as a medium for performing their own lyrics, the VIA system caused problems. In 1971 Mify of Leningrad split up for a short period after having lost most of its members to VIA acts. Two of the founding members were also involved in the official music scene for a short while. They attempted to stage their own rock opera about the generation gap, but the project gained little or no support and was eventually abandoned. Band leader Il'chenko re-formed Mify in 1972 with new musicians. From then on they performed their own songs in Russian, but remained an amateur act.

Tsvety (*Flowers*) from Moscow began their career in 1970. Anastas Mikoian, a language student at MGU and grandson of a famous party veteran, whose name he inherited, was the band's organiser, leader, guitarist, ideologist and manager. Stas Namin, as he prefers to call himself, utilised his family's position and contacts to enable his band to release two singles on Melodiia in 1973 and 1974, apparently without meeting the formal requirements for a VIA. On the other hand, the Tsvety was not a typical amateur band. Their musical style, a mixture of pop-estrada and safe, harmonic rock, was restrained enough to slip into the mainstream, yet their singles of Uriah Heep-powered *gorodskie romansy* (*city romances*) were fresh enough to make a small pop-sensation.[34] However, even though the band managed to obtain most of the privileges of VIAs without fully conforming to official requirements, it did not achieve the success Namin had hoped for, and the band split up in 1975. It re-formed two years later as a VIA proper under Moskoncert: Stas Namin's Vocal Instrumental Group, a.k.a. the Stas Namin Group.[35] In the meantime Namin had become a member of the Union of Composers, founding his claims to be the first to bring rock to a Soviet audience.[36]

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33. *Philharmonic rock* is the expression preferred by Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991) to describe the symphonically orchestrated rock form typical of many 1970s VIAs.
34. *Gorodskoi romans*: see 7.2.4, page 103 ff.
35. Moskoncert and Lenkoncert: The official concert agencies of Moscow and Leningrad respectively.
36. Not surprisingly, amateur bands and their fans give Namin's achievements little credit, regarding him as little more than a cynical, if successful, grey-area businessman of the musical mainstream. To the rock environment of Leningrad, his background in the Moscow elite ensured him even less respect.

3.4.5. Amateur bands of the 70s

Amateur bands also moved on from beat music to hard rock during the 1970s. Their focus on Rhythm and Blues and on hard rock and roll was stronger, although some bands were drawn to progressive rock and jazz rock, insofar as their instruments and equipment would allow.

A pioneer band of Leningrad amateur rock, Sankt-Peterburg, was founded by history student Vladimir Rekshan in 1969. With its stage debut the following year, the band attracted attention with their poetic lyrics, written in Russian, which described the world-view of the protest generation: a musical style based on Rhythm and Blues, with a touch of *gorodskoi romans* and a hitherto unseen, dynamic and aggressive stage behaviour. A violin was added to the line-up from 1972, and Sankt-Peterburg's amateur career peaked during the following year. In 1974 the band was completely reorganised and most of the former members continued performing under the name of Bol'shoi Zheleznyi Kolokol (*Big Iron Bell*). With Mify and Akvarium they participated at the 1976 amateur music festival in Tallinn. Sankt-Peterburg gave a few reunion concerts in the 1980s. Rekshan published several of his short-stories and essays in 1987; since then he has also recorded movie soundtracks under the band's old name.

Rossiiane (*The Russians*), another early Leningrad band formed in 1969, were led by Aleksandr Batist (guitar, vocals) and Aleksandr Krol' (bass). They wrote their own songs in Russian and were soon joined by a kindred spirit, Georgii Ordanovskii (guitar, vocals), a singing poet with an interest in other modes of musical expression. The band played within the rock-and-roll and blues register and became one of most popular Leningrad bands. The pianist Oleg Gusev joined in 1975 after the former keyboardist left to join Mify. This led the band in a new direction of art rock, jazz rock and compositionally advanced instrumental pieces. A horn section was added. Many of the musicians who played with Rossiiane went on to play in VIAs or 'philharmonic' rock bands like Avgust, Dilizhans, Zemliane and Soiuz. The group split up in 1976, but Ordanovskii re-formed it and it became one of the first members of the Leningrad Rock Club in 1981. Rossiiane were rehearsing a new set when Ordanovskii disappeared without a trace in 1984.

After hearing The Beatles on the radio for the first time in 1968, the young Muscovite Andrei Makarevich founded the short-lived cover band Deti (*The Kids*) with some classmates. Not long after Mashina vremeni (*Time Machine*) appeared with songs in Russian by Makarevich. From 1970 they aquired a new drummer, Kapitanovskii, as well as better equipment, but the band split up when he left for a career as a dance-band musician. The remaining members then worked with the pop band Luchshie gody (*The Best Years*), some of whom eventually left for VIAs, enabling Mashina vremeni to re-form with the remaining musicians in 1973. The next few years were marked by constant changes in membership and hard-work-no-benefit concerts. By 1975 the crew finally stabilised sufficiently for the band to find a style based on the many interests of their members: from bard-song, via rock and roll to Country and blues.

Makarevich's lyrics attracted attention. On the one hand they invited the listener into an idealised dreamworld, constructed through well-known symbols and metaphors, on the other hand they managed to convey the distinct flavour of youthful emotions, problems, fears, hopes and worries. Although his poetry was hardly innovative, and increasingly retreated into predictable moulds and cliches, its impact on contemporary youngsters was strong enough. For five years from 1976, Mashina vremeni were the undisputed stars of

the 'non-existent' genre Russian rock. They played regularly in Leningrad as well as in the capital and reached higher and wider than any amateur band before them. The word *mashinomaniia* was used to describe their popularity. Meanwhile, the 'manager' of their Leningrad concerts in the late 70s; Andrei Tropillo, aspired to become a sound engineer:

> So I continued recording music and, beginning in 1977, when the staging of concerts with Mashina vremeni here was bringing in sufficiently good money... I was practically alone in inviting Mashina vremeni over at the time, I was some kind of monopolist. All the money that I received from underground concerts, and the amounts were sufficiently large... For example, I just came to think of it, for a concert in Petrodvorets, the composition *The Little Prince* was [played] there, it was I think in 1978? 79? The income amounted to 1600 roubles, an enormous sum for those days. For that money I bought microphones, mixing tables or components for them (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 3).

Mify, after the demise of their rock opera project, continued to play hard rock and roll and Rhythm and Blues. Their amateur career peaked in 1974 when they won first prize in two different contests for amateur bands, in competition with the likes of Mashina vremeni and Tsvety. The group then split up, but re-formed occasionally for dances and for a Tallinn gig in 1975. Mify reappeared in 1980, when they were involved in Tropillo's early recording work alongside Akvarium, and the following year they became one of the early members of the LRC.

If these were the most prominent bands of the decade, there were many lesser-known bands and much activity was going on in their shadows. Many of the more short-lived groups that appeared in the mid 1970s served as a training ground for the rock boom of the next decade. Nu, pogodi! (*Now, wait!*), formed 1974, is described by Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991: 138) as one of the most distinctive bands of early 1970s Leningrad. Guitar-player Aleksandr Liapin, a formally trained violinist and a frequent collaborator with Akvarium from 1982, played in the band during its early years. Soiuz liubitelei muzyki rok (*Union of rock music lovers*) was another band to appear in the mid-1970s. Zoopark founder 'Maik' Naumenko made his band debut playing bass with them.

Towards the end of the decade, punk and new-wave hit Russia. A reaction against progressive rock pretentiousness, arty symphonic compositions, fusion and other 'mammoth-rock' styles, they brought to the fore Do-It-Yourself aesthetics of simplicity and spontaneity and inspired a new generation of Russian bands. Interestingly, the VIAs' tendency towards hard rock, jazz rock, progressive and 'philharmonic' rock, meant that Russian new-wave bands' adversaries were not so unlike those of punk and new-wave in the west. About the same time, heavy metal bands emerged, contributing to a decisive renewal of Russian rock. The new increase in activity spurred the first attempt to start a rock club in Leningrad.

3.4.6. 'Managers'

In the Soviet context the term *menedzher* signified a speculator, who made money from arranging underground concerts. Some took a serious interest in the music, others were cynical profiteers who paid musicians badly, if at all. Vladimir Rekshan's memories of the early 1970s are full of tales of cheating, fraud and theft. His band, Sankt-Peterburg, was trying to earn money to buy better stage equipment when they were approached by a fake Komsomol activist, who wanted to start a 'rock club'. It was some time before they realised that the club would never materialise and that the band's money had been lost:

> Earlier we worked and were paid our measly eighty roubles by the union committees and bought, may they be damned, amps and speakers. But now everything was in the hands of Arsent'ev, and nothing was heard either of recognition or of the Club's property, we just sunk further and further into the underground. Notions of its dankness, its crawling mice and, for the moment still far off, sniggering rats, were making themselves felt (Rekshan 1999: 31).

However, the 'managers' were arguably the ones who took the major risks. If concerts were interrupted, musicians were usually in the clear, because it was hard to prove that they were receiving illegal money from the concerts, although there was always a risk of sound equipment being confiscated. A manager caught in the act, on the other hand, faced a court case. Arsen'tev was eventually sentenced to one year in a labour camp, but that did not earn Sankt-Peterburg their money back.[37]

News of underground concerts spread from ear to mouth. Invitations were distributed, but payment had to be organised in a discreet way, better in advance than at the concert venue. There was always some risk that information about ticket prices would reach the wrong ears and the authorities would be informed, but it was virtually impossible to secure evidence. If the *militsiia* raided an underground gig, finding the manager among the audience was far from simple:

> Nobody succeeded to prove in practice the fact that money had been received, because at an underground gig no tickets were sold. If there had been real tickets that were sold it would have been speculation, yes. But if you consider that the tickets were self-made or that there were some kind of postcards... Once, for instance, I used a first-degree diploma of some Komsomol organisation with a portrait of Lenin. [...] Hence how was it possible to arrest someone at underground concerts? One would have to stop a considerable number of people in the hall, bring them in, interrogate them as witnesses, take down their testimony [to the fact] that they had paid somebody money for those pieces of paper. But since it was unclear from whom they had been bought, since there was no box-office, achieving something in this way was very hard and during all this time the militsiia never went to such lengths. Never ever. It didn't happen. Because underground concerts [...] were in a sense a trade with air, because people came and went without leaving any proof that money had been paid for the gig. [...] At the time this was known as 'sessions' [*seisheny*] and they were very popular (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 4-5).

37. Andrei Tropillo, who should be familiar with Rekshan's writing (if only for the chapter where he features as 'The Living God'), dismisses arrests for spreading recordings or staging underground concerts: '[...] I don't know of a single person who suffered for staging underground concerts or sound recordings during the times of pre-perestroika Soviet power' (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 3). Interestingly, in contrast to the impression made by the focus on arrests in sources such as Ryback (1990), this appears to be the case: No-one seems to have been sentenced for amateur musical activities as such. This does not prove, however, that musical activities did not play a secondary role behind charges of theft, speculation, document forgery or the planning of illegal emigration. Police harassment of musicians and fans was common, but generally had little to do with the judicial system, see 4.4.3, page 45 ff.

3.4.7. *Litovka*

In a rock context, the word *litovka* signified the sanctioning of live sets, rather than female Lithuanians.[38] Anyone who wanted to perform in public was obliged to have his or her material sanctioned by an official institution, such as a local cultural department of a labour union. Any institution would do, not necessarily the one responsible for the concert venue, but its representative would stand formally responsible for the artistic level of the performance, including the contents of the lyrics.

As soon as the right stamp and signature had been applied to their artistic programme, the musicians need not be too concerned about controls. Initial compromises made by re-writing lyrics, omitting verses or replacing words did not necessarily have consequences for the performance itself. When on stage the band could play the songs in their original versions or play entirely different songs, if they felt sure there were no 'bad apples' in the audience. If any officials arrived, and if they were at all able to note any difference between manuscript and performance, the band could always make a tongue-in-cheek reversal to the sanctioned set.

3.4.8. *Magnitizdat*

In the 1960s, when the practice of taping concerts performed in private apartments and recording cassette albums on home stereo tape recorders began, such activities were mainly the privilege of the upper echelons of Soviet society. Waiting lists for the immensely popular tape recorders were long and the industry struggled to meet demand. In addition, the recording quality of the smaller recording units was hardly sufficient for an acoustic apartment concert. Taping a DIY-electrified beat setup was virtually impossible. To begin with, rock *magnitizdat* (*magnetic publishing*) was chiefly a medium for copying records or recording songs from the radio. The quality of radio recordings was under constant threat from jamming, but even though the cost of radio jamming was many times higher than the budgets of Voice of America and Radio Free Europe put together, songs could still be recorded and distributed. Nikolai Vasin remembers hearing The Beatles for the first time in 1964:

> And so he comes to me with a little Aides-player, a player from Riga, and we listen to a recording made from BBC radio, the frequency changes, noise, cosmic interference hardly lets the music through. I remember hearing a kind of music that I had never heard before (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 2).

At the time when Okudzhava and Vysotsky became the first alternative music stars in the USSR by way of *magnitizdat*, the rock distribution networks were not yet as effective as they were to become and tapes rarely circulated widely or in many copies. This was soon to change as the number of tape recorders grew, better ones became available and rock networks expanded. Magnitizdat would become the central nerve system of Russian rock, because, ironically, the strict publishing legislation did not apply to sound recordings:

> [A]ccording to the existing legislation at the time, however strange it might seem, magnetic recordings were not considered to be publications in their own right, but as mechanical representations of public performances. That meant that the person who spread the recording didn't carry any responsibility. If for example those very same song lyrics were typed on a typewriter in more than six copies and spread, the person responsible could risk up to four years

38. *Litovka* is the noun form of the slang verb *litovat'* (*to sanction*). It probably originates from the official abbreviation '*lit*' for *literatura* or *literaturnyi*.

> imprisonment. But for four thousand copies of a tape [you risked] nothing, because only the one who wrote and performed those songs was responsible for those copies. First and foremost the one who wrote them. [...] [W]hen the tape was played it was not a publication, but was like a performance of that same author only by way of technical magnetic recording. That means that responsibility was held only by, well, for instance Galich or Vysotsky (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 2-3).

From the end of the 1970s Akvarium and Andrei Tropillo made the recording of cassette albums a regular activity, and other bands and artists followed.[39] Eventually, they managed to improve the sound quality considerably, compared with earlier attempts. A fanzine review of a 1978 cassette album by 'Maik' Naumenko, who at that time recorded in a studio at the Leningrad Puppet Theatre, claimed that the poor quality of the recording contributed to 'some sort of hypnotic trance effect that borders on masochism' (in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 96).

Recordings were not only copied from cassette to cassette in private. An important part of *magnitizdat* were the *zvukozapis'* (sound recording) cooperatives which emerged in virtually all major Soviet cities in the 1960s and 1970s. These studios stored reel-to-reel copies of officially approved recordings from Melodiia and its Eastern European sister labels, but they could also to a lesser extent, depending on the individual studio and its staff, provide a few western pop and rock albums, amateur recordings of the bard poets, and/or local rock recordings as these became more common. Customers brought empty cassettes and ordered a recording of what that particular studio had to offer. Tropillo usually distributed his recordings on reel-to-reel tapes in ten master copies, which he handed out to recording cooperatives. From then on they were outside his control, and were re-copied and distributed to other cooperatives and cities.

3.4.9. Fanzines: *rok samizdat*

With the rock boom in the late 1970s came new fanzines. From typewritten rags about Anglo-American rock bands and stars, the trend shifted to writing predominantly about local bands. Among these were the *samizdat* (*'self-publishing'*) journals Roksi (from 1977) and RIO (1985-90) in Leningrad, Urlait in Moscow and still others in Sverdlovsk, Novosibirsk and other cities across the Union. Before perestroika the circulation was minimal. Normally three or four copies were typewritten. These were then circulated and handwritten or typed again. During perestroika, Roksi was adopted as the LRC Bulletin. The number of copies of each fanzine issue increased considerably, and RIO began organising an exchange of rock newsletters between cities. Before glasnost, however, the constraints of publishing legislation meant that it could literally take ages for a Roksi issue to circulate the local scene.[40]

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39. Andrei Tropillo's studio and its activities in the 1980s is treated more thoroughly in 4.6, page 53 ff.
40. Roksi is dealt with in greater detail in 4.5, page 47 ff. For more information on RIO, see 4.5.6, page 52 ff. A comprehensive collection of rock samizdat 1967-1994 is given in Kushnir (1994).

3.4.10. The twists and turns of popular music policies

The 1970s were relatively calm when it came to anti-rock policies. The VIA system appears to have functioned quite satisfactorily. The occasional concert and festival for amateur bands could be held without much risk of provoking the authorities. Amateur bands learned how far they could go, and because they were cut off from official media, radio airplay, recording possibilities and tours, their audiences consisted mostly of friends and acquaintances. But during the late 1970s with its rock boom, police again began to worry. To them, amateur bands like Mashina vremeni arrived with no warning. Metro trains or buses would suddenly become crowded with fans on their way to some real or supposed venue. Ticket forging was a common problem, that occasionally left half the audience outside the venue, protesting loudly.

In 1978, there were riots in Leningrad after a TASS press release revealed plans for an open air concert on the fourth of July on the Palace Square itself, with Joan Baez, Santana and The Beach Boys performing. On the day stated, an audience started gathering on the square when in fact none of the artists mentioned had even entered the Soviet Union. The crowd responded angrily at being cleared from the square by soldiers and the militsiia. Shouting for Santana, the crowd went on to the Lenizdat publishing house, where they smashed the windows. Eventually water-cannons were deployed. Those arrested were transported beyond the city boundaries by the vanload and then released (Smirnov 1999: 60-61).

Worrying news from the west upset Soviet authorities even further. Punk rock was already causing trouble in Poland and other east-European countries. Did someone in the administration fear a repetition of Beatlemania, with decent, twist-dancing beatniki being replaced by pogo-dancing, sneering and gobbing impersonators of Johnny Rotten? The unusually quick response might suggest so. An alternative was desperately sought for to make Soviet youth forget punk, there was no time to construct one, so a western remedy was made to serve instead: Disco, or rather the 'white' appropriation of it.

Experimental discotheques had already been run in the Baltics since 1976. In 1978 complete light and sound systems for 400 discotheques were ordered from the UK. That same year Boney M gave a concert in Moscow. Melodiia released certain safe Western artists, like The Wings' LP *Band on the Run*, the Bee Gees and even a few softer songs by The Rolling Stones. During the months leading up to the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow, the latest Donna Summer hit was pounding the dancefloors from Leningrad to Tashkent. It could not and did not last long. After the Olympics had displayed to the world a liberal and fashionable music scene, the grip on culture was soon tightened again with new restrictions on western music in discotheques. Hopes of a new cultural thaw were high when the Andropov administration came to power in 1982, since Andropov was known to be an old jazz-man, but the politics of his administration did not live up to expectations. On the contrary. Luckily for the Leningrad rock scene, the LRC was by then already well established.

3.5. 1980

3.5.1. Tbilisi: amateur rock enters the stage

In January 1980 Akvarium rehearsed at the A. D. Tsuriupy Palace of Culture. There they met an official, Oleg Ivanovich, who became an admirer of the band's work.[41] On his recommendation, Akvarium was unexpectedly invited to the Spring Rhythms Festival in Tbilisi in March 1980. What they were to play there, however, was a quite different set from what their new promoter was expecting. During the months leading up to the festival, Akvarium, in addition to their work at the Palace of Culture (DK), were rehearsing an electric set. In parts of central Leningrad a few blocks had been temporarily vacated for major restoration. So, with nobody about to complain about the noise, Akvarium could practice louder and noisier versions of their songs. Oleg Ivanovich could have heard the new versions had he attended more rehearsals, but he did not show up. So, when Akvarium was scheduled to perform three concerts in Georgia, he expected to hear the mild-mannered acoustic set they had performed at his DK. Flautist Romanov describes leaving stage after the first Tbilisi performance:

> I even the remember the not pale, but white face of Oleg Ivanovich backstage. He stood silent in a corner of the dressing room, holding a camera that he had never switched on during the concert. He forgot! Such is the power of art! (Romanov 2001: 86)

Akvarium had just performed the first proper rock-and-roll gig ever seen on an official Soviet stage. When the set had been sanctioned, nobody had imagined the screaming guitars, the wild cello, flute and bassoon improvisations, and Boris Grebenshchikov's (BG), for once, strained and raspy voice. As Romanov later commented, it was no provocations in it, 'nothing the Georgian girls in the audience did not like,' and all this might have been tolerated if the band had not behaved like a rock band on stage. The first rule of Soviet estrada performance was: 'Singer, don't move'. Here there were no 'singing trees'. It was a performance in the spirit of an average Rolling Stones gig:

> The performance was perfectly normal, judging from the canon of that genre, to which one would expect all the participants to belong. The whole *'scandal'* lay in the fact that the musicians from Piter ignored the unnatural 'rules of behaviour', which were made for so-called VIAs (Smirnov 1999: 77).

Although the majority of the audience reputedly enjoyed the performance, the jury left the venue after an unsuccessful attempt to stop the concert. The second of Akvarium's three concerts was cancelled, but the third was held in a circus tent in the remote city of Gori. The local organiser insisted his audience be shown all the acts that were performing in the Georgian capital. A Finnish camera-crew was there to preserve the performance for posterity. The soundtrack of the Finnish recording was included on the first side of Akvarium's magnitizdat album *Elektrichestvo* in 1981.

The images recorded by the Finns show an intense stage performance. BG striding to and fro on stage, jumping, lying down, not even the cellist was stationary. Shocked official representatives and envious amateur musicians alike responded with a smear campaign in the press, where Akvarium and BG were, among other things, accused of promoting

41. Oleg Ivanovich's surname figures in neither Romanov's nor Smirnov's accounts.

homosexuality. 'Evidence' included BG's handling of the microphone stand, and two other incidents: 'Fagotto' pointing his bassoon at the audience like a gun, and cellist Gakkel' slapping BG's behind with his bow. Much debate on youth-culture issues followed the events in Georgia.

On his return to Leningrad, BG, at the time a employed at the LGU Institute of Sociology, was dismissed, allegedly for unauthorised absence, and excluded from the Komsomol. As a 'declassified element', BG could not study and had to take work as a nightwatchman under flautist Romanov, until he could find a more satisfactory solution.[42] Their bad reputation in official spheres did not prevent Akvarium from achieving immediate cult status in the rock environment, and their name reached the capital. The Tbilisi gig became a cornerstone of their future success. The following year the band joined the Leningrad Rock Club, where several of the band members became involved in its organisation. In addition to Akvarium's notorious breakthrough, Spring Rhythms marked the triumph of amateur rock by awarding Mashina vremeni first prize, which they shared with Gunnar Graps' VIA, Magnetik Band, from Tallinn. With this, Mashina vremeni decided to change its status to a VIA. Sadly, however, they chose the wrong moment to bring rock to the masses through official channels. Russian rock's breakthrough was destined to come from the amateur level.

3.5.2. Exit VIA

As amateur rock flourished, the reactionary cultural-political climate that dominated under the Andropov and Chernenko administrations virtually choked any remaining appeal from the VIAs. The rock repression had immediate consequences for bands who had agreed to make compromises, thereby effectively disabling the only official alternative to rock. Restrictions did not hit everyone equally, however. In 1980 the Stas Namin Group released the LP *Gimn solntsu* (*Hymn to the sun*) and one mini album for Melodiia, and were allowed three more releases before 1984. The band toured extensively, the USA included, before it eventually split up in the late 1980s. In 1988 Namin organised and managed the 'export' heavy rock band Gorky Park with musicians from the former Stas Namin Group.

The other extreme is demonstrated by the fate of Mashina vremeni. Following a brief moment of glory in the official limelight, which marked the final peak of *mashinomaniia* and the release of an officially unapproved LP in the US, disaster struck. A crushingly critical article published in 1982 in the newspaper Komsomolskaia pravda, entitled *Ragu iz sinei pticy* (*Bluebird ragout*), was only the first shot from the massive anti-rock campaign, the final and perhaps most aggressive repression programme launched against rock in the Soviet era. Mashina vremeni, who were given the privileged role of first target, saw their record releases on Melodiia stopped. Almost all concerts and tours were cancelled, and Makarevich had to fall back on acoustic solo-performances and a few minor movie appearances.

Mashina vremeni's records were eventually released in 1985 and 1986. However, whether as a result of a creative collapse or of compromises made with Melodiia, both albums were tame and uninspired. Makarevich tried to restore the band's image by releasing the album *10 let spustia* (*10 years after*), intended to re-create its energetic, mid-1970s sound. But by then the VIA status had become a credibility problem, and amateur bands had captured the audience.

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42. Some months later, BG, a mathematician turned sociologist, managed somehow to acquire the status of an actor, which permanently solved the problem of his professional position.

Chapter 4 The Leningrad Rock Club

4.1. Introduction

4.1.1. Sources

For this account of the establishment and organisation of the Leningrad Rock Club, the Club's official website (www.rockclub.ru) is a primary source. It contains details of council members, festival juries and many other matters related to the running of the LRC. However, its account is neither consistent nor complete. The views presented on the site reflect the personal opinions of the LRC's president since 1983, Nikolai Mikhailov, and the opinions expressed should therefore be regarded as his official version of events.[43] His views are balanced by the fieldwork interviewees representing the LRC council: Gunitskii (Steinholt 2001b), Burlaka (Steinholt, 2001c), and Feinshtein-Vasil'ev (Steinholt 2002b), and by articles in the fanzine Roksi, issues 1-15 (1978-90). Romanov (2001) and Rekshan (1999) are also informative, as both authors were involved in the LRC organisation. A chapter in Smirnov (1999: 140-149) is devoted to the LRC while Rybin and Startsev (2000) and Tsui (1991) touch on the subject more sporadically. Rock apologist and jury member at LRC festivals Zhitinskii (1990) offers a sympathetic outsider's view. Among western sources, Cushman (1995) gives an extensive account of the Club's existence during the perestroika years.

4.2. The beginning

4.2.1. Success at last: Initiatives from the rock environment

In November 1979, after a series of more or less determined attempts to organise a rock club in Leningrad, some progress was eventually made. The initiators were three *menedzhery* (*'managers'*), Iurii Baidak, Sergei Dryzlov and Tatiana Ivanova.[44] They found a suitable venue in a youth club on Prospekt energetikov, with a hall that could seat an audience of 200. The club's swinging name was *Gorodskoi eksperimental'nyi klub liubitelei sovremennoi molodezhnoi muzyki* (*City experimental club for contemporary youth music enthusiasts*). Although short-lived, it staged the first officially approved rock concert in Leningrad. Eleven bands performed for an audience of rock fans and representatives of the Party and the Komsomol.[45] Two bands from the 'experimental rock club', Kronverk and Zemliane, were also invited to the 1980 Spring Rhythms Festival in Tbilisi, along with non-members Akvarium.

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43. When asked to give an interview for this study's fieldwork Mikhailov, a busy family man, suggested I first consult the website: 'It is all there.' Unfortunately, a supplementary interview could not be arranged during the second part of the fieldwork.
44. *Menedzhery*: see 3.4.6, page 27.
45. The bands were: Argonavty, Dilizhans, Zemliane, Zerkalo, Iabloko, Kronverk, Mify, Ornament, Piknik, Rossiiane, and Soiuz liubitelei muzyki rok (SMLR).

What exactly happened following Spring Rhythms, and why, is the subject of some dispute, but whether it was due to the furore made by Akvarium or not, the 'experimental rock club' closed shortly after.[46] The LRC website claims that members of Kronverk, Zemliane, or both, reported Akvarium and BG to the authorities, something which led to an unresolved conflict amongst the club's leadership. Other sources, such as Smirnov, find the idea of a smear campaign led by fellow musicians doubtful. In any case, the first rock club closed down in the summer of 1980.

In January 1981, another meeting was held with the director of *Leningradskii Mezhsoiuznyi Dom Samodeiatel'nogo Tvorchestva* (Roughly: *'Leningrad all-union creative amateur workshop,'* henceforth: LMDST), Anna Aleksandrovna Ivanova. *Menedzhery* Iurii Baidak and Tatiana Ivanova were again among the initiators, together with some of their colleagues and the members of certain bands. LRC legend has it that the LMDST director agreed to form a rock club with the words: 'Well okay, if they sack me from my job, I have a husband who can feed me.'[47] Thus, alongside the groupings already covered by the LMDST umbrella, clubs for amateur jazz musicians, writers, painters, photographers and so on, the Leningrad Rock Club was established. It moved into LMDST's localities in the former Palace of Folklore on Ulitsa Rubinshteina 13. The founding meeting was held on 7th of February. Members of fourteen bands, among them Akvarium, Mify, Piknik and Rossiiane, participated.

The 7th of March 1981 was the opening night. The four performing bands were: Zerkalo, Rossiiane, Piknik and Mify. The rock fans in the 600 seat hall reputedly found the concerts rather old-fashioned and boring, but the bands secured the club a green light by performing to the satisfaction of the official representatives in the balcony. Thirty-two bands had registered, most had little or no instruments and equipment, but high hopes of reaching a stage to perform.

4.2.2. Clients and patrons: Initiatives from local government

Looked at with hinsight, despite several failed attempts, the eventual organisation of the LRC 'from below' appears to have been curiously smooth. The initiators from the rock community had gained experience, but as Smirnov suggests, this last initiative would probably have got no further than the earlier ones had it not met with interest from above. A potential interest existed in principle within the city administration since the time of the formation of the LMDST on the initiative of the First Secretary of the *Leningradskii Obkom* (*Leningrad County Committee*), Grigorii V. Romanov. He took over the post at the age of fourty-seven, still relatively young, energetic and effective. With the international scandal surrounding the Brodsky trial in fresh memory, he opted for a more pragmatic way of dealing with unofficial or amateur cultural activities. Instead of confronting and pursuing officially unapproved writers, poets, painters and musicians, he was willing to offer them 'cultural reservations'.[48] Within these reservations amateur artists could gather, engage in their chosen cultural practices, share experience, facilities, tools, instruments and

46. The 1980 Spring Rhythms Festival (*Vesennye ritmy*) is described in greater detail in 3.5.1, page 32 ff.
47. www.rockclub.ru/letop1.htm (20.11.2003).
48. The term 'cultural reservations' is used by Smirnov without quotation marks, suggesting that the expression is his own, rather than Romanov's. For a thorough study of the Brodsky trial, see Etkind (1988).

materials. This gave them an opportunity to develop their talents, have their works evaluated and receive practical and ideological schooling. Provided their work attained the required artistic standards, their activities could in principle lead to an officially approved career.

From the point of view of the authorities, the cultural reservations had several obvious advantages. They facilitated an overview and easier control of unsanctioned cultural production. They made it possible to exclude individuals who failed to meet artistic or ideological demands, or whose activities were considered negative or destructive, thereby effectively isolating them. The system relied on cooperation between the Komsomol, the KGB, the LMDST and insiders from within the amateur groupings themselves.

The taming of ideologically problematic cultural activities by promoting a client–patron relationship is a practice which goes back centuries in Russian bureaucracy, to the reign of Ivan the Terrible, if not before. In order to remain at their posts and secure their organisation's continued existence, the LMDST officials would make sure of preserving a good relationship with the controlling authorities and keep a close eye on members' activities. The Rock Club's council was thus kept under constant pressure to punish members who exceeded the invisible boundaries of the acceptable. In turn, predominantly older members who felt comfortable with the degree of artistic freedom offered, would attempt to restrain younger bands, who wanted to test or push limits. Eventually, as soon as these internal power structures had been established, and provided the relative artistic freedom offered was sufficient to attract members, the cultural reservation became virtually self-censoring. In the case of the LRC, these mechanisms would become visible when the rock repression began to lose momentum in 1985.

4.2.3. *KGB-rok, rok-KGB*: Initiatives from within the security apparatus

In 1990 Major General Oleg Kalugin, second in command of the KGB's Leningrad division from 1980-87, declared in an open-hearted interview about the *Kontora's* activities:

> At the beginning of the 1980s, when rock fans flooded the Leningrad scene, a rock club was organised on the KGB's initiative. Its single purpose: To keep that movement under control, make it manageable (in Smirnov 1999: 142).

Kalugin may exaggerate the role played by his organisation, but his statement shows that rock *menedzhery* and musicians and the secret police had a common interest in organising a rock club. To say that the KGB *ran* the LRC would be an overstatement, though. To be more specific, it was formally run by the Leningrad city administration through the LMDST and was subject to KGB surveillance. While the LRC website does its best to deny KGB involvement in the Club's foundation, other sources were less surprised by Kalugin's statements:

> I remember those inexplainable characters that kept walking about at concerts. I addressed the phrase *s bettonnym vzgliadom* [*with a concrete gaze*] to them. I don't think we knew at the time what was the exact role of the KGB, but we were aware that odd things went on (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 7).

> [A]t the beginning of the 80s someone from the ranks of the KGB, apparently, I don't know, I didn't have anything to do with them, I learned about it later. They thought it would be better to let these people have their organisation and at least be able to watch them when they gathered. Of course they tried to influence us, but they couldn't. But they were around there anyhow. Well. We decided that

> instead of being jailed [snorts/laughs] or being hit by a car or being killed or put away, we'd rather join that very same, so-called Rock Club, [and we] received a stamp that gave the right to perform these songs (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 6).
>
> [M]any thanks to the Government Security Committee, the initiator of the Club's foundation. On this occasion it did not bother [us], it suited it better that we weren't sitting in different places, around in cellars, but were gathered in one place, within sight (Naumenko in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 214).

The comments of Borzykin and Feinshtein-Vasil'ev suggest that some LRC members suspected a KGB involvement which reached deeper than the mere presence of a curator.

4.3. LRC organisation

4.3.1. The *DK* system: Houses and palaces of culture

The LRC was organised in much the same way as other houses of culture in the Soviet Union. Andrei Tropillo explains (in Steinholt 2002c: 34) that Lenin was responsible for organising each individual *Dom Kul'tury* (DK) not directly under a central ministry of culture, but under a labour union.[49] Stalin would probably have changed the practice very early on, had it not been authorised by Lenin in person. The system turned out to work quite well, ensuring a high level of employment and activities in the cultural sector. The LRC was part of this system as a sub-department of the LMDST, and bands came to the LRC to have their songs sanctioned for performance. A contributing cause of the eventual demise of the LRC was the abolishment of the DK system in the 1990s, Tropillo underlines, stressing the losses suffered by the cultural sector as a consequence: With the old order the cultural workers were lost along with their entire educational apparatus.

4.3.2. The curators

The LRC website mentions three KGB curators. The first, Vladimir Valentinovich Borisov, was slightly older than the musicians and his attitude is described as 'restrictive'. He eventually married the first LMDST curator at the LRC, Nadezhda Afanas'eva (subsequently: Borisova). The source gives no further comments as to how the curators cooperated with the LRC council and the musicians, but the next KGB man was known informally as 'Volodia'. Apparently displaying a meeker attitude, according to the website, he 'eventually became a resident'. The third and last, Lesha, also mingled quite well with the rockers and, the same source states: '[D]idn't apply much pressure'. In 1984-85 Afanas'eva-Borisova was replaced on the LRC council by the new LMDST curator Natal'ia Veselova, who 'persistently preserved the interests of the club', during the final anti-rock campaigns. Notably, this information comes from the bureaucratic wing of the LRC council, and does not necessarily reflect the opinions of club members, who generally tend to avoid the subject. Zhitinskii is one of the few other sources who remembers to mention the 'three women behind the scenes': The LMDST director, the second LRC curator and the first LRC censor. He underlines that, even though musicians tended to regard them as opponents, it was often thanks to their careful balancing-acts that the LRC was able to survive:

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49. DK: *Dvorca-* or *Doma Kul'tury*: *Palaces-* or *houses of culture.*

> It is not known on which high-placed 'carpets' Anna Aleksandrovna [Ivanova] had to stand and what sharp telephonic threats she had to listen to. The Club was on the verge of disbandment more than once or twice. But somehow everything turned out fine, the thunder passed, but one can only try to imagine what nerves it demanded from Anna Aleksandrovna (Zhitinskii 1990: 128).

> Natasha Veselova, a young, beautiful woman of the Party, was not 'ours' by definition, but for some reason she took the side of the rockers from the outset [...] [She] did her job happily and fearlessly. Sometimes she acted the fool, pretending to be a naïve high-school girl in front of a furious leadership: 'But what's bad in this song?' Sometimes she cried, insulted by the rockers, who were indifferent to the difficulties of operating caught between the hammer and the anvil (Zhitinskii 1990: 129-130).

Nina Baranovskaia came to the LRC in the winter of 1985 from a Leningrad University newsletter, where she had managed to publish some positive articles on Akvarium. Although she was responsible for the *litovka* and no song could be performed legally in public without her authorisation, she was considered by most to be an insider. She had to live with the fact that songs she was not able to sanction were sometimes played anyway, in which cases she would be summoned to answer for them. However, many third generation bands felt she was being too restrictive during the conflict-ridden period of 1986.[50]

4.3.3. The LRC council

On the 7th of February 1981 eleven members were elected to the first LRC council: Grebenshchikov (Akvarium), Romanov (Akvarium), Kalinin (Argonavty), Golubev (Dzhonatan Livingston), Stoliarov (Dilizhans), Priatkin (Zerkalo), Barikhnovskii, Danilov, Zaitsev, Tatiana Ivanova, and Mikhailov. Regular club meetings were held every Saturday, but it soon became apparent that the various representatives had different visions of the Club's purpose. The first of the two ensuing council factions, the so-called *administratory* (which consisted almost exclusively of *menedzhery*) insisted that the club should be organised as a small-scale version of Lenkoncert – the official concert agency. The other wing, headed by initiators Zaitsev, Tatiana Ivanova and Golubev (the former two also *menedzhery*), insisted that the LRC should stay as independent from government organisations as possible, and concentrate instead on serving and protecting the interests of bands and musicians. The conflict marred meetings and gatherings until autumn 1982, when the *administratory* gave in and left the Club. More musicians were then represented in the new LRC leadership and Nikolai Mikhailov, from the *menedzhery*, was elected as the new council's chairman (*prezident*), a position he held until the club's demise in the late 1990s. Among the new council members were Akvarium co-founder and Roksi journalist Anatolii Gunitskii, and Akvarium's bass player and percussionist Mikhail Feinshtein-Vasil'ev.

The new council reorganised the LRC in sections for artwork design, sound operation, rock journalism, recruitment, administration, rock poetry, and a rhythm studio. Each section was lead by a council representative. Apart from in the running of the Club's everyday affairs, the council relied on the LMDST in questions of economy, logistics and other crucial issues. Within its limited field of movement, the new LRC council set about trying to improve conditions for musicians. Among the higher priorities were more concerts,

50. Baranovskaia gives her own views of her work as an LRC censor in the foreword to her biography on Konstantin Kinchev (Baranovskaia 1993).

access to better sound technology and the improvement of concert sound. Its first major achievement was the staging of the 1983 LRC festival, the first proper rock festival in the Russian republic. It was successful enough in all respects to become an annual event, a showcase for the Club's activities.

4.3.4. LRC procedures

For admission, a band would apply to the LRC council. The council's admissions committee would then assemble to listen to the band's set and decide whether to recommend the band for membership. If the band was recommended, it would present its repertory, either by a test performance for the LMDST or, more commonly, by submitting the lyrics for its inspection. With the LMDST-authorised *litovka*, the band could then perform the sanctioned songs in public.[51] Mikhail Feinshtein-Vasil'ev headed the admissions committee for six years from 1983:

> For six years I worked, absolutely for free [laughs]. That is, I was the leader of the admissions committee at the [Leningrad] Rock Club. Which means I took with me two members of the [LRC] council and went to dances or some kinds of parties or rehearsal places to listen. And in that way I found for instance Auktsyon. I was the first one there, Televizor, Dzhungli, all that happened and I granted them all admission. That is, I admitted all the bands that are now well-known. [...] I took with me any two members of the council and if it was interesting we gave instant admittance [...] That's how it was done (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 7).

Tickets for LRC concerts were distributed free. Members received a certain number of invitations to hand out, the rest were distributed through Komsomol organisations. Eventually, however, non-profit ticket distribution became corrupted by the increasing popularity of gigs and festivals. Various forms of speculation flourished, both inside and outside the LRC's organisation. Ticket distribution became one of the most disputed subjects at LRC meetings. The repeated complaint was that too many tickets went to Komsomol bureaucrats and too few to rock fans. In addition, according to the LRC website, cheating was sometimes necessary in order to deal with practical problems, especially because of the Club's chronic lack of resources. The LRC could do very little to supply bands with sound equipment, so it had to be borrowed from houses of culture on a short-term basis. With no other currency to pay for transport, concert tickets had to be used as payment.

The LRC could not pay bands for their performances, but there were less formal ways round that problem. Svetlana Loseva, amateur photographer and LRC concert organiser, tells the story of how Alisa was paid for a gig in 1986: Lead singer Kinchev was a registered resident of Moscow, but lived in Leningrad for long periods of time. So even though he stayed in Leningrad it was possible to cover his theoretical travel expenses. He went to the railway station, asked for a used Moscow-Leningrad ticket and brought it to Loseva. She could then return him 16 roubles 50 kopecks for the trip and buy him a return ticket, which he, in turn, sold at the railway station. This brought the rock star's 'salary' up to 33 roubles. 'Which was not that bad,' Loseva underlines, 'if you bear in mind that a bottle of vodka cost 3 roubles 70 kopecks at the time.'[52]

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51. *Litovka*: see 3.4.7, page 29.
52. Conversation, St Petersburg, 13th of October 2001.

The balcony at Ulica Rubinshteina 13 was used as a 'VIP' area for journalists, curators and other official representatives, and for the jury during festivals. In the main hall as well as outside, the police presence was considerable, and their crowd management included preventing people from dancing during gigs. Police provocation and subsequent arrests of audience members or musicians were not unusual at LRC festivals. Other unpleasant situations could occur when bands toured other cities. The LRC council and LMDST administration routinely received *telegi* (lit. *waggons*) – i.e. written accusations, sometimes based on the performance of unsanctioned songs, but more often on fictitious reports of indecency or provocation. In 1982 Akvarium gave a concert in Arkhangel'sk, where the DK administrator refused to allow BG to go on stage barefoot. Asked why he wore no shoes, he replied that it symbolised the value of being close to the earth. Not convinced by BG's hippie stance, the administrator insisted that he wear proper shoes on her stage or go and be close to the earth somewhere else. BG ignored the warnings, played barefoot, whereupon letters started pouring in to the LMDST. Akvarium flautist Andrei Romanov recalls:

> But afterwards, a little while after our returning home, Akvarium was subject to ostracism most shameful to the rock club. For this, all forces of oppression that one could possibly imagine were utilised. From the banal construction of 'public opinion', to pressure against the leadership of the LMDST, which was left in a most uncomfortable position. After all, it had a very generous attitude towards Akvarium and couldn't comprehend what these boys could have done that would result in all those dreadful letters (Romanov 2001: 153).

The LMDST was forced to set an example and banned Akvarium from performing. Akvarium answered by mounting wheels on Feinshtein-Vasil'ev's bass amplifier and went back to touring the city, giving semi-acoustic apartment concerts for the next six months. After all, for a band as well known as Akvarium, there was a world outside the LRC.

4.3.5. LRC festivals

Following the first event in 1983, the LRC festivals became the Club's single annual highlight, a showcase for its activities with the potential for obtaining positive publicity in the outside world. It also served as a taste and trend barometer for what went on inside the rock environment. The reactions of audience and official guests told bands what was appreciated among rock fans as well as by the cultural establishment. The element of competition involved in music festivals was a typical Soviet feature. A jury would be present to judge performances and award prizes to the best instrumentalists, best performance, best lyrics, best composer, and of course diplomas for the best contenders. All prizes were honorary, no money was involved. The jury consisted of eight members, four representatives of official institutions and organisations and four insiders from the rock community. The gap between the interests of officials and insiders on the juries meant that they tended to ignore audience preferences as they struggled to find internal agreement. This led to many heated debates.

The 1983 festival was held from 13th to 16th July and fourteen bands participated.[53] The jury consisted of: Afanas'eva (LMDST curator), Iusfin (Union of Composers), Kharlampiev (Komsomol regional committee), Shul'ga (Melodiia), Meinert (Estonian radio journalist), Mikhailov (LRC council president), Troitsky (journalist), and Gunitskii (LRC council

53. Akvarium, Dzhonatan Livingston, Iabloko, Manufaktura, Melomany, Mify, Patriarkhal'naia vystavka, Piknik, Pilgrimy, Plius, Rossiiane, Strannye igry, Tamburin, and Zoopark.

member). Much to the disappointment of the audience, Akvarium were awarded second prize, and a newcomer, Manufaktura, was honoured as the jury's favourite. The rock insiders on the jury were accused of making an embarrassing compromise with the cultural establishment, and of denying Akvarium what was rightfully theirs. Most of the audience felt that Akvarium were the natural winners of this first ever rock contest to be held in Russia, and judged Manufaktura's tame lyrics and stage behaviour as no more than rocked-up estrada. Jury member Gunitskii recalls:

> Yes, I remember the controversy. The thing was that Akvarium, like any other band, had its good and bad days. Sometimes they performed better, sometimes weaker. But, honestly, there was something fresh and new in Manufaktura's performance and they had talented musicians in their line-up. Kondrashkin played the drums. Akvarium did not perform very well at that festival and afterwards Manufaktura lost it and eventually disappeared. The problem was that the jury, with their choice of that newcomer, forgot about the audience and its opinion (Gunitskii in Steinholt 2001b: 3).

Musicians and fans, of course, knew that they could not expect wonders from a jury whose decisions were restricted by the tastes of official representatives, but they still took the whole thing very seriously. The first prize of the festival could, after all, be quite important for a band's career. The three best bands were allowed to go on tours and, although nothing of the sort happened before perestroika, there was much talk about recording deals with Melodiia. Thus the element of competition did not result only in endless intrigues, accusations and envy, it also became significant for the stylistic development of LRC bands by setting certain aesthetic standards, some of which were reflected in the awards for 'best instrumentalists' or 'best lyrics'.

For the 1984 festival, held from 18th to 20th May, the LRC succeeded in finding another rock-friendly jury member. Aleksandr Zhitinskii, who represented the Union of Writers, was already publishing rock-friendly articles in the journal Avrora. The Komsomol had a new representative, Pilatov, otherwise the jury was the same as the year before. Seventeen bands competed, among which nine were newcomers.[54] Another novelty was that the Komsomol awarded three special prizes. The first, for 'ideological-artistic level of performance' went to Tamburin. Manufaktura was rewarded for 'constructive creativity' and Zoopark was awarded the: 'Optical Institute's Department of the Komsomol's prize for audience sympathies'. Apparently the intention was to avoid controversy by awarding almost everybody a prize. The 'best-of' list was topped by Akvarium, Kino and Sekret. Among the younger bands, Televizor attracted attention and secured their first diploma. BG's and Maik's lyrics were highly commended.

For the third festival, 15th to 17th March 1985, interest had outgrown the 600 seat concert hall at Ulica Rubinshteina 13 and the event was moved to the bigger venue of LDM.[55] Among the sixteen participants, Zoopark was absent and Sergei Kurekhin's Pop mekhanika was a spectacular newcomer. It was decided not to invite jury members from other cities, since the festival was a local event. This meant that replacements for insiders Troitsky and Meinert had to be found. Thus, although the new curator Veselova was among them, the cultural bureaucrats were once again heavily represented in the jury. The prizes went to Dzhungli, who performed mostly instrumental jazz-rock pieces; a slightly more aggressive Televizor; the cult ska-band Strannye igry who were playing their

54. Alisa, Dzhungli, Kino, Ornament, Prodolzhenie sleduet, Sekret, Tele-U, Televizor and Zenit.
55. LDM: *Leningradskii Dom Molodezhi* (*Leningrad Youth House*), the Leningrad Komsomol's palace of culture.

last LRC festival; Tele-U, the Rhythm and Blues band of Akvarium guitarist Liapin; Alisa, with their new singer Konstantin Kinchev; a more fashionable-sounding Kino; and the bard rockers Tamburin. The hard, dark and spectacular new-wave performance of Alisa became the festival's great sensation, and signalled a new, challenging attitude from the younger bands.

4.4. Glasnost and generation conflict

4.4.1. Testing new borders

The new, third, generation of Leningrad bands was no less willing to make artistic compromises with official taste than Akvarium had been in Tbilisi half a decade earlier.[56] Although the LRC council and the LMDST were still nervous and controlling as a result of the rock repression, the younger and more restless musicians felt that something was on the move. Interestingly, unlike the jazz-loving Andropov, few expected anything from the new General Secretary, a certain Mikhail Gorbachev, who set out with a sacrilegious programme to make Russia sober. So, when the young bands began raising their voices, the LRC establishment, strict and dutifully self-censoring following the pressure of recent years, struggled to restrain them.

A reformist faction was forming in the LRC, however, headed by council member Andrei Burlaka. In order to create a debate and focus more attention on the younger bands, he had founded RIO, an non-profit information newsletter about rock music.[57] A new group initiative, lead by Burlaka, opposed the LRC establishment and split the council into two factions. Much to the dismay of their adversaries, the new faction cooperated with people from outside the LRC, initiating a new expansion of rock activities beyond the LRC organisation. The LRC had already incorporated the fanzine Roksi and officially re-named it the *Bulletin of the Leningrad Rock Club* (*Biulleten' leningradskogo rok-kluba*) from 1985. It also consistently referred to Andrei Tropillo's studio as its own, and continued to do so well into the 1990s, even though Tropillo ran his activities totally independently of the LRC, and even though the Club itself had no studio facilities whatsoever. RIO, on the other hand, stubbornly refused appropriation and added an alternative, if not explicitly challenging voice to Leningrad's rock environment:

> As a member of the LRC council I understood that the club had a new cultural grouping among its members and that it was necessary to help these new bands. I was pushed into opposition. So I organised the journal RIO. I distributed one issue each month. It was given away for free, because what was considered illegal in such activities was to earn or even receive the tiniest bit of money from them [the activities]. I understood that there was nothing criminal in what I did. I wrote clean musical criticism, concert and album reviews, and no KGB-shnik ever bothered me in my work. The LRC establishment, on the other hand, did react. We invited in contributors and helpers from outside the LRC ranks. RIO founded a new Russian rock language on the basis on normal everyday street

56. Some differences can be observed between sources when it comes to which bands belonged in the respective generations of Leningrad rock. Usually, however, the 'oldtimer' generation includes Mify, Rossiiane and St. Peterburg; the second generation: Akvarium, Zoopark, and, usually, Strannye igry and Akvarium adoptees Kino; The third generation is generally considered to consist of bands which emerged from 1984 onwards, like Alisa, Televizor and Auktsyon.
57. Officially, RIO was said to be an abbreviation of *Reklamno-Informatsionnyi Obzor* (*publicity and information survey*), but most interpreted it as *Rock In Opposition*, with reference to the ongoing conflict within the LRC.

> jargon. [...] And we were attacked by Roksi and the LRC, and it is quite fun now to look back on the language in which they attacked us: pure, official Soviet phrases. Gunitskii accused us of 'anti-Soviet activities' and so on (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 6-7).

The many balancing acts involved in keeping the LRC going during times of repression had taught the Rock Club establishment how to react to independent initiatives and unsanctioned projects. When official pressure ceased and left the LRC council in control, it was clear it had grown used to its cramped, defensive position and was reluctant to let go. Convinced it was still protecting the rock environment with all means available, it failed to notice that surveillance had been lifted. In effect, the LRC establishment ended up struggling to protect Leningrad rock from its own renewal, while bands who tried to test the limits were finding that a cultural climate change was taking place outside the Club. During 1985-86 song sanctioning was kept strict and disobedience was punished as before. The restrictive policy was partly supported by older bands, who were more heavily represented in the LRC organisation and who found working conditions and the current level of artistic freedom satisfactory.

> The clan at LRC consisted of first wave bands: Akvarium, Zoopark (later, Kino was adopted). They could tour quite freely and led a much easier life than us. As we were being increasingly controlled and monitored, they started being left alone. Of course, Maik had his times of trouble, too, but that was before this point. From 1986, when we were being banned by the Club Council, he was already in the clear (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 7).

Televizor's strategy was simple. From 1986 Borzykin plainly refused to acknowledge any censorship and sang what he pleased. His idea was that censorship is in your mind, and as long as you do not accept it, it does not exist. After Televizor's performance at the 1986 festival they were banned from performing for six months for playing unsanctioned songs, such as *Tvoi papa fashist* (*Your dad's a fascist*), *My idem* (*We're going*) and *Vyiti iz-pod kontrol'ia* (*Get out of control*).[58] On the first possible occasion they repeated their tactics with exactly the same result. From 1987, however, pressure had ceased sufficiently for Borzykin to leave the spiral of ever intensifying provocations and return to more poetic songs:

> When people started to react to my more daring and provocative lyrics it produced a counter-effect with me and made me write even more provocative lyrics. BG and others (Zoopark and other members of the older generation) were afraid that such provocations could put the LRC in danger. This led me to lose interest in Akvarium from around 1984. Today, of course, all that is forgotten and there are no more bad feelings (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 5).

If Borzykin has forgotten the bad feelings of the LRC generation conflict, this is not so with all the representatives of the old LRC establishment to whom I talked. Opinions were still very much divided along the lines of previous disputes and to a much higher degree than I had expected.[59] Judging from reactions witnessed during the fieldwork, relationships must have been more than a little strained when LRC controversies peaked in 1986. The conflict coincided with a high-water mark for provocative and 'political' lyrics. Leningrad rock has never been so politically explicit, neither before nor after. Nevertheless, as rock entered the big stages and gradually found its place in the popular music mainstream in the late 1980s, bands as well as audiences were turning their backs on explicitly political songs.

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58. See 5.5.6, page 80.
59. A couple of interviews actually failed because I made the mistake of mentioning that I had talked to old adversaries of the interviewees.

> The political peak in our rock music was reached in 1986. In the summer of 1987 the authorities were panicking, but by autumn (the Kinchev case) they already knew they'd lost. They just launched another provocation (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 7).[60]

As the pressure on rock started to weaken, the rock community started to dissolve. Confronted by the laws of an emerging commercial music industry from which musicians were the last to receive any income, the name of the game changed. From a case of extensive cooperation necessitated by external pressure before perestroika, the situation quickly turned into one of 'all for one and everybody for themselves.'

4.4.2. The final rise and fall of the LRC

With the practice of *litovka* now recent history, in 1988 the LRC staged its biggest ever festival. It had to be held in two 'rounds', a three-day qualifying round for newcomers in late May followed by a full six days in early June. The following year the event returned to a more moderate size, and 1990 saw no festival at all. The last LRC festival marked the Club's ten-year anniversary and was held between 7th and 10th of March 1991. Facing competition from other rock venues, the LRC struggled on less prominently for a few years. A reluctancy to reorganise itself and give new people with fresh ideas access to its organisation, meant that the Club was unable to renew itself as it staggered on to a quiet demise in the late 1990s. Today small rock stages and venues appear, disappear and reappear in St Petersburg with astounding regularity. The rock scene is not as dominant as it was during its boom in the late 1980s, but vital and multifaceted. The era when a central, unifying rock organisation was needed appears to be over.

4.4.3. *Police par tout - justice nullepart*: The rock community and the *militsiia*

As already mentioned, one consequence of binary models of oppression and resistance is a tendency to regard the oppressing authorities as a single, unified force. This is not always in accord with historical reality. While it is clear that police raids at concerts were, along with extensive campaigns in the media, a vehicle used actively by the authorities during the rock repression of 1983-84, this does not explain why police harassment and provocations remained a part of rock life in Leningrad during perestroika. Whereas the authorities periodically called on the police as a part of their official anti-rock policies, the *militsiia* used force against the rock community of its own accord more or less continuously. Before venturing to examine the relationship between the police and rockers more closely, this paragraph looks at three separate incidents by way of illustration. The first incident, or rather series of incidents, took place in Moscow, where the rock community was not sheltered by any official club:

> It was 1983, the last year concerts were held at all in Moscow, because Andropov was, sometime in 1984, already out making order – they started arresting in August '83 and in '84, after the raid at the Bravo concert, gigs in concerts halls ceased for about a year, only acoustic apartment concerts [*kvartirniki*] remained (Smirnov in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 112-113).

60. A smear campaign was staged against Alisa singer Konstantin Kinchev, who was accused, quite falsely, of shouting 'sieg heil' from the stage and, whether provoked or not, maybe not so falsely accused of attacking a policeman.

What has remained the prime example of the rock repression in Moscow, the arrest of Bravo singer Zhanna Aguzarova, had no official connection with her musical activities. The targetting of her band had very little to do with the political sensivity of its repertory, which consisted mainly of quite innocent love songs. Aguzarova was arrested for forging her *propiska*, her Moscow residential permit.[61] However, the fact that the police resorted to closing a concert in order to control the identity papers of performers and audience, is a typical example of police provocation at concerts in general, and of the means used to clear Moscow stages of rock acts in 1983-84 in particular.

The repression was felt in Leningrad as well, where the LRC came under increasing pressure. But since the LRC was an official venue, police presence at concerts and festivals was already mandatory. The second sample incident took place at the 1986 LRC festival and was witnessed by a journalist from Rolling Stone Magazine. His account begins when Akvarium enters the stage and BG announces his band's refusal to play:

> He [BG] briefly states that out in the lobby, men have been detaining and questioning many people, including musicians. Andrei Otryaskin, one of the most talented guitarists in the country, had his head slammed into a wall when he tried to resist. [...] With the houselights up and Aquarium filing offstage, the buzz turns into a roar, and the roar begins to crest like a wave. Soon rhythmic stamping rocks the building. In front of the stage, a photographer methodically takes pictures of the crowd. Unbelievably, a kid with long hair appears and holds his hand up to block the lens: it's something instantly recognizable, something spliced in from the Sixties (Benson 1987: 142).

I asked Andrei Burlaka about the 1986 police provocation described in the Rolling Stone article. His insider view of events was, perhaps not surprisingly, a shade more sardonic:

> Yes, that is a real funny article [*zabavnaia stat'ia*]. The tumults at the 1986 festival, about which that Rolling Stone journalist wrote in the style of a war correspondent, were merely part of the game. It was normal rock club life. The police would break up the odd concert and pick out some musicians and fans to pester, it was nothing special (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 7).

Spectacular as they often were, the reason for the endless conflicts with the police did not necessarily reflect a determined, consistent policy, where police acted on orders from above. For bored *militsionery*, one benefit of their rather tedious guard duties at rock concerts was the occasional opportunity to have some fun of their own. With some bands, Alisa in particular, violent clashes with the police became something of a tradition. My third example was observed during this study's fieldwork. On the 30th of September 2001, Alisa gave a concert at the Iubileinyi in St Petersburg. Standing in the back of the hall, I had a first-hand view of how arrogant and bullying constables roamed the fringes of the crowd for the entire event. Fully equipped with truncheons and riot helmets they concentrated on fans dressed in the red and black colours of the band. They undertook body searches and identity controls inside the hall. People standing nearby were briskly commanded to distance themselves or simply pushed away. A teenage boy, who had sat down to rest after dancing, had his arms checked for needle marks. He was not the only one to be dragged out to the foyer for a quick beating, after which the constables were observed refreshing themselves at the beer-stand. Other audience members reassured me

61. A residential permit for major Soviet cities could be obtained only by long-term commuting, unless a job with the police or similar services seemed like a tempting option.

with a shrug that I was witnessing normal events. Most probably, then, a Rolling Stone journalist today would find scenes similar to those witnessed in 1986.[62] The most obvious novelty since then is the fact that the musicians of major bands, now regarded as public figures rather than deviant kids, are left alone.

In Russia's major cities there is a profound lack of trust between citizens and policemen. In St Petersburg most people are reluctant to speak to a policeman if they can avoid it, even if it is just to ask for the way. As one informant explained, the bad relationship between constables and the population has a long tradition in most Russian cities and is closely linked to the *propiska* system. Instead of waiting for up to eight years to obtain a city residentship, joining the police force is a quicker way, largely for young men from the provinces, to settle in the big city. To the locals, policemen are outsiders, *ne náshy* (*not ours*), just simple guys from the provinces, with no talent or education by means of which they could obtain their *propiska* sooner. They are simply not regarded as qualified urban citizens, as people who know the ways of city life. As such they cannot be trusted, my informant concluded. Other locals would assert that, at least since the days of Dostoevsky, the inhabitants of St Petersburg have complained that because of the propiska loophole, 'not our brightest jewels' are recruited as protectors of law and order.

To what extent such notions are based on fact and to what extent they serve as a convenient way of distancing people from their unpopular fellow townsmen remains an open question. There is no doubt, however, that the *militsiia* has always had a special eye for non-conformist elements. Few, if any, LRC veterans will dispute the view that the police in the 1980s, supported by the general population's scepticism towards non-conformist teenagers, took the opportunity to exercise power and provoke 'action' at rock concerts, and would have done so whether orders were issued from above or not. The present situation, as witnessed during the *RiR* fieldwork, supports such a view. Thus, police provocation at rock concerts in 1980s Leningrad does not necessarily reflect contemporary high-level cultural policies. It was also a symptom of the ongoing conflict between non-conformist urban youth and uniformed young men from the provinces.

4.5. Roksi (1977-1990)

4.5.1. Founders, editors and contributors

In 1977, BG and Kolia Vasin took the initiative of starting a rock fanzine, and Maik Naumenko was one of the initial contributors. The journal was typewritten in no more than six copies, in accordance with publishing law. Slow circulation contributed to the low publishing frequency of this *samizdat* fanzine. Among the early editors were Boris Malyshev, Aleksandr Andreev and Mikhail Bruk. From Roksi no. 6 (1983), Aleksandr Startsev (a.k.a. 'Sasha Skrimami,' 'Alek Zander') became co-editor with Anatolii 'Dzhordzh' Gunitskii (a.k.a. 'Staryi roker') and Igor' Leonov, while Malyshev and Andreev continued as occasional contributors. From January 1985 Roksi was adopted as the official organ of the LRC, which increased its circulation from six to fifty copies. The LRC demanded the name be changed to 'Biulleten' leningradskogo rok-kluba,' but it remained Roksi in spirit with readers, editors and contributors. Photographs gained a higher priority

62. For the sake of giving a balanced account, there was no lack of bullying, beer-stealing, violent and excessively drunk members of the *Armiia Alisa* (*Alice Army*, the Alisa fan club) present at the 2001 gig. However, the fisticuffs observed between audience members tended to be truncheon-less and one- rather than five-against-one.

during this period and Natal'ia Vasil'eva and Vadim Konradt were frequent contributors of photographic material. Photographs were copied and glued to the pages manually, which made the work involved in publishing each issue hard and time-consuming. For the largest issues this meant preparing up to 5000 pages of typescript and 1000 photos.

4.5.2. Roksi issues and their regular features

The fanzine was published irregularly, but the size of each issue increased gradually:

No.1, 1977, 22 p.[63]	No.6, 1983, 65 p.	No.11, Jan.-Jun. 1986, 91 p.
No.2, 1978, 28 p.	No.7, June 1984, 53 p.	No.12, Spring 1987, 60 p.
No.3, 1978, 29 p.	No.8, January 1985, 66 p.	No.13, Jun.-Oct. 1987, 47 p.
No.4, 1980, 45 p.	No.9, 1985, 59 p.	No.14, Jan.-Apr. 1988, 81 p.
No.5, 1981, 44 p.	No.10, Sep.-Dec. 1985, 76 p.	No.15, 1990, 74 p.

Regular features of the earlier issues included an editorial and a rumours column. Another frequent feature was the 'Lengortop', a chart, initially of quite ambitious proportions.[64] In the 1977 issue the list was based on a survey of fifty-four insiders of the rock environment, listing the top fourty-four Russian rock songs. In No.2 the 'Lengortop' consisted of two lists, for 'western' and 'eastern' rock musicians. These ranked the best guitarists, bassists, drummers, keyboardists, other instrumentalists, male and female vocalists, as well as best bands, songwriters and musical arrangements for Russian bands. After a break in 1983, the chart returned as a taste barometer for Roksi's editors and contributors. It listed the top five local bands, top five local songwriters and top five western bands. Later the list was based on jury decisions at the annual festivals, audience reactions or audience questionnaires. From 1984, lists of western songs and bands disappeared. In documenting the musical taste of the Leningrad rock environment's inner circle, the 'Lengortop' registered several notable changes, such as in Roksi no. 6, when The Clash came out ahead of glam rock and hard rock bands.

From the first issue of Roksi, a column devoted to rock literature was introduced by BG and Maik. A short-story by Maik (using the pseudonym 'Zh. Fizdipillo') appeared in no. 1. No. 2 ran a full section on 'literature and other arts,' with reviews of short-stories by BG, some thoughts on rock prose by Vasilii Aksenov, and a humorous poem. Another humorous poem appeared in no. 5, after which the column disappeared altogether.

4.5.3. Translations and Roksi's rock criticism

Translated articles from the western rock press, predominantly Rolling Stone (RS), appeared from no. 4. Roksi's views were generally close to the relative conservatism, and the reluctance to embrace new rock styles, that RS came to represent from the early 1970s.[65] A closer look at the articles featured in Roksi reveals a fairly conservative choice of subjects:

63. The number of pages refers to the CD-Rom edition prepared by Aleksandr Startsev. The typewritten originals were considerably longer.
64. 'Lengortop' is a Soviet-style abbreviation for *Leningradskii Gorodskoi Top* (*'Leningrad City Top'*).
65. See Lindberg, Gudmundsson, Michelsen and Weisethaunet (2000: 126-28).

Author	*Journal, issue*	*Band / artist featured*	*(Roksi no.)*
J. Gill,	Sounds, Jun. 7th 1980	Yes, Buggles	(4)
P. Johns,	Billboard, Jun. 1983	UK new pop and new romantics	(6)
S. Pond, LA,	RS 420, April 26th 1984	UB 40	(7)
M. Brown, London,	RS 422, May 24th 1984	The Who	(7)
C. Shaar Murray,	RS*	David Bowie	(8)
P. Martin,	Smash Hits, March 1985	Julian Lennon	(9)
(album reviews)	RS*	Julian Lennon, Paul Mc Cartney, Lou Reed, and Deep Purple	(9)
K. Lauder,	RS 442, February 1985	Bruce Springsteen	(10)
J. Santoro,	Guitar World, March 1986	Keith Richards	(11)
M. Benson,	RS 488, December 4th 1986	UB 40 (Tour of the USSR)	(12)
A. de Curtis,	RS 511, Oct. 1987	George Harrison	(14)

*Issue number and date of publication not stated.

From the very first issue, the majority of Roksi's contents meet the following definition of rock criticism's place in rock journalism:

> '[R]ock criticism' does not equal but is taken as a qualified subdivision of 'rock journalism.' The term designates printed texts, which have argumentative and interpretive ambitions but are more 'journalistic' than 'academic'. News is not criticism according to this definition, nor is practical information or passing commentary, while reviews, in-depth interviews, overviews, debate articles and essays (or 'think pieces', as rock critics like to call them) are (Lindberg, Gudmundsson, Michelsen and Weisethaunet 2000: xviii).

In Roksi no. 1 the influence of RS is apparent in an article that quotes Jon Landau's *The Age of Rock*, and agrees with his point that rock no longer fights tradition but has become a tradition of its own. From this point of departure the criticism of Roksi reaches an academic peak with sociologist Boris Malyshev's popular-academic articles *Rock as an energy of change* (no. 5) and *Why do they burn for this? Or social reasons for youth music* (no. 6).[66] The articles on rock lyrics by 'Slavianin' (no. 4) and 'Gorkin' (nos. 4 and 5) aim at a similar level. After the first few years, and especially after the formation of the LRC, Roksi's notes, essays and 'think-pieces' shifted their focus from the Anglo-American to the local rock scene. This shift was accompanied by a less formal writing style and less academic approaches to rock.

More recent trends in Anglo-American rock criticism are reflected in the styles of younger Roksi writers. Aleksandr Startsev's growing boldness and disrespectful attitude towards certain performers exemplifies this. Roksi initially attempted to present conflicting views, as is demonstrated by the double reviews of the band Soiuz liubitelei muzyki rok (no. 1) and Akvarium's album *Treugol'nik* (no. 5). The editors encouraged contributions expressing different views, but apparently received little response. A letter-box section was attempted briefly (no. 10), but was quickly abandoned. Instead, reports from other cities were occasionally included as new rock clubs appeared across the Soviet Union from 1985.

66. The Russian titles are *Rok kak energiia izmeneniia* and *Pochemu oni torchat na etom? Ili sotsial'nye prichiny molodezhnoi muzyki*, respectively.

4.5.4. A shift towards news and interviews

With the increasing level of activity at the LRC, news and reviews became more central. Roksi's focus shifted to cover concerts, festivals, recordings and other developments since the last issue. A festival report would usually provide information about each performing band, their recent line-up changes and recordings, before evaluating their performance. Most Roksi interviews are short (two to four pages), but they are often combined with album reviews, band features or 'think pieces'. Roksi no. 5 comes close to a special feature, presenting a seven-page interview with an anonymous punk fan, a 'think piece' entitled *What is punk and where is its place in our lives*, and a four-page interview with punk rocker Andrei 'Svin' Panov. Early interview questions range from musical 'primitivism', the avantgarde, eastern philosophy, or religion to: 'What's your favourite colour?' As the Roksi journalists gained in experience both the coherence and information value of their interviews improved. A list of all Roksi interviews indicates a marked preference for the older LRC generation. It appears to support the younger LRC bands' complaints of being overlooked. Most bands of the younger generation were featured only after Burlaka's journal RIO provided Roksi with some competition from 1986. Bands and artists covered by this study appear in bold:

Name	*Band(s)*	*Roksi no(s).*
Vladimir Kozlov	SLMR	1
Iurii I'lchenko	Mify, Mashina vremeni	2
Mikhail Naumenko	Maik, Zoopark	3,4,7,11
Georgii Ordanovskii	Rossiiane	4
Anonymous punk fan		5
Andrei 'Svin' Panov	Avtomaticheskie udovletvoriteli (AU)	5
Aleksei Rybin,	ex-Kino	6
Aleksandr Davydov	ex-Strannye Igry (publ. posthumously)	7
Boris Grebenshchikov	Akvarium	7,9,12,14,15
Iurii Morozov	(solo)	7
Aleksandr Titov	Akvarium, Kino	8
Mikhail 'Fan' Vasil'ev	Akvarium, Zoopark	8
Konstantin Kinchev	Alisa	9,14
Vladimir Rekshan	St Peterburg, Gorod	9
Aleksandr Liapin	Akvarium, Tele-U, Motor-bliuz	9
Andrei Otriaskin	Dzhungli	9
Viktor Tsui	Kino	10
Aleksandr Kondrashkin	Strannye igry, Akvarium, Manufaktura, Dzhungli	10
Nikolai Mikhailov	(LRC chairman)	11,15
Mikhail Borzykin	Televizor	11
Leonid Fedorov and Sergei Rogoshkin	Auktsyon	11
Andrei Tropillo	(Sound engineer, AnTrop studio)	12
Aleksandr Bashlachev	(solo)	14
Mladshie Brat'ia band interview		14
'Rikoshet' Aksenov	Ob'ekt nasmeshek	14
Aleksandr Lipnitskii	Zvuki Mu	14
Andrei Makarevich	Mashina vremeni	15

4.5.5. Album reviews

Roksi's album reviews began with issue no. 4, and usually took up one or two pages. Initially the selection of recordings was extremely local, bearing in mind that both Maik and BG were early Roksi contributors. Recordings by Maik, Zoopark and Akvarium make up eight out of eleven reviewed in issues 4 through 8, not counting albums recorded with Akvarium members, such as Kino's *Nachal'nik Kamchatki*. However, this also reflects the fact that these were the most productive studio bands at the time, and even they were not reviewed consistently.[67] Nevertheless, well-known and productive recording artists such as Mashina vremeni and Iurii Morozov are missing. The younger generation, apart from Kino, received little or no attention: Award winners Televizor's debut album *Shestvie ryb* and the ska band Strannye igry are notable absences from the review list. Bands, artists and albums covered by this study appear in bold:

Band/artist	*Album*	*Roksi no.*	*Sound engineer**
Maik:	*Sladkaia N i drugie*	(4)	
Akvarium	*Treugol'nik*	(5 [x2])	AT
Zoopark	***Uezdnyi gorod N***	(6)	AT
Akvarium	*Radio Afrika*	(6)	AT
Kino	***Nachal'nik Kamchatki***	(7)	AT
Bravo (Moscow)	*Koshki*	(7)	
Akvarium	*MCI*	(7)	AT
Akvarium	*Ikhtiologiia*	(7)	
Zoopark	*Belaia polosa*	(8)	AT
Akvarium	*Den' serebra*	(8)	AT
Kofe	*Balet*	(8)	
Alisa	*Energiia*	(10)	AT
Akvarium	*Deti dekabria*	(10)	AT
Kino	*Eto ne liubov'*	(10)	LV
Kino	*Noch'*	(11)	AT
Ob'ekt nasmeshek	*Smeetsia tot, kto smeetsia poslednii*	(11)	LV
Nol'	*Muzyka driachevykh napil'nikov*	(12)	AT
Alisa	*Blok ada*	(13)	AT
Ob'ekt nasmeshek	*Glasnost'*	(13)	
Aleksei Vishnia	*Serdtse*	(14)	LV
Mify	*Mifylogiia*	(14)	
Iurii Naumov	*Ne poddaiushchiisia proverke*	(14)	
Televizor	***Otechestvo illiuzii***	(14)	
Nikolai Korzinin	*Kamni Sankt-Peterburga*	(14)	
Akvarium	*Ravnodenstvie*	(14)	
Kino	*Gruppa krovi*	(14)	LV
Kino	*Zvezda po imeni solntse*	(15)	
Kommercheskie Kursy	*Batareia*	(15)	
Iurii Il'chenko	*Pervaia krov'*	(15)	
Opasnye sosedi	*Ta Dap*	(15)	
Ob'ekt nasmeshek	*Zhizn' nastoiashchikh kovboev*	(15)	

*AT: Andrei Tropillo; LV: Aleksei 'Lesha' Vishnia

67. Not reviewed are: BG and Maik: *Vse brat'ia sestry*, Maik: *LV*, Zoopark: *Blues de Moscou*, and Akvarium's *Sinii al'bom* and *Tabu.*

4.5.6. Complaints and targets of criticism

From the very beginning in 1977, Roksi's editorial tone was critical and depressed. The first editorial mourns the lack of rock-and-roll spirit in Leningrad rock. In the second issue it complains about the hardships of being a rock musician, or a fan in search of rare occasions of empowerment. The third editorial is more desperate: 'We need our rock. In the Russian language, with a Russian poetics, with a music that can gradually become our own [...] OURS - like our reaction to OUR life' (Roksi 3: 3). Even so, it conveys fatigue rather than inspiration. Later complaints include the notion that Leningrad rock is not 'real', and that local audiences cannot behave themselves at gigs. From time to time there is the odd spark of enthusiasm, however, as when it describes the opening of the LRC, but problems, insufficiences and discontent are never far away. Roksi no. 5, which celebrates the birth of the LRC, contains an open letter to a non-member and is quite characteristic of the fanzine's attitude. Beginning as an advertisement for the Club, it grows increasingly ironic:

> And Tania [Tatiana Ivanova] goes there, too. She's a journalist and all. She knows everybody and everybody knows and loves her. Because that very same Tania published an article about Lennon in the Pargolovsk Bulletin of Vegetable-Growing and squeezed in materials about Akvarium in the Peterhof Yard-Tender. So now we'll have our own press. Our rock needs people like that (Roksi 5: 38).

More frustration was generated by the initial quarrels in the LRC council, but when these fell silent, criticism returned to bands and musicians. The positive reviews were, as a rule, reserved for Zoopark or Akvarium, alternating with accounts of disappointing performances and/or recordings. Typically, rock veterans like Georgii Ordnanovskii of Rossiiane receive little acclaim. In his particular case, however, attitudes changed after his disappearance in 1984.[68] After some initial spite, Kino became another Roksi favourite. In 1986 Roksi attacked the LRC organisation on the occasion of its five-year anniversary, but in the same issue, 'Staryi Roker', a.k.a. council member Anatolii Gunitskii, defended the council members by describing their appalling working conditions.

Soon after, Roksi took the side of the LRC establishment in the heated debate over the generation conflict. It attacked the 'sloganism' of young, disrespectful bands, particularly Borzykin's Televizor. The band was accused specifically of playing unsanctioned songs, and of generally exploiting the rock idea to launch a banal socio-political agenda. However, as a year passed between the publication of Roksi nos. 11 and 12, tempers cooled down somewhat, and the brief and arrogant editorial that welcomed the competitor RIO bore only traces of former resentment:

> Finally, a younger brother of Roksi has emerged - RIO, which is published once a month. The editorial staff welcomes this publication and will consider publishing a supplement to Roksi, entitled, let's say: 'Buenos Aires' (Roksi 12: 3).

However sullen and full of grievance, Roksi's writing never ventured to take risks or break with its introverted focus on rock music and the rock community. It offered virtually no critique, whether serious nor jocular, of any part of the official social or political order. It never related the internal problems of the rock environment or the LRC to the broader societal context, even after several years of glasnost. In this sense Roksi was strictly

68. Ordanovskii was later presumed dead by suicide.

apolitical, whether from choice, habit, or outside pressure. RIO also made sure to limit itself strictly to musical issues. As editor Burlaka puts it: 'I understood that there was nothing criminal in what I did. I wrote clean musical criticism, concert and album reviews, and no KGB-shnik never ever bothered me in my work' (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 6).

That rock fanzines did not engage in political issues is not to deny the fact that the rock environment was profoundly dissatisfied with many aspects of Soviet existence and cultural life. However, this dissatisfaction appears to have been an implicit part of the rock environment's common experience, rather than a suppressed political programme awaiting implementation. Roksi's despondent mood might have been in part determined by a dissatisfaction with Soviet society, but when glasnost gave more opportunity for criticism, the rock fanzines preferred to use the new space gained to discuss rock music, rather than divert attention to politics. When given the chance to disengage from discussing their music within the bounds of an official, political-ideological discourse imposed on them from above, the rock journalists embraced the opportunity.

4.6. Andrei Tropillo and the AnTrop studio

4.6.1. Sources

This account is based on the fieldwork interview with Tropillo (Steinholt 2002c). Some of this extensive interview information is supported and verified by Smirnov (1999: 124-133), and Romanov (2001: 287-91), Rekshan (1999), Rybin and Startsev (2000), Tsui (1991) and Cushman (1995).

4.6.2. Introduction

The sleeve notes of early rock records released by Melodiia in the late 1980s include references to the 'Leningrad Rock Club's recording studio.' This is despite the fact that the LRC never had any studio facilities to offer its members. The studio referred to was the result of the long-term activities of Andrei Vladimirovich Tropillo, born 1951, a rock enthusiast with a serious interest in music recording and a flair for electronics. Melodiia, the Soviet monopolist of sound recordings, could not bring itself to acknowledge the existence of any competing individual enterprise, however small and insignificant, and therefore disguised the amateur studio as an official LRC venture.[69] Nevertheless, as the first to record Russian rock bands on a regular basis, Tropillo with his technical, musical and aesthetic preferences had a decisive formative influence, not only on the bands he recorded, but on Leningrad rock and Russian rock in general.

69. Melodiia's monopolist attitude is further illustrated by the following: In 1985, the Californian exchange student Joanna 'Stingray' Fields brought recordings by six Leningrad bands to the U.S. These were released by Big Time Records on the double compilation LP *Red Wave* in 1986. The master tapes were recorded at Tropillo's studio. Ironically, 'Stingray' was later sued by Melodiia, a company notorious for pirating western recordings, for violating its copyright, although it had taken no part in the production and had shown no interest in recording the bands in question. 'Stingray' eventually had to pay a sum of 500 US Dollars to settle the case. See Smirnov 1999: 188-95.

4.6.3. Financing and early experiments

In 1976, having just bought a double LP by The Beatles for 120 roubles, more than an engineer's monthly wage, Andrei Tropillo began to nourish the dream of pressing his own records. He rented a cellar room from his employer, the Geophysics department of LGU, where he tried to set up a small record factory.[70] Although his first attempts to engrave records were not sufficiently successful, he learned much from the process. Alongside these experiments, Tropillo was an active *menedzher* and staged concerts with several bands. He was almost exclusively responsible for Mashina vremeni's performances in Leningrad in the late 1970s. He invested his considerable income from organising concerts in technical equipment for sound recording.[71] He bought much of his early studio hardware from jazz enthusiasts, who had recorded local ensembles like Goloshekin's jazz orchestra, and soon replaced his plans for a record pressing plant with a project to build a recording studio to record local bands.

While Tropillo was struggling to build a studio in cooperation with the LGU institute of Psychology in 1978-79, he was informed that the Second House of Pupils and Pioneers, a technology workshop for schoolchildren in the Leningrad district of Okhta, was equipped with studio facilities to make soundtracks for amateur movies. He accepted a part-time post there to supervise a programme in sound recording and give guitar lessons. Once settled in, he began rebuilding and developing the studio.

4.6.4. The AnTrop studio at Okhta, 1979-85

Tropillo found it relatively easy to supply an institution such as the House of Pioneers with sound technology. Due to Soviet planning, Leningrad was home to many of the USSR's principal institutions in radio and acoustics.[72] When these institutions, as well as theatres, radio and TV stations renewed their hardware, they faced complicated processes when disposing of their old equipment. An alternative to controlled demolition was to donate the hardware to schools or pioneer palaces. Thus, among the discarded mixing tables and microphones that Tropillo received, he occasionally found high-quality units.

According to Aleksei Rybin, the studio consisted of a few small basement rooms, at least one of which was always filled with electronic components in various stages of repair or conversion (in Smirnov 1999: 125). When his group of fifteen pupils left for the evening or for the summer holidays, Tropillo invited local rock bands to his studio to record. He describes Akvarium and Mify as his first 'test rabbits'. The administration did not approve of having adults on the premises, but the house had many entrances, and so long as the noise level was kept down, the porter (*zavkhoz*) would take no notice and not report Tropillo to the director.

Gradually, from 1980-81 a studio collective began forming at AnTrop. It consisted simply of musicians who came there regularly. One of the problems with album recording was that band members had a tendency not to show up. Others found it difficult to play in a studio and simply lost interest. Then again, musicians who took an interest in recording work began to frequent the studio, and could step in at short notice. Among them were educated musicians such as the saxophone player Mikhail Chernokhin, the keyboardist Sergei

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70. LGU: *Leningradskii Gosudarstvennyi Universitet* (*Leningrad University*)
71. Tropillo reveals that his profit from one of Mashina vremeni's visits amounted to 1.600 roubles (in Steinholt 2002c: 3).
72. E.g. the Popov Institute, the Institute of Radio and Television, and the Institute of Cinematic Engineering (Steinholt 2002c: 11).

Kurekhin and the drummer Evgenii Guberman. As a consequence, while most bands had a relatively stable line-up for concerts, musicians moved freely and extensively between bands in the recording studio. In retrospect it is often hard to tell who was playing on a given recording, especially since the finished tape would be assembled from a multitude of cut-outs from different takes.[73] Who was present at a given recording also influenced the arrangements:

> [S]peaking about Akvarium, when the arrangements were made [...] fewer arrangements were produced by way of involving other musicians. That is to say that nobody knew the arrangements. Here is a song and if we invite Titov to play the bass, the bass will be like this. Afterwards there was yet another bassist, I don't remember [who]. It's possible that someone just picked up the instrument and that's the way it became [the way it did]. We tried several guitarists there [on Akvarium's *Tabu*]. What was the name of one such guitarist, Volodia? Volodia what? Wasn't it Danilov, his family name? He tried to play there too, together with whoever we had to chose from on the guitar. He played a little, but he, well, Liapin was better. So again the arrangements changed between different musicians from the studio collective. And Liapin was a member of that collective and he played with great pleasure when asked to, but still you may say, his playing didn't remain everywhere, because of the way it was (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 17-18).

To begin with, electric instruments were few and of poor quality, which meant that many songs were recorded with acoustic instruments. Such songs and albums were referred to as *akustika*, as opposed to 'electric' songs and albums. In effect, Leningrad bands were recording 'unplugged' albums more than a decade before this style became fashionable in the west.

In the early days of perestroika, in 1985, when the AnTrop studio had just been rebuilt, the curator of the People's Education Committee was replaced along with the curators of its security committee. Tropillo was promptly dismissed and his studio at the Second House of Pioneers closed. This put an end to Tropillo's training of young sound engineers, many of whom had subsequently ventured to record music on their own, such as Aleksei 'Lesha' Vishnia, or had found employment in radio, film or television.

4.6.5. Albums, techniques and technologies

In the 1970s and early 1980s, the Russian word *al'bom* (*album*) signified a vinyl record with a fold-out sleeve, as opposed to a *plastinka* (*record*), which had a one-record-sized sleeve. Tropillo's conception of an album as a conceptual song collection was a novelty. The word for a rock recording at the time was *kontsert*. Andrei Kagadeev of the band N.O.M.zhir explains:

> In our provinces, people for some reason used the term 'concert', meaning an album: 'You heard the new Zeppelin concert yet?' would not refer to a gig, but to any recording, be it studio or live. It's just good old jargon (Kagadeev in Steinholt 2001d: 5).

73. Since the time Russian copyright legislation began to function, this has resulted in severe conflicts over royalties. Tropillo was called in as a witness for both sides in a recent court case about Kino royalties, since the core members of the band were not the only ones playing on the recordings (Steinholt 2002c: 13).

Tropillo's first album, *Den' Rozhdeniia* (*Birthday*) was compiled from various Mashina vremeni recordings and released in 1978 on 208 cassette copies with specially-made covers.[74] His early Akvarium recordings, some of which were later released as the album *MCI*, were results of wide-ranging experiments, from recording all instruments simultaneously in one take (the song *Sentiabr'*) to bouncing technique:[75]

> [F]irst two tracks [*dorozhki*] were recorded on a Tembr recorder. One track was recorded, listened to, then those two tracks, recorded at different times, were fed to the mixing table, the studio was added and all this was recorded on a monographic MEZ 28 recorder, our [i.e. Soviet] make, on 38 [cm/s] and this was the original. Then all this was assembled, pasted, if necessary synchronised [*dublilos'*] and these originals became the masters from which the working copy was taken. Usually these originals from 1980 consisted of more than 200 little pieces and the songs were composed of such tiny little cut-outs. For many reasons. Errors were cropped, replacements from the better takes were inserted into the bad, because any kind of dubbing technique was beyond our capacities back then (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 10).

There was little literature available on sound recording, so experience was gained mostly from testing and failing. In 1984 an Amplex multitrack tape recorder was donated to the studio, which made it easier to re-record separate instruments, and to avoid sound deterioration of the tracks recorded earlier. This improvement can be heard on Kino's *Nachal'nik Kamchatki* album.[76] During the six years the Okhta studio existed, Tropillo made recordings with a significant number of bands, many of which are still prominent names in the Russian rock scene. However, he would occasionally turn down songs which, he felt, failed to meet his aesthetic standards:

> Through my ears came the first citations. I picked out what was good, what was bad, and that's why it can be said that Russian rock [and] roll initially went through one head, through one pair of ears, through one place, through one studio collective. That way it was born, all [of it]. There was a unity of place, action and people, [...] (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 15).

Although he does not express it very modestly, there is some truth in Tropillo's statement. By way of the unofficial *magnitizdat* distribution networks his recordings were duplicated successively and spread across the Soviet Union, literally in millions of copies.[77] Thus, alongside the LRC festivals, the AnTrop studio, its producer and its collective of musicians became decisive in many ways for the development of rock, not only in Leningrad, but in other Russian cities as well.

4.6.6. Melodiia and beyond

When the studio at Okhta was shut down, Tropillo gathered his hardware and temporarily stored it at the LRC on Ulica Rubinshteina 13, before setting up a new AnTrop studio on Bolshoi prospekt, Petrogradskaia storona. From 1987 he was employed by Melodiia's Leningrad branch, where he successfully released several of the AnTrop recordings as LPs. Melodiia gave the rock musicians a measly average profit ratio of 3332:1 (Cushman 1995: 239-40), but the albums sold in millions of copies and brought the music to a wider

74. Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov state 1978. The number of copies is stated in Romanov 2001: 288.
75. For a definition of the technique 'bouncing tracks,' see 8.3.6, page 140.
76. Further details of this recording are considered in 8.4.8, page 155 ff.
77. See also 3.4.8, page 29 ff.

audience. Tropillo was not able to invite any bands to Melodiia to make new recordings. Instead he ensured the release of music by western bands and artists. This eventually lost him his job when Paul McCartney, among others, threatened to press charges for copyright violations.

AnTrop subsequently reappeared as a record label based at the premises of the St Petersburg Evangelical-Lutheran Church, from where it released copies of albums by western bands, from The Rolling Stones to Joy Division, Dead Can Dance and Sonic Youth. In 1991 The Beatles' *White Album* was released as a double LP, a copy having been made from Kolia Vasin's original LP. As Russian copyright regulations closed in on this kind of business, AnTrop again concentrated on recording local bands. Today, Andrei Tropillo runs a new studio and CD pressing plant on the premises of the former Melodiia's Leningrad offices.

Chapter 5 Band and songwriter biographies

5.1. Band and album selection

The selection of bands and albums for this study has involved a balancing act between a number of different factors. The amount of information generated by informant-based music analyses has meant the number of songs analysed has had to be limited to four, each performed by a different band. Within this framework my intention is to cover two LRC generations: bands which had established themselves before the Rock Club opened, and bands which emerged within it. To ensure a certain geographical unity, the bands considered were all formed and based in the city. The availability of recordings is a third qualifying factor. All the bands chosen recorded and distributed tape recordings during the study's focal period. All albums have subsequently been released as compact discs and are both well-known and easily available in Russia today. A final significant point is to illustrate the stylistic diversity in musical and lyrical approaches between the various Rock Club bands. The selected albums therefore span the period of the study, from when the LRC was established until the apex of its generation conflict.

The novelty, number and enduring popularity of Akvarium's tape albums during the pre-Perestroika era, the band's key position in the LRC environment and organisation, and their considerable influence on subsequent generations of rock musicians, make them an obvious choice for this study. Akvarium's music of the period is characterised by wide-ranging stylistic experiments and there is a vast material to choose from. The drawback of choosing a band as productive as Akvarium is that one song from one album can only reveal a fraction of the band's stylistic register. My choice of the 1982 album *Tabu* was criticised by some insiders of the old LRC environment for being a typical western choice.[78] They regard it as the most 'western-sounding' Akvarium album and as less diverse and subtle, both musically and lyrically, than the acoustic and 'Russian-sounding' albums of the same period. Others, however, supported the choice, listing *Tabu*, *Treugol'nik* (1981) and *Radio Afrika* (1983) as the three strongest and most lasting Akvarium albums.[79]

The choice of Maik Naumenko's Zoopark as the second representative of the LRC 'old guard' is mainly motivated by stylistic considerations. Maik's position in the rock environment was central, but in many ways his attitude to rock is quite different from that of Akvarium songwriter Boris Grebenshchikov's (BG). Maik shunned stylistic experiments. His music is faithful to well-established rock-and-roll styles and his lyrics are straightforward and stripped of ornaments. Whereas BG could be a symbol-obsessed mystic, Maik was a straight-talking atheist. Zoopark's attitude and way of playing was interpreted by many as punk rock. Maik's production of tape albums is more modest and the quality of his early recordings varies considerably, but the 1983 album *Uezdnyi gorod N* stands out. It was recorded when Zoopark was, arguably, at the height of its capabilities and includes a set of versions of Maik's most famous songs, played with a full band and on electric instruments.

78. e.g. Anatolii Gunitskii, Aleksandr Startsev.
79. e.g. Andrei Burlaka, Andrei Tropillo.

Kino became the most famous band of the younger LRC generation, but its major breakthrough came during perestroika. The band was helped on its way by Akvarium and BG, which gave them an early start with recording. Viktor Tsui's songs appear to reflect contemporary western, especially British, trends. His lyrics are usually open, direct and easy to identify with. Kino appealed to a younger audience than Akvarium or Zoopark and were regarded by many as *modniki* (from *moda*: *fashion*), which suggested a higher level of pop influences in their music. Kino's 1984 album *Nachal'nik Kamchatki* was recorded with contributions by Akvarium musicians. It was the band's first with a new line-up and appears less technically sophisticated and complete than later albums. Still, the opening song, *Poslednii geroi* became a trademark of Kino. At the time of the recording, the band was still developing its style, which makes *Nachal'nik Kamchatki* an interesting album to study. Also it was recorded at a time when a new generation of LRC bands was emerging.

If Kino represents part of the younger generation that remained loyal to the 'old guard,' Televizor was to take the opposite stance. Initially inspired by BG's songwriting, Mikhail Borzykin turned to writing more direct lyrics, closer to those of Maik. From 1986 he took a controversial stand against the sanctioning of songs, ignoring all forms of censorship, and wrote increasingly provocative songs. Musically Televizor combined elements of guitar-based post-punk, synth rock and new pop, resulting in an always energetic, sometimes aggressive sound. Televizor's debut album was recorded in Andrei Tropillo's studio and would seem a natural choice for this study. However, the role of Borzykin's later songs in the generation conflict at the LRC, as well as the attention given them by western journalists and scholars, single out the band's second album, *Otechestvo illiuzii*. It was recorded in 1986-87, after Tropillo's studio was closed, and was distributed as a tape album from 1987. The song *Syt po gorlo* is not among Borzykin's most controversial, but interestingly it exists in two versions: one Soviet and one post-Soviet. Since it is not among Borzykin's most deliberately provocative songs, it is suitable for demonstrating nuances and diversities in Televizor's protest stance.

The four selected bands are intended to represent as many different approaches to rock music and songwriting. They cover two generations of LRC bands, and two factions among the younger. The bands were all well-known and popular acts, and all won several prizes at LRC festivals. All four bands are centred around a lead singer and songwriter, who is also the undisputed band leader, and whose songs are arranged and performed collectively. The dominance of the lead-singer varies between bands and between albums, but in the following band biographies considerable attention will be given to the songwriting band leaders. Notably, in the cases of Akvarium, Zoopark and Kino, there were considerable differences between line-ups at live performances and during recordings. This has to do with the studio collective of musicians at the AnTrop studio.[80]

5.2. Akvarium

5.2.1. Sources

Il'ia Smirnov's biography of Grebenshchikov (1999), with its scientific approach to the multitude of available semi-mythological sources, is an authoritative source on the history of Akvarium and BG. Also most significant to this brief band biography are flautist Andrei Romanov's memoirs (2001). Information has also been taken from Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991); Rekshan (1999); Troitsky (1990a); Troegubov (1999); Tsui (1991); Vasil'eva

80. See 4.6, page 53 ff.

(1997); Zhitinskii (1990); Kushnir (2003); and from Roksi issues 1-12 (1978-87). In addition, the fieldwork interviews with Borzykin, Gunitskii, Burlaka, Vasin, Feinshtein-Vasil'ev and Tropillo (Steinholt 2001a-c, 2002a-c) all touch on the subject to varying degrees.

5.2.2. The name

Sources offer no certified version as to the exact origin of the name 'Akvarium,' but its symbolic value is relatively apparent: An artificial microcosm of underwater life, framed by glass and placed on dry land, without any permanent connection to life in sea, river or lake. The name on one level illustrates the existence of beat and rock music in Russia at the time of the band's foundation. Beat and rock music was a foreign phenomenon, unacknowledged by the official media, not accepted by official culture, but which still existed in small closed spheres of Soviet society. In the 1980s Akvarium adopted the symbol Å (10^{-10} m) to replace the first letter of its name and as its short form, giving further emphasis to the notion of microcosm. Music is, in Boris Grebenshchikov's universe, equivalent to water in its importance to human life:

> Musicians, and especially people who are devoted to what we call rock [and] roll, fill an absolutely clear and accurately defined function in society. And what they do is important, even of vital necessity to culture, the people, the planet, because they have been entrusted with this mission (BG in Tsui 1991: 94).

The parallels to water are also evident in the way BG describes Akvarium's music:

> [Our music] does not submit to standards, it transcends any template. We play what we want to play. They call us punk rock, new-wave [*n'iu veiv*], but we are just returning to the beginning of rock. [...] [W]e return it to its primary purpose [...] (BG in Smirnov 1999: 7).

5.2.3. Line-up

Members & participants 1981-86	*Instrument(s)*	*(on album[s])*
Boris 'BG' Grebenshchikov	Vocals, guitar	(1-10)
Andrei 'Diusha' Romanov	Flutes, piano, guitar, vocals	(1-10)
Mikhail 'Fan' Feinshtein-Vasil'ev	Bass, vocals, percussion	(1-10)
Vsevolod 'Seva' Gakkel'	Cello, vocals, bass	(1-10)
Evgenii Guberman	Drums, percussion	(3, 6)
Aleksandr 'Fagot' Aleksandrov	Bassoon	(3)
Aleksandr Titov	Bass	(6, 8-10)
Sergei Kurekhin	Piano, keyboards	(2-6, 9)
Aleksandr Liapin	Guitar	(5, 6, 8, 9)
Petr Troshchenkov	Drums, percussion	(5, 6, 8, 9)
Igor' Butman	Saxophone	(5, 6)
Aleksandr Kussul'	Violin	(8-10)
Aleksandr Kondrashkin	Drums	(2-4, 6)
Vladimir Grishchenko	Bass	(5, 6)
Dmitrii Gusev	Harmonica	(1)
Ol'ga Protasova-Pershina	Vocals	(2, 4)
Vladimir Kozlov	Guitar	(2, 3)
Mikhail Kordiukov	Drums	(6)
Andrei Tropillo	Sound engineer(1-6, 8, 9), flute (2)	

5.2.4. Discography

Magnitizdat albums 1981-86:			
1.	*Sinii al'bom*		(1981)
2.	*Treugol'nik*		(1981)
3.	*Elektrichestvo: Istoriia Akvariuma tom 2*		(1981)
4.	*Akustika: Istoriia Akvariuma tom 1*		(1982)
5.	*Tabu*		(1982)
6.	*Radio Afrika*		(1983)
7.	*Ikhtiologiia*	Live	(1984)
8.	*Den' serebra*		(1984)
9.	*Deti dekabria*		(1985)
10.	*Desiat' strel*		(1986)

5.2.5. Boris Grebenshchikov: BG

Russia's most celebrated rock singer, songwriter and 'rock poet,' Boris Borisovich Grebenshchikov, a.k.a. BG, was born in Leningrad on the 27th of November, 1953. The family is of Georgian origin. His father, Boris Aleksandrovich, had served in the fleet and had visited London several times. He was appointed director of a research and development factory of the Soviet Fleet after he made certain discoveries in hydroacoustics. The job eventually wore him down and he died from heart failure in 1975. Liudmila Kharitonovna Grebenshchikova studied law, but was mainly interested in the arts before she was appointed to a post at the Leningrad Institute of Sociology. The family had several musician friends. Boris Sr. collected recordings of Okudzhava, Kapuru and Vertinskii. An MP-1 tape recorder resided permanently in the living room. The singer-poet Kliachkin performed in the Grebenshchikovs' apartment on a few occasions. When their only son started listening in to the BBC and Voice of America, the parents were not alarmed, but encouraged his language interest by giving him books in English. He liked reading and started writing his own stories at an early age.

As Smirnov demonstrates, accounts of BG and Akvarium, even statements by BG himself, frequently conflict with each other. Most versions agree, however, that BG, in 1964 or 1965, recorded a fragment of a Beatles song from the radio, and that this first listening experience had a tremendous impact on him:

> I thirsted outright, in the end, to listen to that music that travelled around, but came to me in a most distorted way... I switched on the radio, placed the tape recorder in front of it. [...] And there and then everything became clear to me: who I was, what I wanted to do and why I wanted to do it... [...] That is, the clarity originated in that moment, but only now can I express it [...] Everything became clear, focused, and I have never lost that focus since (BG in Smirnov 1999: 21).

Until the age of eleven or twelve, young Boris collected recordings of Vysotsky. He also admired Vertinskii for opening up a world beyond official phrases and slogans, but nothing he heard could compete with The Beatles. The games he played with his neighbourhood friend Anatolii Gunitskii changed from those of musketeers to musicians. Their hero was George Harrison. When Boris aquired his own seven-string guitar, his grandmother taught him to play an old Russian *romans*. He soon removed the seventh string, though, and at the age of fourteen performed at teenage dances with his school band. He sang songs

by The Rolling Stones and The Beatles in English, but a number by Creedence Clearwater Revival proved too difficult for the drummer. BG's classmates in college introduced him to hard rock, Led Zeppelin and Jethro Tull. In 1971 BG started studying mathematics at Leningrad University, but music remained his main interest.

5.2.6. The band

During the early years following its formation in 1972, the name Akvarium signified a group of friends interested in music, rather than a band as such. Gradually, however, a band with a repertory formed: Vsevolod 'Seva' Gakkel' on (occasionally electrified) cello, Andrei 'Diusha' Romanov on flute, Mikhail 'Fan' Feinshtein (later: Vasil'ev) on bass, and BG on acoustic guitar with his tender, boyish voice. They all contributed to what would become Akvarium's characteristic sound.

One of the band's early successes came at the 1976 rock festival in Tallinn. Akvarium also played regularly at student evenings and apartment concerts, mainly in and around Leningrad. Because all its musicians did serve the mandatory two years as army conscripts, musical activities remained somewhat sporadic until the end of the 1970s. By then Akvarium was meeting to rehearse in a villa on Kamennyi ostrov, a fashionable area where the party elite resided. There BG and future Akvarium bass player Aleksandr Titov rented rooms in a house owned by the philologist Andrei Falaleev.[81] The landlord became a close friend of the amateur musicians and they were able to practice and listen to music freely. It was a productive time for the band. Falaleev lectured to American exchange students at his institute and often invited them home, much to the dislike of his superiors and the interest of the KGB. The Akvarium circle also made friends with the American consul and his two daughters. Eventually, Falaleev emigrated to the U.S. and the consul was replaced. Nevertheless, as another member of the circle at the time, photographer Andrei 'Villi' Usov, puts it: 'The opportunities to socialise with good, normal people' had a serious influence on the band, their musical knowledge and their understanding of the west.[82]

A younger philologist, Aleksei Rodimtsev, a.k.a. 'Liverpulets' (*The Liverpudlian*) became Akvarium's next 'landlord'. He occupied a flat in Goncharnaia ulitsa, where the houses had been vacated, awaiting major restoration. The 'Liverpudlian' had been to York on a three-month language course, which he skived off in order to stay with friends. On one occasion, reputedly, he had been backstage with The Sex Pistols, and although their music did not appeal that much to him, he was an up-to-date source for the latest music. Romanov remembers hearing records by David Bowie, The Police, Patti Smith, Madness, The Greatful Dead and J. J. Cale in Rodimtsev's flat. In the same period Akvarium rehearsed alongside Rossiiane at the Tsuriupy DK, where an administrator secured them an invitation to Tbilisi.[83]

After boosting their rock credibility at the 1980 Tbilisi Spring Rhythms Festival, Akvarium were among the first bands to join the LRC. Several of the band members became involved in the Club's organisation during its early years, although only Feinshtein-Vasiliev made a lasting contribution. Also, Anatolii 'Dzhordzh' Gunitskii, Akvarium co-founder and member 1972-75, and co-editor of Roksi, sat on the LRC council

81. Falaleev had kept a document stating that the house was to remain the family's property in perpetuity. The document was signed by a certain Vladimir Il'ich Lenin (Romanov 2001: 56).
82. Conversation in Usov's workshop, Ulica Repina, St Petersburg, 17th October 2001.
83. The 1980 Spring Rhythms Festival in Tbilisi is covered in 3.5.1, page 32 ff.

for more than a decade from 1982. Akvarium soon became the most prominent band on the Leningrad rock scene, artistically and by popularity, but also when organisational goodwill and support were considered. Even that did not always guarantee them a trouble-free existence, but Akvarium were to maintain their influential position until 1986-87, when the core members of the band turned to their separate projects.

From 1980 onwards, as Akvarium started recording tape albums in Andrei Tropillo's studio, several new musicians began to contribute actively to the band's work. A studio collective of musicians interested in recording work was forming at AnTrop. Who eventually played on a given recording often depended on who was available at the decisive moment. The first studio album, *Sinii al'bom* (*Blue Album*), was recorded during two weeks in late winter 1981.[84] The quartet of BG, Fan, Diusha and Gakkel' was accompanied by Dmitrii Gusev on harmonica. Apart from a guitar solo by Diusha, the album was played acoustically. The cassette covers were made of blue paper and had photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov and song information glued to them. Usov's photographs were used in a similar manner for the covers of the first six Akvarium albums. The band distributed a number of 'original' tapes, the price of which did not significantly exceed that of an empty cassette, which cost from four to seven roubles. Usov finds it hard to estimate the number of 'original' cassettes made, since redistribution was common: 'They would ask me for some twenty copies of a cover photo, then for another twenty, then maybe another fourty.'[85] In this manner, new albums followed in quick succession.

Until the late 1970s, Vsevolod Gakkel' was the only band member with a music school background. At the time music students from the Musorgsky institute were becoming involved with Akvarium's music, some as members of the studio collective at AnTrop. Before 1977 Mikhail Kordiukov was the most frequent man behind the drumkit, but when he went to serve in the army, the conservatory-educated Evgenii Guberman took over. A professional, he was already playing with Goloshchekin's jazz band, a few VIAs and a number of restaurant orchestras. He complained that the amateurism of Akvarium turned his hair grey, but he continued to play and record with the band. At one point Akvarium used no less than four drummers on the same studio project: Kordiukov, Guberman and two other professional drummers: Petr Troshchenkov and Aleksandr Kondrashkin.

Aleksandr 'Fagot' Aleksandrov, Akvarium's occasional bassoon player, worked in a theatre orchestra, played classical music for Lenkoncert and jazz with Anatolii Vapirov and Sergei Kurekhin in the Trio sovremennogo dzhaza. Kurekhin, a pianist and the son of a naval officer, had come from Murmansk to study music in Leningrad. He was attracted to Akvarium's musical ideas and became an important contributor, composer and arranger, most notably on the albums *Tabu* and *Radio Afrika*. Later his involvement with Akvarium was overshadowed by other projects. The most lasting and (in)famous of these was Pop mekhanika, a veritable circus of jazz- and rock-based musical improvisation that, among many other things, involved absurd theatre, acrobatics and farm animals as 'soloists'. From the album *Tabu* onwards, Aleksandr Liapin, schooled violinist, electric guitar virtuoso, and much-awarded 'best instrumentalist' at LRC festivals, gave Akvarium a

84. *Sinii al'bom* is the first album recorded with Tropillo that BG acknowledges. *MCI*, a collection of earlier recordings, was released later, without his blessing. Akvarium also recorded a few cassette 'albums' during the 1970s with less sophisticated equipment. These have recently been restored and released as cds.
85. Conversation in Usov's workshop, Ulica Repina, St Petersburg, 17th October 2001.

powerful guitar sound, which was to characterise their fully amplified performances in the following years. Rounding off the professional contributors was the band's second bass player, Aleksandr Titov, who first appeared on *Radio Afrika*, and Ol'ga Pershina, a guitar-playing bard and folk-singer, who contributed to *Treugol'nik* and *Akustika*.

Treugol'nik (*Triangle*), recorded in August 1981, stands out as Akvarium's most curious and least rock-and-roll album. It became a favourite among fans, but its popularity also stretched beyond the rock environment. The song *Dva traktorista* entered the local urban folklore and is still a popular song at evening parties and festive dinners. The only song on the album which might classify as rock is the quiet *Mochalkin Bliuz*, which BG wrote in the early 1970s. The remaining tracks range from walzes, through more or less ironic romances and drinking songs to sound collages. A return to the early years of Akvarium avantgarde, it comes as no surprise that the lyrics for six of the fifteen songs are poems by Anatolii Gunitskii. One poem is even backward masked. And for once, Gakkel', Diusha, and Pershina alternate with BG as lead singers.

Akvarium's third AnTrop album was *Elektrichestvo* (*Electricity*). Its first half consisted of songs performed at the Spring Rhythms Festival concert in Gori, recorded by a Finnish television team. The second part was made up of new numbers, including the 'hits' *Vavilon* (a reggae) and *Prekrasnii diletant*. Although it was the first to be released, *Elektrichestvo* was numbered as the second volume of a two-album Akvarium history. Volume 1 appeared in 1982, entitled *Akustika*. Biographer Smirnov is not alone in dividing Akvarium's work into two currents: one acoustic, predominantly 'Russian-sounding,' and one electric, predominantly 'western-sounding'. The 1982 album *Tabu* belongs to the latter category. It is held to be one of the most contemporary-sounding Russian rock albums of its time, when compared to western bands. At the time of its recording, BG's stage appearance was strongly influenced by David Bowie. BG has since repeatedly expressed his dissatisfaction with many songs on the album, which he felt were marred by too many of the musicians acting simultaneously as soloists. According to Kushnir (2003: 118) only the recordings *Aristokrat* and *Synov'ia molchalivykh dnei* were considered as successful by the songwriter himself.

Radio Afrika, the recording where Kurekhin made his most marked influence as composer and arranger, was intended to be a return to a quieter style of rock with an emphasis on the music's African origins. Following a concert recording, released as *Ikhtiologiia* in 1984, two more albums were made at AnTrop. Increasingly inspired by Irish and Celtic folk music, they marked a return to more pastoral and folk-oriented motifs. The band began to cultivate a more consistent style, a development which parallelled their status within a somewhat privileged elite at the LRC. However, Akvarium suffered a major blow, further reducing their creative experiments, when the band's promising young violinist Aleksandr Kussul' drowned in 1986.[86] The following year the band were admitted to the Leningrad studio of Melodiia to record what would become their last album with its 'old' line-up. Unfortunately, *Ravnodenstvie* (*Equinox*), as it was entitled, was marred by compromises that had to be made with the Melodiia staff and failed to meet the expectations of both the band and their audience.

86. Kussul', aged 23, failed an attempt to swim both ways across the Volga.

In March 1988, BG signed a recording contract with CBS and crossed the Atlantic to record the first of what was intended to be eight albums for the company. For accompaniment he relied on western musicians.[87] In his absence, the band that has since been referred to as the 'old Akvarium' split up. Meanwhile BG's solo album *Radio Silence* failed to meet sales demands and his recording contract was eventually suspended. The old Akvarium line-up performed occasionally after BG's return, and gave a farewell gig in 1991. BG then formed a new Akvarium, which he renamed for a short period the BG Band. He has since continued to use the old band name. The 'old Akvarium' last performed in 1997, celebrating their 25th anniversary by giving one concert in Moscow and one in St Petersburg. A notable absence was Kurekhin, who had succumbed to chronic heart disease in 1996. Flautist Andrei Romanov, active with his own band Trilistnik since 1987, died in March 1999.[88]

5.2.7. BG's songs

BG's lyrics had both fans and censors bending their minds trying to find the intentional meaning behind the words, but his many allegories, conscious ambiguities, and often vague symbols and metaphors tend to evade categoric interpretations. He often chooses words for their sound-quality rather than semantic value, and his preoccupation with religion, mysticism, ancient legends and mythical culture does little to make the verbal messages of his songs easily accessible. From all these sources BG constructs a pragmatic, if romantic, humanist philosophy that fuels many of his songs. Christian, Rastafari, Hindu, Zen-Buddhist, Tolkienist or ancient Celtic symbols and motifs interact as a matter of course. Legend has it that a certain KGB office was made responsible for routinely examining BG's lyrics, and that they would on occasion call the author on the phone to ask him to explain his intention with a given line. Among fans and fellow musicians, Televizor's Mikhail Borzykin went through his time of trying to decipher Akvarium songs:

> We used to have long discussions and quarrelled about what BG would mean by this or that song or by this or that line. It could go on for weeks. Everybody involved would get worked up and increasingly convinced that he knew the right meaning. Then, when BG was asked, he would simply say with a shrug: 'Oh, that! What I meant to say? Well, nothing in particular' (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 5).

Still, not all of BG's lyrics are as complex and inscrutable. The author is known not only to play down certain interpretations in order to defend the openness of his songs, but also to make a show of re-interpreting his more accessible songs in order to divert critical attention or inject them with an additional touch of 'high culture'.

87. The album *Radio Silence* was produced by Dave Stewart (Eurythmics) and members of The Pretenders were among the musicians.
88. Romanov, aged 46, suffered a heart attack during the sound check for a Trilistnik concert at the St Petersburg venue Spartak.

5.3. Zoopark

5.3.1. Sources

Rybin and Startsev's biography of Naumenko (2000) is the major source for this account. Zhitinskii (1990) also discusses Maik and his songs quite extensively. Smirnov (1999) covers Maik's co-projects with BG and his time with Akvarium. Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991); Rekshan (1999); Troegubov (1999); Kushnir (2003); and Roksi 1-13 (1978-90) serve as additional sources. The fieldwork interviews with Borzykin, Burlaka and Tropillo (Steinholt 2001a, 2001c, 2002c) also supply information on Maik and Zoopark.

5.3.2. The name

The word which was to become the band name appears in some of Maik's first songs from the early 1970s: *Zooparkovaia muzyka* and *Zoopark*. The zoo represents a place or condition from which the protagonist dreams of escaping. In her memoirs, Maik's mother, Galina Florent'evna, relates the songs to a period when her son felt particularly trapped:

> [He] felt like if he had been chased into a cage, from which he longed to break free. And to him the cage was the ban on books and the persecution of music, as well as his studies at the institute and routine work, even the order of things at home. From this came the notion of the zoo, and from this came the name of the band (Galina Naumenko in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 39).

5.3.3. Line-up

Members & participants 1981-86	*Instruments*	*(on album[s])*
Mikhail 'Maik' Naumenko	Vocals, guitar, piano	(1-4)
Aleksandr Khrabunov	Guitar	(1, 3, 4)
Il'ia Kulikov	Bass	(1, 3)
Andrei Danilov	Drums	(1, 3)
Aleksandr Titov	Bass	(4)
Valerii Kirilov	Drums	
Aleksei Murashkov	Drums	(4)
Sergei Tessiul'	Bass	
Andrei Tropillo	Sound engineer	(3, 4)

5.3.4. Discography

Magnitizdat albums 1981 - 86:

1. *Blues de Moscou*	(81)	Zoopark live
2. *LV*	(82)	Maik solo
3. *Vchera i pozavchera ...v uezdnom gorode N*	(83)	Zoopark
4. *Belaia polosa*	(84)	Zoopark

5.3.5. Mikhail Naumenko: Maik

Mikhail Vasil'evich Naumenko, a.k.a. Maik, was born on the 18th April 1955 to parents of the 'middle-level intelligentsia': The father was a senior lecturer at a technological university, his mother a librarian. For eighteen months from 1961-63 Vasilii Grigorevich Naumenko served as a technical supervisor in Hanoi, and seven-year-old Misha travelled there with his mother to visit him. At school, Misha proved an all-round talent with top grades in all subjects except singing. After graduating from the English college he entered the Leningrad Institute of Construction Engineering, where his older sister studied and his father worked, but much to the disappointment of his parents he dropped out halfway through.[89] In spring 1973 he took his guitar, left his mother a note, and 'hit the road'.

The repercussions of this escapade is quite illustrative of parent - offspring relationships at the time, and of the potential for protectiveness and conformism in an Soviet intellectual nuclear family. The mother's memoirs testify to a profound and mutual lack of understanding, dividing the two generations. They throw light on the nature and intensity of the conflict between the rock generation of the 1970s and the generation of its parents. The runaway was tracked down in Kiev after several weeks of intense parental investigation. The mother took a plane there to meet him and made him promise to return home instantly. On his return she took him to a psychiatrist who, much to her surprise, recommended a year off from study and warned against army service as a solution to his problems:

> But I, in my simple soul, had regarded army service as the very best for him right then: There he'd be doing sports, grow up, grow physically and morally strong. My naïve ideas about the army as a dear home with kind, wise officers, an ideal place for a young man to mature had, of course, been formed under the influence from cinema and television movies (Galina Naumenko in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 35).

The father, however, determined to push his son through an education, gave him a long list of orders to sign and follow as an exercise in self-development. They included: to quit smoking, reduce the time and energy spent on recording and listening to records, not to play in any rock band for the next two to three years, and generally avoid all harmful influences and temptations. Maik's relationship with his grandmother, an educated Petrogradian born in the 1890s, was altogether different. They were close friends. She had sung for him in his childhood. In return he played the soundtrack of *Jesus Christ Superstar* to this woman, sixty-two years older than himself. He translated the lyrics for her and they discussed them endlessly.

Despite his father's instructions, Maik's continued to prefer music to academic study, and 1973 had not passed before he had made his concert debut as a bass player. In the mid-1970s he became involved with the Akvarium circle as well as with Leningrad's leading *bitloman* (*beatlemaniac*), Kolia Vasin. In 1976 he appeared briefly with the band Soiuz liubitelei muzyki rok. When BG returned from the army in 1977, Maik played guitar with Akvarium. He also led the Vokal'no-instrumental'naia gruppirovka im. Chaka Berri (The Chuck Berry Vocal-Instrumental Association), an Akvarium 'spin-off' project that concentrated on Rock-'n'-Roll and Rhythm and Blues. He also recorded an acoustic album with BG in 1978, entitled *Vse brat'ia-sestry* (*Everybody's brothers and sisters*), outdoors in the garden behind the Smol'nyi monastery.

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89. In principle, although it might seem somewhat misplaced from a Soviet ideological point of view, the English language schools are best described as elite schools.

Maik stuck to his musical ideals and dismissed new styles and fashions. BG once commented that Maik's musical preferences were already fixed at the age of sixteen. In interviews, Maik repeatedly listed 1950s Rock-'n'-Roll, Beatles, Rolling Stones, glam rock, David Bowie and, above all, Mark Bolan, among his favourite styles and performers. His record collection was renowned. He translated books and lyrics and contributed to the rock fanzine Roksi. In 1980, with the help of BG, Igor' 'Panker' Gudkov, and Kapital'nyi remont guitarist Slava Zorin, he recorded a selection of acoustic songs entitled *Sladkaia N i drugie* (*Sweet N and others*). The album included songs that would become his most popular, like *Drian'*. He recorded his 'album' at the Puppet Theatre's sound studio, where he was working as a nightwatchman. The sound quality was appalling, even by the standards of the time. Maik later confessed it was all done 'drunk and foolish', without rehearsal, and mainly in order to preserve some old and new song ideas. He also stressed that two thirds of the material was intended for a full band with electric instruments. In the autumn of 1980 Maik finally formed his band.

5.3.6. The band

> I like the band Zoopark for the fact that many don't like it. There are people who literally hate us. I am most indebted to them for that. There are people who regard us as one of the best bands (at least in Leningrad). I am, probably, indebted to them as well (Maik in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 118).

Zoopark joined the LRC in 1981 and caused much controversy during their early years there. The band's casual attitude to musicianship and noisy straightforward rock and roll divided the audience into two, one half empowered and enthusiastic, one disgusted and provoked. Both sides usually gave vent to their feelings noisily, booing and cheering alternately. The LRC festival juries and officials both awarded and punished the band. Naumenko's songs won acclaim for their elegant interpretation of rock-and-roll aesthetics in the Russian language, but also met sharp accusations against their alleged 'negativism'. Worse still, Naumenko's lyrics were also faithful to blues and rock when it came to sexual thematics, a fact that brought complaints of sexism, resulting in restrictions on the band's concert activities. Under the new LRC board from 1984, however, Zoopark retained their position in the Club's establishment.

Zoopark was founded after Isha Petrovskii, Maik's close friend and co-author of the song *Blues de Moscou*, introduced him to the bass player Il'ia Kulikov. Through Akvarium's Mikhail 'Fan' Vasil'ev they met two musicians he had already played with in an army band. At the time, these two, drummer Andrei Danilov and guitarist Aleksandr Khrabunov, were playing cover songs of anything from Deep Purple to The B-52s in a band called Proshchai, chernyi ponedel'nik (Goodbye, Black Monday). Although suspicious of their musical taste, Maik invited them to join.

In a 1982 interview with a Moscow rock fanzine, Maik outlines the simple musical aesthetics of Zoopark:

> We play deliberately dirty rock and roll, without worrying much about purity of sound and the like. The main thing is the general kick, the sound intensity, energy, vibrations. Many believe that everything should be slick and cute (the Petersburg bands Zerkalo, Piknik, for example). I stick firmly to another opinion. To me the main thing is that the audience doesn't get bored. After all, that's who we play for - and on (Maik in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 118).

The band's work ethic was much along the same lines. Practising was kept to an absolute minimum. This attitude led many, including some critics and commentators, to regard Zoopark as a punk-rock act, despite its strong musical ties to blues-based rock and roll. The dismissal of any kind of sophistication, the band's reputation for performing in various degrees of drunken stupor, the punk references in Isha Petrovskii's lyrics to the song *Blues de Moscou,* and the general absence of punk bands on the LRC stage contributed to this confusion.

There were no punk cover songs in Zoopark's sets, however. Their first gigs were played at *sovkhoz* dances in the countryside near Leningrad, and the sets consisted of one part 1950s Rock-'n'-Roll (Chuck Berry, Carl Perkins, Larry Williams), one part 1960s rock 'classics' and 1970s glam rock (Rolling Stones, David Bowie, T-Rex), while the audience would usually yell for Boney M and Mashina vremeni. The first cassette album made was a live recording, and Maik's first with electric instruments. Entitled *Blues de Moscou* it contained fully arranged versions of songs from *Sladkaya N* and a handful of new ones. Before the rock repression started in Moscow in the late autumn of 1983, Maik went there frequently to play; on a few occasions other musicians stepped in to back Maik. Thus, even when Zoopark was banned from performing, Maik managed to play in Moscow with a full line-up 'with a little help from his friends'.

An 'electric' solo album, *LV*, appeared in 1982. Maik and Gudkov gained access to the Theatre Institute's sound studio, which had a sixteen-channel mixing table. As he was working on the premises, Gudkov could smuggle in Maik's guitars, but not the drumkit needed for an electric recording. The problem was solved by borrowing an old drum machine from Tropillo, the very same which Kino were to use two years later for their album *Nachal'nik Kamchatki*. The next full Zoopark album, *Uezdnyi Gorod N*, was recorded with Andrei Tropillo in 1983.[90] In many ways it marked the peak of Zoopark's recording achievements. Headed by well-known songs such as *Dryan'* and *Prigorodnyi bliuz*, the album ends with the title song *Uezdnyi Gorod N*, a Russian epic which lasts nearly a quarter of an hour, and an answer to Dylan's *Desolation Row*. Andrei Tropillo compares the two songs:

> But the [Maik's] song I regard as unique and it's different from Bob Dylan's song, which I think is much more simple. Because Bob Dylan's song merely lists living celebrities [...] but in Maik's [song] there is much more material. There's also Ivan Durachok and Mona Lisa and Marilyn Monroe and Mayakovsky and Jesus Christ [...] not only some [...] Hollywood community as in Dylan-Zimmerman's. It is practically the whole layer [...] of that culture, whose formula has formed the consciousness of [...] the Russian intelligentsia, right? And therefore it is that much more interesting and therefore much deeper than Dylan's [song] at that. They are simply on different [levels] (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 23).

In 1984 came the album *Belaia polosa* (*White* [*dividing*] *line*), a more dance-friendly album fronted by the hit *Bugi-vugi kazhdyi den'*. The set was performed at the LRC festival the following year, sporting a male-female vocal backing group. It became very popular, but angered quite a few purist fans, who held the opinion that such backing vocals belonged in the estrada and had nothing to do with rock.

The increasing popularity of Zoopark had unfortunate side-effects. Used to keeping an open house for friends and visitors, Maik was overwhelmed by fan strangers from all over the Union. They brought him a constant flow of drink, distracted him from writing new songs and in effect helped ruin his marriage. Maik's wife finally had enough, took the

90. The full title of the album was *Vchera i pozavchera ...v uezdnom gorode N* (*Yesterday and the day before ...in district town N*).

couple's son with her and left. Maik put on weight, began acting increasingly nervously and wearing dark glasses permanently. Nevertheless, he kept his feet firmly on the ground while other musicians dreamed of touring and releasing records in the west. Maik held no such hopes: 'They have their own excellent bands, what would they need us for?' (Maik in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 206). In his view Russian rock was, and should be, by and for Russians.

In contrast to BG, Maik was and remained an atheist and musical retro-purist, and he wrote a different kind of lyrics. Vasilii Solov'ev characterises Maik's lyrics as 'prose, sung in the genre of rock' (Solov'ev in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 255). Maik had played the role of against-all-odds rock star since his teens, but he soon lost interest in the kind of stardom he eventually experienced. For him perestroika was a harbinger of disillusionment. He had no urge to change, to adapt to a growing commercial music industry. In that sense, one of his friends notes, he remained a man of Socialism to the bitter end.[91] In the late 1980s Maik's music was used for a movie, and the soundtrack was released on an album entitled *Muzyka dlia fil'ma* (*Music for a movie*) shortly before his death. He gave his last official performance with BG at the tenth anniversary of the LRC at the Iubileinyi on the 14th of March 1991. Although aware of the bad state of his health, he no longer seemed to care. Maik Naumenko died in his small *kommunalka* room on the 27th of August 1991, aged 36. Years of heavy drinking had finally triggered a heart attack.

91. Aleksandr Lipnitskii in Rybin and Startsev (2000: 245).

5.4. Kino

5.4.1. Sources

The main source for this account is Tsui (1991), a collection of memoirs of Viktor Tsui's friends and acquaintances, articles from journals and newspapers, and Tsui's lyrics, compiled and edited by his widow Marianna and Aleksandr Zhitinskii.[92] Smirnov (1999) accounts for BG's involvement with Tsui and Kino; Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991), Zhitinskii (1990) and Roksi 5-15 (1981-90) are supporting sources. Among the fieldwork interviews, Borzykin, Burlaka and Tropillo (Steinholt 2001a, 2001c, 2002c) provide some information on Kino and their albums.

5.4.2. The name

Founded in 1981 as the trio Garin i giperboloidy, which joined the LRC in 1981, the band changed their name to Kino in spring 1982. The change was made after BG and his friends suggested the band find a shorter, more catchy and fashionable name. According to Aleksei Rybin, the name 'Kino' (*cinema, film, movie*) was one of several suggestions that came up during a collective brainstorming.

5.4.3. Line-up

Members & participants 1982-86	*Instrument(s)*	*(On album[s])*
Viktor Tsui	Vocals, guitar	(1-5)
Iurii Kasparian	Guitar	(3-5)
Aleksandr Titov	Bass	(3)
Georgii 'Gustav' Gur'ianov	Drums	(3-5)
Igor' Tikhomirov	Bass	(4, 5)
Aleksei Rybin	Vocals, guitar	(1, 2)
Maksim Kolosov	Bass	(2)
Oleg Balinskii	Drums	(1)
Andrei 'Diusha' Romanov		(1)
Mikhail 'Fan' Feinshtein-Vasil'ev		(1)
Boris 'BG' Grebenshchikov	Drum machine, keyboards, casiotone	(3)
Sergei Kurekhin	Keyboards	(3)
Petr Troshchenkov	Drums	(3)
Vsevolod Gakkel'	Cello, drums	(3)
Igor' Butman	Saxophone	(3)
Andrei Tropillo	Sound engineer	(1, 3, 5)

92. Contributions to Tsui (1991) referred to in this account include those by: Marianna Tsui, Maksim Pashkov, Aleksei Rybin, Andrei Panov, BG, Andrei Tropillo, Anatolii Sokolkov and Iurii Kasparian.

5.4.4. Discography

Magnitizdat albums 1982-86:

1.	*45*	(1982)
2.	*46*	(1983)[93]
3.	*Nachal'nik Kamchatki*	(1984)
4.	*Eto ne liubov'*	(1985)
5.	*Noch'*	(1986)

5.4.5. Viktor Tsui

Viktor Robertovich Tsui was born in Leningrad on the 21st June 1962, the only child of a Korean father, an engineer, and a Russian mother, a gymnastics teacher. Aged twelve to fifteen he attended an art school, then entered the Serov college of art, from which he was expelled after his first year for 'lack of progress'. More precisely, according to his friend Maksim Pashkov, his constant skiving off from ideology lessons in order to rehearse in the music room was not tolerated by the administration. Let down by a formal art education, he switched to learning woodcarving at a polytechnic institute, from which he graduated in 1982. He then spent two years restoring ceilings in Catherine the Great's summer palace at Pushkino (Tsarskoe selo). Later he was transferred to a garden and park trust, before he joined other rock musicians who worked as stokers in a boiler-room known as the 'Kamchatka'. He kept that job until 1987, when he was able to make a living from his band Kino.

Tsui's musical activities began in 1978 when he started playing bass in the band of his school friend Maksim Pashkov. The group later called itself Palata no. 6 (*Ward six*) after Chekhov's short-story about an insanity ward. Pashkov, who had been introduced to the music of Elvis Presley, Johnny Halliday and The Beatles by his father, had a collection of battered guitars. The drummer played a pioneer marching-band drum, while the 40 roubles needed to buy a bass guitar for Tsui was shared among the three members. When Tsui entered the Serov college, the band had access to its electric instruments and a proper drumkit, which was better suited a sound inspired by Black Sabbath and Deep Purple. However, hard rock was not preferred by the band's circle of friends, which was into punk.

A leading figure in this small circle was Andrei 'Svin' Panov. He had been introduced to Russian rock as well as the western punk phenomenon by Maik's friend Igor 'Panker' Gudkov, a.k.a. 'Monozub' (*Monotooth*). It was glimpses of punk's visual style and its DIY philosophy, rather than the music, that initially attracted Panov's attention. His father, who worked with the ballet and travelled abroad, sent him money for his education, most of which was spent on musical instruments, amplifiers, drums and a tape recorder. In autumn 1979 Panov formed the first Russian punk band, Avtomaticheskie udovletvoriteli (*The Automatic Satisfyers*), or AU for short. The band gave their first concerts that same year.

In 1980 AU was invited to Moscow by Artem Troitsky, who was eager to show the outrageous new punk music to a Moscow audience. Panov brought a ten-man team to the capital, among them Tsui, who opened the apartment 'session' with two of his own acoustic songs, before backing AU on bass. The audience, mostly from the privileged elite, got the outrageous performance they had paid for: Swearing, noise and the singer dropping his trousers. According to Panov himself, both performers and audience left happy.

93. Unfinished recording released without the band's consent.

At the time, though, Viktor Tsui was generally thought of as a shy and quiet guy. At first he was reluctant to perform his own songs and he preferred to stay in the background. The teenage boys who gathered around Panov's musical workshop referred to themselves as *bitnikí* (*beatniks*, as beat music fans had been called in the 1960s). While only the AU members were 'proper' punks, the rest of the gang from the south-end suburb of Kupchino blended the styles of 1960s Soviet *bitniki* with that of early punk. However, their attitude and rituals were closer to the latter. According to Rybin, these 'neo-*bitniki*' fought boredom by constantly seeking out the latest party; playing music; smoking dope; drinking mulled red wine and fleeing from the *militsiia*. The *bitniki* were proud *bezdel'niki* (*loafers*) and were referred to by the older rock generation as the *molodaia shpana* (*young rabble*). Rybin recalls that the dress code was black from socks through narrow trousers to sweater and fake leather jacket with pin-on buttons. He describes the preferred power posture as knees slightly bent, back somewhat hunched, arms straight and fists clenched. He met Tsui when heating wine-bottles in Panov's kitchen, where they discovered a shared taste in music, that was a bit conservative for *bitniki*: Beatles, Rolling Stones, Genesis, Yes, some new-wave (Elvis Costello, Pretenders, Television, XTC) and rock and roll (Who, Led Zeppelin). In 1981, after Tsui had been writing his own songs for some time, they started a band together.

5.4.6. The band

In the autumn of 1981 Tsui and Aleksei 'Ryba' Rybin registered their band Garin i giperboloidy at the LRC with drummer Oleg Balinskii. They practised hard for their admissions committee audition, which they performed with two guitars and two bongo drums. At the time, Rybin underlines, the LRC bureaucrats dismissed both punk and new-wave music and council member Tatiana Ivanova, he recalls, was negative to the point of hostility:

> On the one hand we were convinced that our musical material was more interesting than that of most rock club groups, on the other hand we knew that the commission members had their own stamped and sealed conceptions of rock, and that the further a band was from these conceptions, the narrower would be its chances of being liked at an audition. [...] -And what are you called? - asked Tania [Tatiana Ivanova]. -Garin i giperboloidy, - Vit'ka replied. The commission members burst out laughing, but Tania frowned. -And what do you want to say with such a name? -Well, nothing, - Vit'ka said, getting annoyed. -Yes - Tania shook her head. Well, it's understandable - she fought for the purity of the rock idea, and here come these Hyperboloids - what wise things do they have to say? [...] -Well and what do you want to say with your songs? What is the idea of your work? - Tania asked Vitia - Who's that loafer? Is that any good? And stopping only by the beer stands - does that mean everybody's supposed to get drunk? Is that what you want to say? And what kind of music is it you're playing? (Rybin in Tsui 1991: 70-72).

Ivanova, however, not wanting to damage the LRC's democratic atmosphere, gave in to the verdict of an amused committee and the band was admitted. Tsui was introduced to Maik by Rybin, and at the beginning he would often test-perform his new songs for the older rocker and his circle of friends. In the autumn they joined the LRC; Tsui and Rybin were introduced to BG, who had just finished recording *Treugol'nik,* and to Tropillo. BG defined the style of Tsui's and Rybin's band as 'new romantic' and promised the help of Akvarium in recording an album. Thus, renamed Kino, the band recorded their debut album, *45*, the

following year. A drum machine was used, and Rybin remembers that they found it difficult to follow the even rhythm. This was resolved by Feinshtein-Vasil'ev conducting through a tiny window by the mixing table. The songs were recorded a few at a time, then backing vocals and additional tracks were added.

Kino's first concert at the LRC was well prepared. Tsui's girlfriend and future wife, Marianna, worked at the Leningrad Circus and secured the debutants spectacular dress and make-up. Tsui wore a laced shirt, a shimmering golden jacket, rings with fake jewels and facial make-up far better made than anything that had previously been seen on Leningrad rock musicians. The line-up was supplemented by Feinshtein-Vasil'ev on bass, Diusha Romanov on grand piano, and BG, out of sight, administering the pre-recorded drum-machine track. This was another novelty at a LRC concert. For the final number, BG, Maik, and Gudkov appeared. If the immediate audience reaction was positive, the rock establishment was more amused by the chaos than enthralled by the songs. In the review in Roksi (Roksi 6: 31) the musical performance was less of an issue than Rybin's unzipped fly.

For their second LRC gig in February 1983, Kino appeared with a new line-up. This was partly because Tsui's new songs demanded a fully amplified sound, partly a move to become less dependent on Akvarium's musicians. The hurriedly assembled 'combo' did not meet Tsui's expectations, however, and after a few performances in Moscow he preferred to record his next album with BG and Akvarium musicians. As a result the band split up. The only musician who continued working with Tsui was the new guitarist Iurii Kasparian.

Tsui's attempt to avoid army service did little to keep the band together. In order to obtain a so-called 'white ticket' (*belyi bilet*, a certificate, verifying that a person was psychologically unfit for military service) he allowed himself to be hospitalised in a psychiatric clinic, expecting to be believed and discharged relatively quickly. Unfortunately, Tsui's psychiatrist suspected he was simulating and kept him at the clinic for six weeks, under heavy medication. Finally released, weak, traumatised and still without exemption papers, it took his girlfriend a day of crying at the recruitment office to have him relieved of his two years duty in the Red Army.

The album *Nachal'nik Kamchatki* (*The Leader of Kamchatka*) was recorded in much the same way as *45*. Tropillo supervised and engineered, and the fresh Kino line-up arranged and played Tsui's songs together with musicians from the studio collective and from Akvarium. In addition to Tsui and guitarist Kasparian, Kino's concert line-up consisted of Gustav Gur'ianov, who played a light drumkit standing (in the manner of the UK band Style Council), and bass player Aleksandr Titov, who shared his time between Akvarium and Kino. BG initially wanted to produce the album, but, after playing a mini-Casiotone and running the drum-machine, he stopped attending recording sessions. However, Kurekhin contributed on piano, Troshchenkov on drums and Butman on sax.

After the recording of *Nachal'nik*, the close cooperation with Akvarium ended, although Titov continued to share his time between the bands until spring 1986. Petr Troshchenkov replaced him and remained with the band until the end. Titov had time to play on the album *Noch'*, the last recorded with Tropillo, and *Eto ne liubov'* (*This is not love*), recorded with Tropillo's apprentice Aleksei 'Lesha' Vishnia. The mixing of *Noch'* took almost a year and the band grew dissatisfied with it, feeling it was impossible to make a contemporary-sounding album with Tropillo. Meanwhile the latter found it hard to work with people who were 'constantly waving their arms above your head' (Tropillo in Tsui 1991: 108). *Eto ne liubov'*, on the other hand, was recorded in the course of a week. When Tropillo released

Noch' on the Melodiia label in 1987, Tsui felt insulted, less because Melodiia paid virtually no royalties than because his original record cover had been changed. Tropillo claimed his request for artwork had never been answered. Anyhow, the record sold in more than two million copies and thus played a significant part in launching Kino to stardom. Six songs from *Noch'* appeared on the *Red Wave* compilation album issued by Big Time Records in the U.S. in 1986. Kino's most popular recording, *Gruppa krovi*, was not released until 1988. By then Kino were attracting stadium crowds and had toured France and Italy. Their last regular album, *Zvezda po imeni soltsne*, was released in 1989, the same year the record *Le dernier des héros* was released in France

In August 1990, near Riga, Tsui was killed at the wheel of his car in a high-speed collision with a bus. Thousands flocked to his funeral and the gravesite was guarded by fans day and night for several years. The label Russkii disk released the posthumous album *Kino* in 1991 without the consent of the remaining band members. Kino is still one of Russia's most popular rock bands and Tsui's status as a musical cult hero is virtually unmatched.

5.5. Televizor

5.5.1. Sources

According to himself, Mikhail Borzykin has never cared much for public relations or self-promotion. This is reflected in the amount of available material about him and his band. The most extensive account of Televizor is given by Andrei Burlaka on his website.[94] A shorter historical account is found on the band's official homepage.[95] Cushman (1995) contains extensive interviews with one 'Misha,' easily identified as Borzykin. Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991) give a short profile of Televizor, and Zhitinskii (1990) offers background information and an interview. Roksi issues 8-15 (1985-90) cover the LRC establishment's view of Televizor. Most importantly, though, Borzykin was interviewed for this study as the only accessible band leader (Steinholt 2001a).

5.5.2. The name

The name Televizor reflects the band leader's preoccupation with the relationship between the individual and the masses, and with music as a medium of mass communication. It also plays upon the local band-naming tradition. 'Television' can refer to an object not unlike an aquarium, yet extrovert rather than mystic and introvert, and to a phenomenon not unlike cinema (Kino), yet a more immediate and effective mass medium than cinema, with access to everybody's private sphere.

5.5.3. Line-up

Members & participants 1981-87	*Instrument(s)*	*(on album[s])*
Mikhail Borzykin	Vocals, keyboards, effects	(1,2)
Aleksandr Beliaev	Guitar, backing vocals	(1,2)
Aleksei Ratsen	Drums	(2)
Igor' Babanov	Keyboards	(2)
Igor' Kopylov	Bass	(1)
Igor' Petrov	Keyboards, guitar	(1)
Viacheslav Arkhipov	Drums	(1)
Sergei Osipov	Sound engineer	
Andrei Tropillo	Sound engineer	(1)
Kazbekov	Sound engineer	(2)
Aleksandr Dokshin	Sound engineer	(2)

5.5.4. Discography

Magnitizdat albums 1984-87:

1.	*Shestvie Ryb*	(1985, as LP on Melodiia 1988)
2.	*Otechestvo illiuzii*	(1987, on record 1990)

94. www.rock-n-roll.ru/show.php?file=encyclopedia (19.04.2004)
95. www.televizor.spb.ru/history0.html (19.04.2004)

5.5.5. Mikhail Borzykin and Televizor

Borzykin was born in the North-Caucasian town of Piatigorsk on the 27th May 1962. His early childhood was divided between his parents in Leningrad and his grandmother in Piatigorsk. He went to an English language college before entering Leningrad University's Faculty of Philology. From the late 1970s he took a serious interest in rock music. The elite language school allowed pupils to form bands and perform songs by The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, Sweet and others, as a part of their English-language training. In 1983 Borzykin started playing keyboards with the band Ozero (*Lake*). After it split up, he formed his own band, Televizor, in February 1984. Shortly after, Televizor joined the LRC.

Televizor's music was initially inspired by new-wave and new pop. Borzykin mentions: Depeche Mode, Simple Minds, Kraftwerk, The Smiths, Madness, Talking Heads, The Cure, and the 'new romantics': Duran Duran, Nik Kershaw, Howard Jones. Today the band describes its style as a blend of early Russian new romantic and electrofunk. When it came to the lyrical part of songwriting, however, the teachers were locals:

> [...] I think Akvarium had a great influence on everybody. Especially [on] how to write and perform songs in Russian (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 3).

> Akvarium likes complexity. My first album was made under the influence of BG [...] After that I was drawn more in the direction of Maik. And I found that 'open' lyrics were that much more difficult to write. It makes the composition a lot more laborious because the music must carry more meaning. Every sound must be selected with care to make it work (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 5).

Borzykin explains that much music entered the Leningrad rock environment through an 'Akvarium filter,' firstly because BG was well-informed, listened out for new music and was often the first to receive the latest records; secondly because his band was still actively experimenting with new sounds and styles. In his songwriting, Borzykin, unlike BG, always had a very relaxed attitude towards religiosity and mysticism, which made his songs more able to accomodate sharp, direct observations about the experiences of Soviet youth, to indulge in ironic self-reflections, or exploit the energy inherent in sarcasm, spite and anger. Televizor's debut album, *Shestvie ryb* (*Fish parade*), was recorded at AnTrop. The songs had already attracted considerable attention at the 1984 LRC festival, where Televizor won its first award. The success was repeated at the following festival. Musically, the sound on *Shestvie ryb* is close to British, ska-influenced post-punk. A harder, more electronic sound, inspired by bands like Depeche Mode, is more prominent in the songs written during 1985-86.

> It was their [Depeche Mode's] cool aggressiveness, that neo-punk sound. Around 1983-84 came this new industrial sound that hit us like a fresh breeze. We knew Beatles and Stones, we knew blues and hard rock and were getting enough of that, this was a new feeling. I think those lyrics, *Master & Servant*, made a certain impression, too (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 3).

Borzykin's interest in the relationship between the individual and the masses was also inspired by his reading of Hesse, Nietzsche, Sartre, and not least Bulgakov, whose novel *Master and Margarita* was being re-discovered at the time. That novel had a considerable impact on the work of several rock songwriters.[96] At the 1986 festival, as tensions rose between the two generations at the LRC, Televizor changed their tactics towards censorship and created a scandal by performing unsanctioned songs. Politically

96. Not least on Alisa who made tributes to the novel in both songs and artwork (see Cushman 1995: 153-54).

provocative protest songs such as *My idem* (*We're going*) and *Vyiti iz-pod kontrolia* (*Get out of control*) shocked and enraged both the majority of LRC administrators and many of the members. The stunt earned the band a six-month ban on performing and earned Borzykin a reputation as a 'leftie' activist and troublemaker. However, it did not result in any sanctions against the LRC. As the controversy created by Borzykin actively affected and intensified the LRC generation conflict, it will be treated more extensively in the next paragraph.

The most provocative songs, including *Tvoi papa - fashist* (*Your dad's a fascist*), were included on Televizor's second album *Otechestvo illiuzii* (*Fatherland of illusions*). It was recorded in the studio at LDM in the winter of 1987, after Tropillo's studio at Okhta was closed down.[97] By then, the first of five major changes in the band's line-up had taken place: drummer Aleksei Ratsen and the keyboardist Igor' Babanov had joined guitarist Aleksandr Beliaev and lead singer Borzykin, compensating for the exit of Petrov, Kopylov, Arkhipov and concert sound engineer Osipov. Borzykin says the following about the recording of *Otechestvo*:

> We used an 8-track. The sound engineer's name was Kazbekov. The studio was very small, but the equipment was not bad. It was *firmennaia* [foreign make], though relatively cheap. We had a Yamaha DX 21 synth, and a Soviet make analogue synth, AKG microphones. The drums were recorded in three takes, where only two drums were played during each take, the cymbals by themselves, etc. A bit strange, but it was supposed to be very professional. The guitars were placed far to the sides, which made them come out a bit weakish (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 1-2).

According to Andrei Burlaka, the songs on *Otechestvo* ventured further and became more explicit in their search for the social roots of totalitariansm and its impact on social consciousness, than any other song by an LRC band had done. Televizor was often accused of lacking musicality and over-emphasising the political.[98] While many were angered by Borzykin's provocative song-paroles, others nevertheless found the music appropriate to the verbal messages: 'Short, almost riff-like phrases, steady rhythm, ascetic but curious arrangements, where the main role is given to the voice [and] the studied laconic keyboard sound' (www.rock-n-roll.ru).

After *Otechestvo* Borzykin appeared to have vented his frustration, and he returned to a less declamatory lyrical style. In 1988 Melodiia issued Televizor's debut album on LP. The band toured Poland and Holland and played at two Italian festivals. The musicians invested their income in building up a sound studio to protect their artistic integrity. It opened in 1989 and over the next few years released records by several bands, including Televizor's own LP *Mechta samoubiitsy* (*Suicidium's dream*) in 1991. The same year the band embarked on another European tour, before they split up again. Borzykin remained active, engaging in a musical-environmental project with a temporary Televizor line-up, and writing music for a TV series. He then re-formed the group and released the album *Dym-Tuman* (*Smoke-fog*) in 1994, which included a 'new Russian' version of the song *Syt po gorlo*.[99] A concert recording, *Zhivoi*, was released the same year and the album *Dvoe* (*Two*) followed

97. LDM: *Leningradskii Dom Molodezhi*, lit. *'The Leningrad Youth House'*, the Leningrad Komsomol's house of culture.
98. Accusations that Televizor's songs lacked musicality are especially interesting when seen in the light of the musical analyses of this study, where informants tend to describe Televizor's composition as more complex, sophisticated and advanced than those of Akvarium, Zoopark and Kino, see 8.5.1, page 168.
99. See 8.5.19, page 185 ff.

in 1995. After this intense recording period, Televizor concentrated on live performances until the recording of the album *7 b*, released in 2000. By then Racen had re-joined the band on electronic drums, and in spring 2002 the album *Put' k uspekhu* (*The road to success*) followed. With its ever-changing line-up, Televizor still performs regularly at St Petersburg rock venues. Songs from *Otechestvo* are still a popular part of the band's setlist.

5.5.6. The Borzykin controversy

As one might expect, western studies of Russian rock have tended to regard Borzykin's so-called 'song-pamphlets' as evidence of a countercultural stance directed either against the Soviet system as such, or at least against its cultural establishment.[100] In view of the relative silence of the rock community with regard to politics and social problems, such an interpretation of songs like *Vyiti iz-pod kontrol'ia* or *Tvoi papa fashist* is evidently appropriate, but not exhaustive. This silence concealed a deep frustration with Soviet everyday and cultural life and the marginal position of rock. It should be noted here that many Russians used, and still use, word such as 'politics' and 'political' with a strong pejorative valour: The political and the criminal are both conceived of as 'dirty' and as opposed to 'normal' life. Thus, in breaking with the predominantly apolitical discourse of the rock environment, Borzykin's protest songs served as a vehicle for effectively provoking the LRC establishment and the older rock generation by throwing their own taboo back at them. As with the journalism of Roksi, Borzykin's critique was at least partly directed inwards towards the rock environment itself.[101] This view is supported by the fact that Televizor's songs returned to less controversial and more poetic themes following the culmination of the LRC conflict, and that Borzykin subsequently struggled to free himself from the label 'political songwriter', as well as from accusations that he turned rock into soulless propaganda:

> I always hate it when [my group] is called a political group because it is entirely not political. If one listens to the texts carefully and analyzes them deeply there always exists a second, concealed meaning (*podteksi*). [...] Protest was never all of it. Just some songs kind of poured out, because the time was really so - like we came to the Rock Club and there were "bosses" [...] like Akvarium and Zoopark. Everything for them was alright. They were constantly on tour, and at the time we saw that they didn't agree on anything. They didn't have a common understanding of things. They weren't expressing themselves fully in the sense that they were encoding their thought in their poetry, in their imagery (Borzykin in Cushman 1995: 112, Cushman's translation).

On more than one level, Borzykin's protest targets the LRC establishment, including what he perceives to be a mistaken strategy of lyrical complexity and obscurity in songwriting. To Roksi and the LRC establishment, on the other hand, the value of Borzykin's songs were corrupted by political content, by the songwriter bringing rock into contact with the surrounding socio-political sphere. In their view, Borzykin started acting like a politician. In Borzykin's view, the problem was less his being a politician than the LRC-establishment showing signs of turning into just another branch of Soviet cultural bureaucracy. Maik Naumenko's reaction to Borzykin's accusations might be among the more pragmatic, but still illustrates the lack of mutual understanding:

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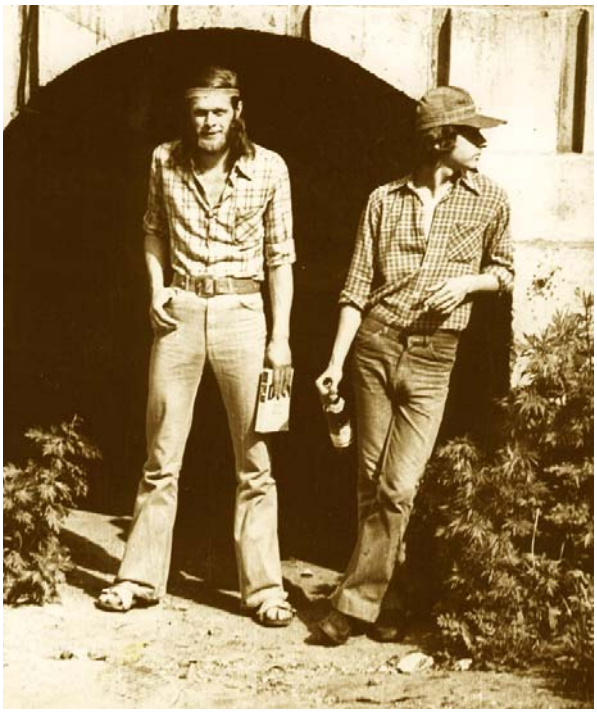
100. See Chapter 6.
101. See comments on rock environment self-criticism in Roksi in 4.5.6, page 52 ff.

> I don't want to say that Misha's point is a lie... Misha is our passionate revolutionary and passionately ultra-leftist. He regards himself deeply insulted by life. You see it was equally bad for everybody, nobody got anything served [on a silver plate]. [...] I wouldn't like to insult him in any way, because he has received his share of blows on the head, but I cannot remember anything which could confirm that Akvarium, Kino, Kurekhin and ourselves were given everything (Maik in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 222-223).

In the light of this it would be misleading to explain Borzykin's provocative songs as simply anti-Soviet and pro-democratic. And, as we have seen, the relations between the Leningrad rock community and the Soviet state was also far more complex and problematic than a simple binary opposition between a unified counterculture and oppressive authorities might imply. Apart from the LRC establishment's long cultivated fear of any behaviour that might threaten its existence, could there have been more subtle reasons for the fierce reactions against Borzykin's songs from within the rock environment? Once a more sophisticated theoretical approach has been suggested in the next chapter, I will return to this question.[102]

102. See 6.2.4, page 95.

Photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov



Maik and Akvarium in the 1970s: Top left: BG (with Dylan book) and Maik. Top right: Maik, Seva Gakkel' and BG 'band portrait' with Cat Stevens in the mirror. Bottom: Akvarium and friends, from the left: Gakkel', made-up Maik, Kordiukov, Fan, BG, U.S. exchange student Jim, and Fagotto (sitting).

Work in progress at the AnTrop studio at Okhta:
Top left: BG recording guitar and vocals.
The guitar was built and donated by the photographer.
Top right: The stern-looking man at the controls - Andrei Tropillo.
Bottom right: Guberman and Kondrashkin recording drums and percussion.
Bottom left: A pensive-looking Seva Gakkel' at the mixing table.

Photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov

The 1983 summer rock festival in Vyborg. One of too few occasions in pre-perestroika times when Leningrad rock was allowed to really take off - and take the crowd with it all the way.

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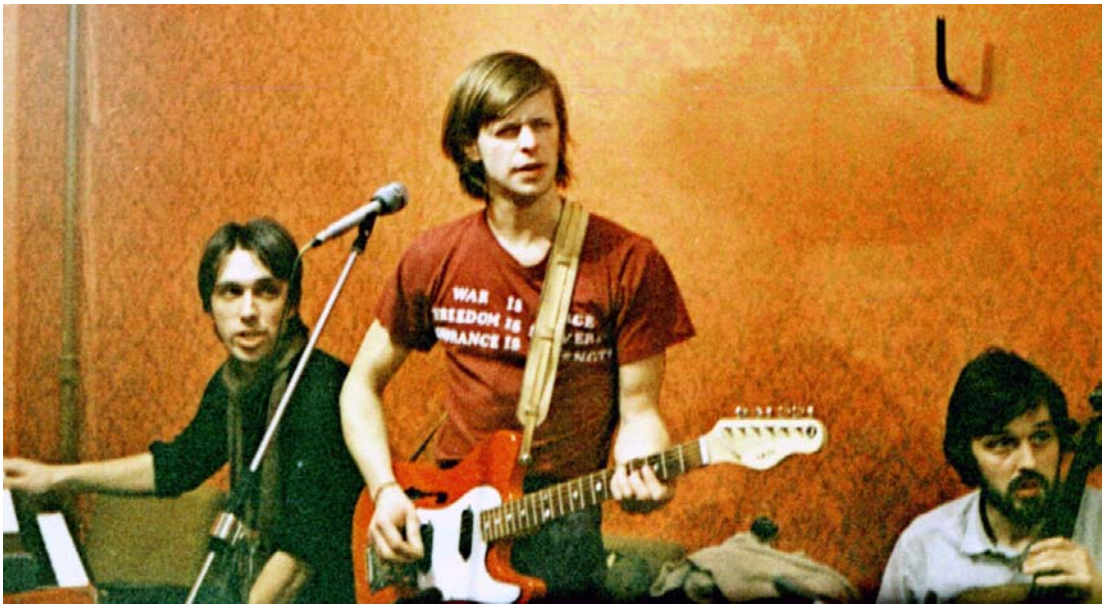
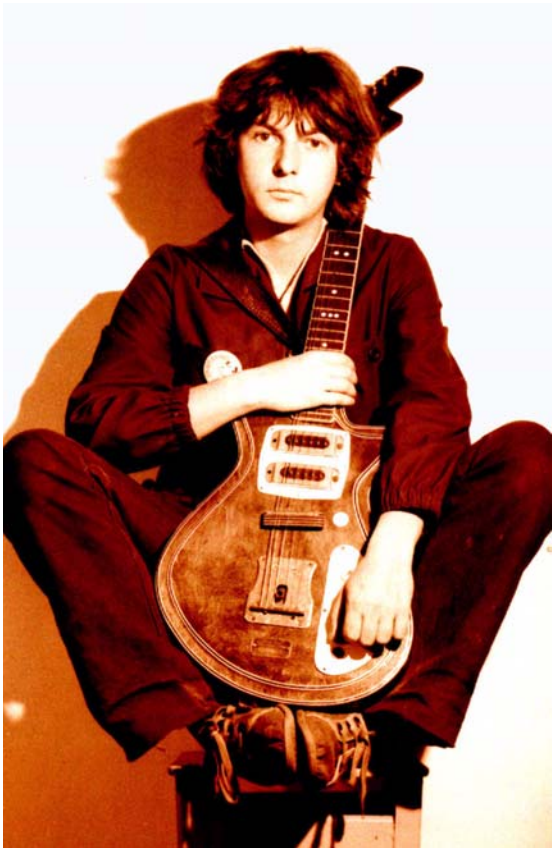
Above: Akvarium, February 1980. Left to right: Diusha, Fagotto, BG, Fan, Gakkel'.
Below: 1982 electricity: Kurekhin, BG, Gakkel'.

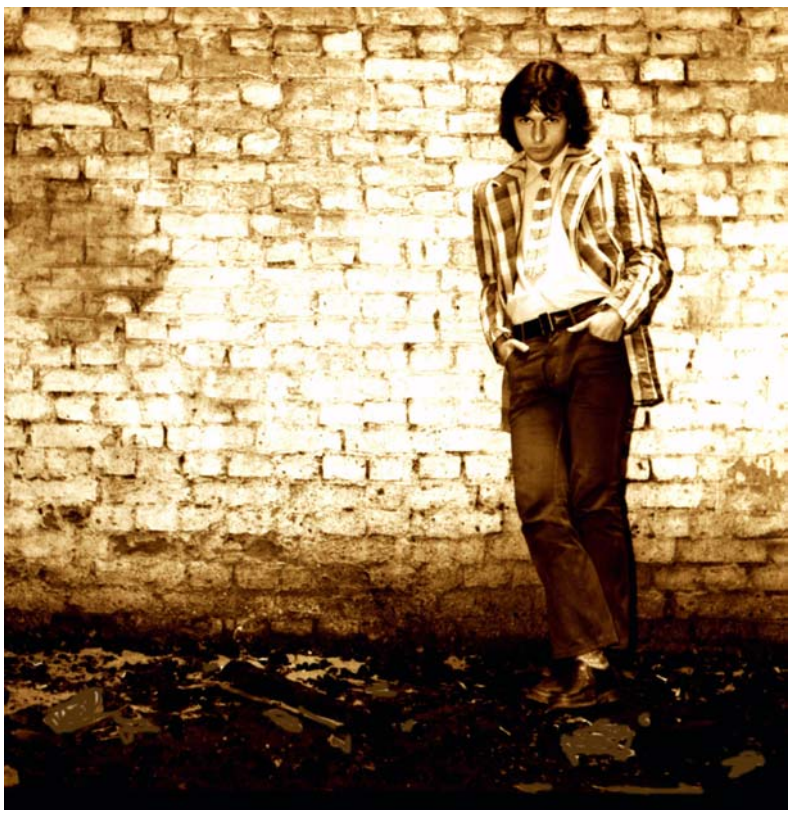


Photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov

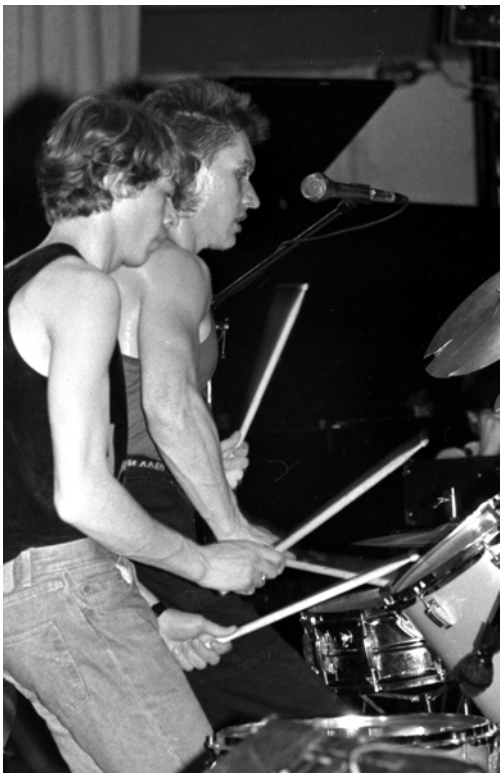
Clockwise from top left: 'Who is she, the one who knows how to move herself?'
BG answers questions from the audience after Akvarium's 1986 performance on Leningrad TV's Muzykal'nyi ring*;*
Akvarium jam at the Falaleev house, 1979;
BG at home with Beatles, Bob Marley and Tolkien on the walls, 1985;
Akvarium in the cold 1985.

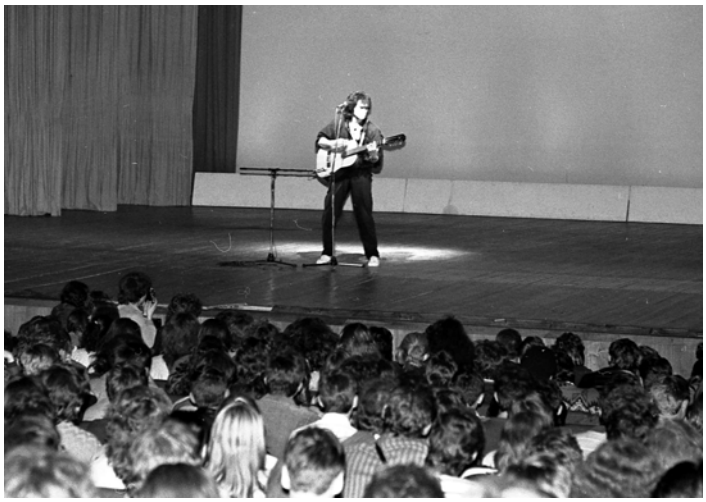


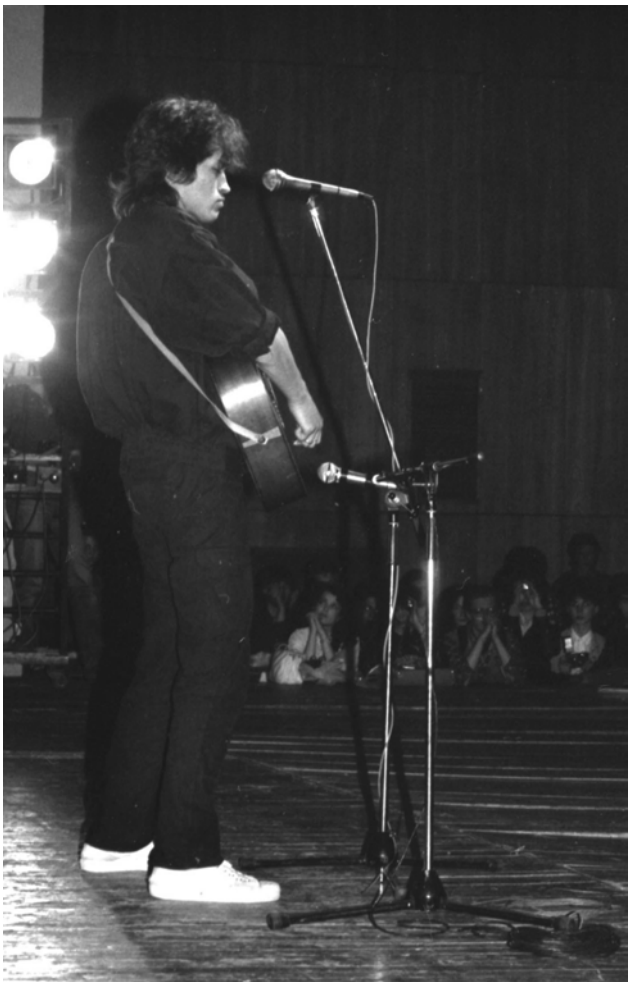
Top left: Maik posing with home-built guitar by Iurii Il'chenko (Mify);
Top right: 1987 Zoopark band portrait.
Below: Cover photo for Blues de Moscou, 1981 *(left); stylish Maik 1980.*



Photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov



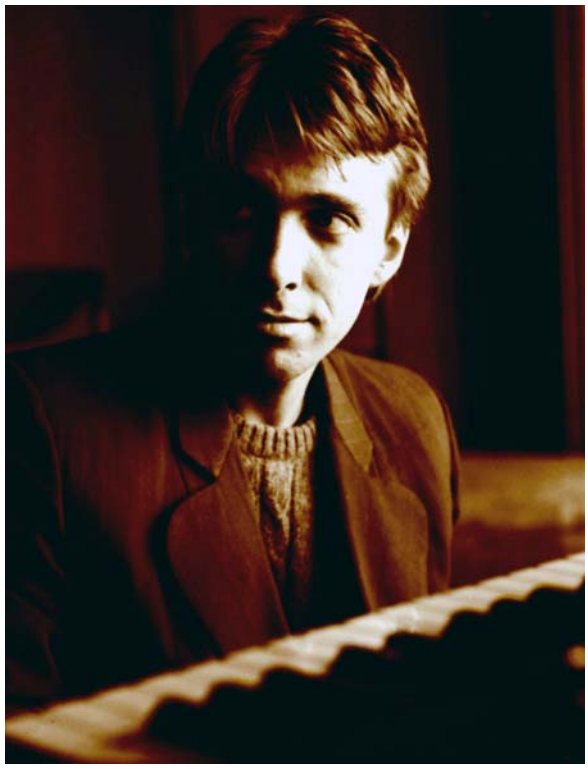




Top left: Two standing Kino drummers, 'Afrika' and Gur'ianov, at the 1987 LRC festival. Bottom left: Viktor Tsui off stage (1985). Right: Tsui performing solo 1989.

Mikhail Borzykin and Televizor live: Top and bottom left: from the performance at the sixth LRC festival, 1988. Bottom right: Borzykin 1985.

Photos by Andrei 'Villi' Usov



Top left: The late great punk rocker Andrei Panov of Avtomaticheskie udovletvoriteli.
Top right: Akvarium, keyboardist, co-arranger and composer, the late Sergei Kurekhin.
Bottom: Original cover photo for Akvarium's 1981 cassette album Treugol'nik.

Top left: Rock critic Artem Troitskii with author and rock apologist Andrei Voznesenskii. Top right: Another writer with rock sympathies, Aleksandr Zhitinskii, on the stairs to BG's old flat. Below: Mashina vremeni have just served up a 'bluebird ragout' on the TV-show Muzykal'nyi ring.

Chapter 6 Fragmenting the binary: Counterculture and beyond

6.1. Binary concepts: Western approaches to Russian rock

6.1.1. Introduction: Views from the outside

As Gorbachev's new policies of glasnost and perestroika began to take effect, the western media discovered a goldmine of more or less sensational stories from 'behind the wall.' After nearly forty years of the Cold War as well as recent statements from the White House declaring the Soviet Union to be an 'Empire of Evil', it makes little sense to blame reporters in retrospect for failing to draw an unbiased picture of life under the old enemy. Today, after nearly twenty years of research, western commentators still struggle to come to terms with the complexities and absurdities of Soviet society, power and bureaucracy. This has not been made any easier by the fact that the western media have interpreted the information gathered in predominantly western terms. Resorting to old formulas has been easier than attempting to understand Soviet citizens on their own terms. As a consequence, media coverage of Russia became increasingly over-simplified as the glasnost euphoria intensified in western Europe and the US, keeping old prejudices and concepts of binary opposition alive.

In the course of a few years, the western public's attitude to Russians shifted from fear and suspicion to pity. Reports on current living conditions and the economy of shortage blended with old notions of Stalinist terror and prison camps, re-enforcing the impression that vast masses of Soviet citizens were powerless victims of an intrinsically evil oppression. Sting's 1985 hit *Russians* may be seen as an example of this. With its lyrical message ('...if the Russians love their children too'), its mournful melodic theme taken from Prokofiev, and its sinister black-and-white video imagery of totalitarianism, the song based its appeal to common sense on such victimisation. Ironically, by persistently regarding Soviet citizens as 'victims of oppression', western academics, reporters and journalists have overlooked the fact that those people whom they pitied felt as uncomfortable with the role of victims as they did with that of 'enemies of the free world'. Compassionate western commentators almost completely neglected to consider that more than three generations of Soviet citizens had spent their lives contributing to, coming to terms with, and making sense of their society. Whether or not they approved of Party ideology, they lived, loved and worked under its rule and had to learn how to live with it. As it was, most people did. Nevertheless, anyone prepared to acknowledge this pragmatic view today must be prepared to face accusations that he or she is defending communist totalitarianism. The spirit of the Cold War is still very much alive.

In short, back in the mid-1980s, confused westerners learned of the existence of Russian rock from the equally confused media. In 1986 the U.S. label Big Time Records released a double compilation LP made from tapes from Tropillo's AnTrop studio. The same year Rolling Stone Magazine and The Observer sent reporters to write about the rock scenes in Leningrad and Moscow, and more followed as a handful of western bands visited Russia.[103] It soon turned out, however, that Russian rock bands had a limited sales potential, and the few honest attempts at journalistic research gave way to more easily

103. For more on the Rolling Stone article on the 1986 LRC festival, see 4.4.3, page 45 ff. The UB 40 tour article was published in Russian translation in Roksi no. 12.

digestible features that exploited the phenomenon's sensational value. To the extent that any notion of Russian rock remained in the western consciousness at all, it was a true product of its time. In much the same way as east-European authors have seen themselves marketed to western audiences as 'dissidents' for the past fifteen years, Russian rock was regarded intuitively as a movement of anti-Soviet cultural resistance.

6.1.2. Counterculture approaches

In the mid-1980s western academia was, much like the media, caught between new fields of research opened up by glasnost on the one hand, and old modes of thinking on the other. As noted by several recent works, the majority of analyses reasoned that Soviet totalitarian society was based on belief and loyalty on the one hand, dissent and oppression on the other.[104] According to this perspective, citizens could not acknowledge the weaknesses of ideology without resisting it. Simultaneously, Popular Music Studies were dominated by sociological approaches that attempted to refine and develop the Birmingham School's subculture theories.[105] Both these trends are reflected in the binary models of oppression and resistance frequently employed in studies of Russian rock.

In the article *Rock Counterculture in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union* (1985: 151) Pedro Ramet defines the term 'counterculture' in two ways: A broad definition: 'any culture which challenges the Party's official culture, which is premised on the concept of a single, legitimate, general interest'; and a narrower one: 'a set of ideas, orientations, tastes and assumptions which differ systematically from those of the dominant culture', and, Ramet stresses, 'recognizing that dominant culture is not the same as official culture'. The latter point has been overlooked by many works in the field. Thus, Ramet's point of departure is relatively sophisticated for a counterculture approach. He acknowledges considerable variations in the degree and kind of counterculture represented by different east-European rock styles. Whereas such styles as Polish punk rock could be openly anti-Soviet, the same did not necessarily apply to other styles, or even to punk in other countries (Notably, punk was quite an arbitrary phenomenon in Russia before perestroika). Ramet eventually evades the consequences of this observation, simply by declaring that not all styles qualify as counterculture *per se*. Whereas punk does qualify, new-wave, he concludes, 'seems better described as self-assertion' (Ramet 1985: 169). Ramet does not pursue this point, but has reservations when it comes to describing Russian rock as a counterculture.

Thus, in a later article by Pedro Ramet and Sergei Zamashchikov, entitled *The Soviet Rock Scene* (1990), the concept of counterculture is applied less rigidly, although a politicised perspective is retained, which entails certain reductionist tendencies. The article also reveals a recurring weakness in sociological approaches to rock culture in eastern Europe and Russia: They lack discussions of the rock song as an aesthetic object. Early sociological approaches have tended to promote theoretical models of varying sophistication, which in the most serious cases have primarily sought legetimisation through biased readings of translated song lyric excerpts. Remnants of this trend can be observed at least until the mid-1990s. One example: Although the whole song lyric is quoted in this case, Thomas

104. For examples of such binary approaches, Yurchak (1997) lists: Breslauer 1978, Burton 1981, Hill 1985, Medding 1981.
105. 'The Birmingham School' refers to the research environment which developed at the The Birmingham University's Department of Sociology in the late 1970s. Works such as Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The meaning of style* (1979) marked a great step forward in the study of youth culture, but were initially limited by Marxist views of culture as being a reflection of society.

Cushman's *Notes from the Underground* (1995: 115), which quite typically does not contain a single note, translates BG's song *Kontrdans* with the word *Counterdance* and generally insinuates that its lyric has an obvious political agenda. Since the reader is denied any description of the music, he or she is led to interpret it as a rebellious rock song. However, Cushman ignores the fact that the word *contredance* exists in English and refers to a French 18th-century dance (related to the quadrille). He overlooks the fact that the musical arrangement refers to this dance. He also overlooks BG's soft and intimate singing voice with its characteristic tender vibrato and the quiet acoustic guitar accompaniment. When the music is taken into consideration, the alleged rebelliousness retreats in favour of more silent reflections about individuals, their personal relationships, and their place in society.

At this point some self-critique is required. My master's dissertation (Steinholt 1996) investigated the role of political motifs in song lyrics by Konstantin Kinchev, lead singer in the Leningrad band Alisa. Six song lyrics were analysed, two from each of three periods: Before, during and after perestroika. The entire lyrics were presented in Russian and in Norwegian translation, but the approach was predominantly literary. In retrospect I became aware of the limitations of my approach. I visited Kinchev in Moscow to discuss the finished thesis. Although he had no fundamental objections to my findings, he had doubts about their relevance. Kinchev underlined that political readings of his songs would inevitably reduce and trivialise them, and very likely lead to misunderstandings. Cushman's interviewees from the Leningrad rock environment share Kinchev's scepticism. Cushman concludes that the view that rock is beyond politics was an integral part of the musicians' self-awareness. He notes that this view was shared even by songwriters who were regarded by their colleagues as politically motivated (Cushman 1995: 94). However, the implications of these observations were not dealt with until later.

In Popular Music Studies during the 1980s and 1990s, awareness of the problems involved in politically motivated interpretations of rock culture was high and increasing. Curiously the same did not apply to works on east-European and Russian popular music. This may have been related to an obsession with dissident culture on the part of western academia. There is an enduring tendency in the west to reduce east-European culture to a question of dissent, as the Romanian author and critic Mircea Cartarescu recently noted. Objecting to a German publisher's comment that he wrote south-east-European literature, Cartarescu writes:

> Stay where you are, the publisher was kindly telling me in this manner. [...] Write about your Securitate, your Ceaucescu, your House of the People. About your dogs, your street urchins, your gypsies. Be proud of your dissident activities during communism. Leave it to us to write about love, death, happiness, agony and ecstasy. Leave it to us to form an avantgarde, to renew and breathe cultural normality. [...] I am *not* an east-European author. I do *not* acknowledge the division of Europe into three zones, whether geopolitically, culturally, religiously, nor in any other way. I am dreaming of a varied, but not a schizophrenic Europe. [...] I do not care in which country André Breton lived and wrote. I cannot find Bulgakov's Kiev on a map. Neither did I discover Catullus, or Rabelais or Cantemir or Virginia Woolf on a map, but in a library where the books are standing side by side (Cartarescu 2003: 3).

Returning to Russian rock, the fascination with dissent is reflected in the political interpretations of Lyrvall (1987) and Easton (1989). Even the Russian critic Troitsky (1987), writing for a sensation-hungry western audience, employs a counterculture perspective. In his thesis on hippie culture in the Soviet union, Mark Yoffe cannot keep himself from speaking about 'tight-panted revolutionaries' (1991: 15). Timothy Ryback's conclusion from his book *Rock Around The Bloc* sums up the tendency:

> In a very real sense, the triumph of rock and roll in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has been the realization of a democratic process. [...] In the course of thirty years, rock bands have stormed every bastion of official resistance and forced both party and government to accept rock-and-roll music as part of life in the Marxist-Leninist state (Ryback 1990: 233).

Covering an immense field of countries and scenes over a period of thirty years, Ryback's information tends to be randomly emphasised and occasionally hard to verify. As his war metaphors suggest, the vast amount of information at hand has left little room for a flexible analytic perspective. Furthermore, the work fails to account for the fundamental difference between the cultural atmosphere in countries which came under Soviet control after World War II, and the cultural atmosphere in Soviet Russia itself.

Cushman (1995) concentrates on the Leningrad rock scene. The work is based on extensive qualitative interviews with insiders from the rock environment, combined with the author's 'thick descriptions'. Unfortunately, Cushman's impressive theoretical constructions and sociological analyses have a tendency to obscure the messages of his informants. The author also appears to have become aware of the limitations of his counterculture perspective at some point during the process. However, instead of changing his perspective, or modifying it, he attempts to reinforce it through his 'thick descriptions' and analyses. Thus he observes that much frustration is directed against the parent generation rather than the political authorities as such; he notes that the State is virtually invisible in Leningrad rock; he notes that rock retreats from Soviet everyday life; he notes that although rock musicians showed disregard for the official side of Soviet modernity, they chose to remain within it. On the other hand he continues to talk about rock as an active code of resistance against a dominant culture, which he fails to define more closely. He insists that this code of resistance fights concepts of 'communist identity'. His observations are not necessarily wrong, but Cushman reveals the reduction involved when he states:

> What interests us here is not consent and conformity, but dissent and resistance. For members of the Petersburg musical community, the cosmology of socialist industrial modernity did not provide meaningful categories for personal or social existence. At the most abstract level, musical counterculture was a collective effort to invest existence with a degree of authenticity which was subjectively meaningful to those involved. [...] Musicians negated the dominant conception of space by locating the center of their counterculture in the rock culture of the west (Cushman 1995: 193).

Cushman's basic notion of the failure of Soviet ideology to represent the everyday life of individual citizens and their private lives finds solid support elsewhere.[106] The problem is that he deprives Soviet citizens of the ability to construct alternative meanings and strategies to make sense of their individual and private spheres, unless it involves dissent, resistance, and adaptation of western modes of expression. In other words, his use of the counterculture perspective traps his argument in the old mould, according to which the acknowledgement of ideological weakness necessitates resistance. Cushman also comes close to suggesting that Russian rock musicians have merely 'imported' a western cultural mode of expression as a means to confront official ideology. Not only does this represent a reductionist view of the motivation for cultural activities in general, it also disregards the dominant idea among Leningrad rock musicians themselves, that rock is about something else, and more, than politics.

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106. For concrete examples, see 6.2.2, page 92 ff.

Cushman thus finds himself in a situation where conflicts occur between the qualitative and analytic parts of his project. This forces him to play down certain aspects of the former. In some instances the results are paradoxical: Where other scholars have described the characteristic backyards, passages and basements of Leningrad as ideal surroundings for alternative cultural activities (e.g. Lyrvall 1987, Nielsen 1993), Cushman arrives at the opposite conclusion. Reflecting on the raising of the bridges across the Neva, his analysis excels itself:

> The raising of the bridges signifies in a regular and standardized fashion the potential of the system to determine the movement of individuals who inhabit the space of the city. The practice reinforced and reasserted in visible fashion and on a nightly basis the particular cultural logic which infused the social organization of the socialist city (Cushman 1995: 176).

Not only were the bridges built and opening well before 1917. They still open in post-Soviet St Petersburg in much the same way as in capitalist Amsterdam. What this quotation illustrates is the over-extension of analysis that often accompanies concepts of binary opposition. It also demonstrates the lack of historical perspective that applies to the majority of western works on Russian rock until the late 1990s, along with an understanding of Soviet citizens as mere passive victims of ideological oppression. Arriving during or after perestroika, most researchers completed their fieldwork during the rock boom of the late 1980s. Since such hit-and-run anthropologists failed to investigate how Russian rock existed before the changes, many also failed to acknowledge that Russian rock itself was undergoing dramatic changes during that period. Complicating factors have thus been largely ignored. One example of this is the interaction between the Leningrad rock community, the local authorities, and the KGB in the formation and running of the LRC. Another is the problem of how the majority of Soviet citizens learned to live with notions of the falsity of official ideology without turning to dissent or resistance.

6.1.3. A Danish alternative

Barrett and Hansen's MA thesis in Historical Musicology is partly based on fieldwork conducted in 1991 and 1992 in Moscow, Leningrad (St Petersburg), and Sverdlovsk (Ekaterinburg) (Barrett and Hansen 1993). It attempts an interdisciplinary approach, which makes the thesis interesting from point of view of *Rock in the Reservation*. Barrett and Hansen's investigation starts by examining Soviet jazz in the 1920s and ends with a report on the status of rock music in the post-Soviet Russia of 1992.

The conclusion emphasises the atmosphere of disillusionment in the rock environment, which predominated in the wake of the devastating commercialisation process, a general feeling that 'Russian rock is about to die'. Barrett and Hansen also conclude that the consequences for Russian rock of oppressive Soviet cultural policies were not entirely negative. These policies also enabled it to express and develop its idealism, intellectualism and high-culture aspirations. Furthermore, the authors identify important similarities between the emergence of jazz and that of rock in the Soviet Union: Both were accused of running errands for western cultural imperialism and both were forced either to make compromises or to chose to exist outside the official scene.

From the point of view of *Rock in the Reservation*, the limitations of Barrett and Hansen's thesis are threefold. Firstly, it has retained the tendency of counterculture approaches to overfocus on 'illegality' when discussing cultural grey-area activities. Secondly, their song analyses ignore the relationship between lyrics and music. The lyric analyses are restricted to shallow content analyses, while the music analyses use a specialised

vocabulary largely inaccessible to non-musicologists. This makes it difficult to relate the analyses to the findings in the qualitative investigation. A third problem is that the musical features are considered solely in relation to an exclusively Russian musical context. Rather than accepting Russian rock's origin in 'authorised translations' of western rock, Barrett and Hansen approach it as a purely local phenomenon. In several cases this perspective is misleading, as when they describe Akvarium's accordion as a typically Russian folk *baian*, ignoring its obvious pseudo-Celtic traits. Compare Andrei Tropillo's comment on Nol' and Akvarium's respective uses of that instrument:

> [L]ook at how, say, Chistiakov [of the band Nol'] uses his baian in rock [and] roll. That's a Russian way and therefore the voice, too, can be moved to a secondary level, because here we already have a technical basis. The use of that instrument gives an instant colouring, as with the balalaika and so on. And look at how ungifted in that sense [is the way that] Akvarium use the accordion. There is, you see, some incomprehensible dead Irish stuff in it, [mixed] with something else. But there's nothing, there is nothing particularly Russian in it (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 30).

By ignoring any debt to western rock in their analyses of the Russian songs and lyrics, the two Danish scholars are unable to account for the fine interaction between western and Russian stylistic traits. Thus, in my view, the main virtue of Barrett's and Hansen's thesis remains its authors' resistance to the ideological readings which characterise many of the counterculture approaches.

6.2. Beyond dualism

6.2.1. Views from the inside

Turning from western academic works on the Leningrad rock scene to opinions from within the community, the impression of a manifest countercultural movement quickly dissolves. Informants present a wide range of views, but their answers tend to become evasive when the question of opposition is raised. However, a few main tendencies do appear, the first of which concerns rock's alleged relationship with politics:

> The concert would go on for a couple of hours, afterwards people went silently home and that was all. There wasn't anything special to it, no politics, nobody cried 'Down with the Soviets [sovki]!' or 'Down with those commies!' See? Nobody cried because we were disgusted even by speaking of them. And we were afraid. Everybody was afraid of politics. For political reasons you could lose your job or go to prison, see? For fifteen days, for a year (Vasin in Steinholt 2002a: 7).

Vasin describes the situation in the early 1970s when he first started staging concerts with amateur beat bands. The sociologist Il'ia Smirnov takes recent trends in the Russian rock press as his point of departure:

> In the glossy 'fan' magazines of the 1990s an argument has become popular, according to which the rockers of the 1980s were politicised, stood up in the roles of '*tribunes*' of sorts, '*being in opposition to everything, they were typical bolsheviks*' - as Valerii Todorovskii wrote, without bothering himself with evidence, because there is none. Politics in the generally accepted sense of the word, i.e. a question of power, was something neither Grebenshchikov, nor Maik, nor Tsui, nor Shevchuk were in reality occupied with (Smirnov 1999: 207).

Even Mikhail Borzykin, whom many regarded as a 'political songwriter' in the mid-1980s, refused to have his songs reduced to political pamphlets.[107] Today he relates his provocative songs primarily to the internal conflict at the LRC. On the other hand, strong forces among the authorities did see rock as an ideological threat and this did affect the songs, as Anatolii Gunitskii underlines: '[T]he interest in social problems was brought about by censorship' (Gunitskii in Steinholt 2001b: 2). However, the apolitical attitude of rock in the early 1980s did not make it innocent in the eyes of the authorities, especially not in the provinces:

> [I]n Leningrad it wasn't that bad, but let's say in Ufa, the KGB was literally pursuing people who got involved with this. Outright pursued. But why? Well, back then ideology was the main issue in our country. And a person who writes songs uncontrolled, sings them and, worst of all, has an audience, this person automatically becomes an enemy of the ruling power. The power was totalitarian and it started fighting this with all accessible means [...] consciously or unconsciously. Therefore anybody who wrote songs were by the gates, literally, strictly, everybody who wrote [songs], everybody was registered and all were influenced, that is they received much money, summer houses, cars, to ensure that they wrote the things they were supposed to. And the internal control with those people who wrote Soviet songs was stronger than any external control. [...] But when a young man has listened too much to The Rolling Stones or Pink Floyd, he's not likely to write a song as it's supposed to be anymore. Therefore all rock musicians, and especially those who wrote songs, or copied songs by others, were pursued (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 5).

Feinshtein-Vasil'ev' stresses that the authorities were opposed to rock because it represented an alternative to the officially approved popular music of the estrada. This notion of a cultural opposition between rock and estrada is highly relevant in this context, since many Leningrad musicians defined rock as an aesthetic adversary of official pop music.[108] Typically, however, western researchers with a dissident perspective on Russian rock would use a quotation such as this to focus on political conflict between a 'democratic' rock movement on the one hand, and the Soviet authorities, armed with police and the KGB, on the other. As is clear from Chapter 4 of this book, the relations between the authorities and the Leningrad rock community were far more complex. Anatolii Sokolkov, work leader at the boiler room known as the 'Kamchatka', where many rock musicians were employed as stokers, gives another example of unexpected loyalties:

> With the cops it was very easy here [at 'Kamchatka']. The cops didn't come by. The boiler room was, most probably, under the wing of the KGB and the *gebisty* [KGB officers] simply forbade the cops to come here. There was this time when they started to show up a lot, but afterwards I had a meeting with one *kegebeshnik* [KGB officer]... You know, earlier they used to call everyone out to the cafe for a conversation... I told him about the cops. For some reason he got very angry and said: 'There will be no more cops' (Sokolkov in Tsui 1991: 140).

Of course, one way of retaining a counterculture perspective on Leningrad rock would be to focus on the aesthetic side of the opposition between rock and estrada, rather than on political dissent, but this would demand a focus on the actual music, in which sociological approaches have shown virtually no interest so far. A more fundamental problem is that a

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107. See 5.5.6, page 80.
108. See interview with Mikhail Borzykin (Steinholt 2001a: 3), interview with Anatolii Gunitskii (Steinholt 2001b: 4), and Andrei Tropillo's comment about music to peel potatoes to, quoted in 7.2.7, page 110.

model which primarily builds on a binary opposition will inevitably be more effective as a means of reduction or simplification than as a means of revealing complex structures. The following description gives a flavour of the many-sidedness of Leningrad rock and its context of cultural opposition:

> The phenomenon Leningrad rock is the product of a series of factors: a legal and more or less liberal Rock Club; Tropillo's non-commercial studio; the spirit of brotherhood in the rock community (not always, but in general) and the absence of competition between bands on other grounds than the cultural field; the ban on all sorts of musical activity outside the LRC (except in restaurants and dancehalls) – it was bad, but played a role; the establishment of similar cultural reservations for other groupings of artists (Tovarishchestvo eksperimentalnykh iskusstv) [Comradeship of experimental arts] and writers (Club '81) meant we were all in the same boat[. A]nd if you add the eternal rivalry between Moscow (the site of government) and St Petersburg (which goes back to the 18th century), you'll get the picture (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 9).

Even if one acknowledges that Leningrad rock, at least in the pre-perestroika years, was essentially apolitical, it would nevertheless be possible to argue that rock's ideology of individuality was principally at odds with Soviet ideology, and that rock was therefore intrinsically anti-Soviet. As Anatolii Gunitskii puts it: 'Everything normal was anti-Soviet to a certain degree' (Gunitskii in Steinholt 2001b: 5). Not everyone is ready to accept such a stance, though:

> The overwhelming majority of our 'middle class' was not 'anti-Soviet'-minded at all. Its mentors were not dissidents (the '*human rights movement*,' which gradually turned into a sect, was halted once and for all by the KGB at the beginning of the 80s), but figures in the so-called '*cultural opposition*' (Smirnov 1999: 205).

Although the official discourse of the time tended to give the opposite impression, Andrei Burlaka sees a significant difference between dissent and a striving for a less ideologically dogmatic cultural scene:

> As I see it, there was no dissident influence in the LRC but there was always a kind of hidden opposition because of the situation itself: We were listening to and discussing a "non-existent" musical style! There was a spirit of opposition, possibly, not against the System – we never believed that the System would be broken and hence never dreamed of it – but against some Stupids. There was something like a naïve faith that we had a chance to implant rock into Soviet culture if we could overcome some stupid old idiots (and some stupid young bastards like Komsomol activists). Even today I believe that if the chief Soviet ideologist Mikhail Suslov – who was very-very old and very-very stupid – had died just four or five years earlier, the Communist Party would have had a chance to save Socialism! Gorbachev got the power too late. The things went too far, and when Gorbachev started the changes they came like a snowball down a hill. We couldn't stop (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 8-9).

The belief that the Soviet system as such was virtually everlasting is another significant point in this context. It will be addressed in the next paragraph. Burlaka looks back on the project of Leningrad rock as a naïve struggle for official accept. The dream of implanting rock into Soviet reality is reflected in one of Maik Naumenko's short-stories.[109] Maik does not simply replace Soviet reality with something else, but blends it with western features to achieve a perfect balance between the familiar and the exotic:

109. See Rybin and Startsev (2000: 6-11).

The main character and first person narrator is a wealthy rock star who drives a Rolls Royce to the recording studio, and strums his new Gibson Les Paul. On the other hand he smokes Belomors, has a contract with Melodiia and complains about shabby Ukrainian hotel rooms, smelly tour buses and lazy band members who never turn up in time for rehearsals. It is hard to define Maik's story as anti-Soviet. For him, Russian rock was a culture inseparable from its Soviet setting: '[...] Maik remained all but the one and only king of the underground epoch, who didn't fall into the web of the new Russian show business. Like Bashlachev, Maik was through and through a man of socialism' (Lipnitskii in Rybin and Startsev 2001: 245).[110] Significantly, to be a 'man of socialism' in this context is not incompatible with being apolitical. In a 1990 interview Maik states: 'There's one thing I can't understand: Why we can't live normally in our country without political parties. Just live' (in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 216).

In one sense, it could be argued, Maik's desire to escape politics represents a highly political stance. This stance is reflected in a shift in political attitude among the Russian intelligentsia between the late 1980s and the early 1990s. More concerned with celebrating the many freedoms of democracy than with attending to their civic responsibilities, the intelligentsia increasingly came to regard politics as a dirty game, with which they had no desire to become involved. This refusal of involvement, grounded in an all-gain-no-sacrifice attitude, may be related to the concept of 'modern cynicism'.

6.2.2. Cynicism and resistance

Sloterdijk (1987) defines modern cynicism as 'enlightened false consciousness,' a modern unhappy consciousness that results from the irreversibility of enlightenment:

> It is the universally widespread way in which enlightened people see to it that they are not taken for suckers. [...] Psychologically, present-day cynics can be understood as borderline melancholics, who can keep their symptoms of depression under control and can remain more or less able to work [...] in spite of anything that might happen [...] In the new cynicism a detached negativity comes through that scarcely allows itself any hope, at most a little irony and pity (Sloterdijk 1987: 5-6).

These notions seem generally in line with dominant tendencies in late Soviet society as well. For example, the resigned and depressed tone of early rock journalism in Leningrad could be said to reflect this kind of cynical attitude.[111] In Sloterdijk's terms, the cynicism of rock community members resulted from the confrontation between their own knowledge of and enthusiasm for rock music and the refusal of official society to accept it.

The concept of cynicism undermines the foundation of counterculture approaches based on models of oppression and resistance. Sloterdijk's critique of the manner in which philosophy has treated fascist ideologies also applies to many western approaches to Soviet totalitarianism. The weak point is, Sloterdijk argues, that philosophy has tended to

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110. Aleksandr Bashlachev (1960-1988): One of Russia's legendary guitar poets and singers. His songs are by many regarded as the principal example of continuity between bard song and rock. Came to Leningrad from Cherepovets in 1984 and joined the LRC. Made a short and influential career with intense solo performances of his songs to acoustic guitar accompaniment. Committed suicide by defenestration in February 1988. For a discussion on rock and bard song, see 7.2.4, page 103.

111. See 4.5.6, page 52 ff.

underestimate fascist ideology, underrate it as a serious object for reflective critique: '[Philosophy] remains fixated on "serious opponents," and with this attitude it neglects the task of comprehending the ideological template of "unserious", shallow "systems"' (Sloterdijk 1987: 8).

Could the problem of counterculture approaches to Russian rock be related to their neglect of cynicism as a common response to the 'shallow system' of Soviet ideology? As noted by Kay (2003: 133-135), Slavoj Zizek sees cynicism as an integral part of the modern totalitarian state, because totalitarian power structures rely on the 'objective' disengaged compliance of citizens. Ideology, he argues, produces a cynical subject who, although he or she is aware of the discrepancy between the mask of ideology and social reality, prefers the mask: 'I know very well, but still...'

> Soviet citizens were likewise entirely cynical towards the Party and its *nomenklatura*, but this did not for a moment prevent them from complicity with the regime, or indeed from becoming Party members themselves. On the contrary, it was what powered their relationship with it (Kay 2003: 134).
>
> [C]ynicism poses as subversive, whereas in fact it reinforces ideology, since its imaginary distance from it is something ideology has already taken into account. Indeed, irony and detachment, the belief in an independent, authentic position outside ideology, are examples of ideology at its most insidious (Kay 2003: 151).

In one sense, it could be argued, the client-patron relationship on which the LRC was based required a cynical attitude among the Club's members. Was the dominant attitude in the Leningrad rock environment, with its symbiotic relationship with official structures in the LRC, one of cynicism rather than resistance? As already seen, western notions of countercultural rock rebellion tend to collide with the authentic, spiritual rock sphere described by insiders, a cultural sphere which in their view existed above and beyond the trivialities of official ideology and politics. One way of overcoming this discrepancy might be to acknowledge that the urge to resist official ideology could result not only in open protest, but also in the employment of cynical strategies. The withdrawal into a parallel cultural sphere could be regarded as one such strategy.

6.2.3. Into the parallel

> Politics starts from the material conditions in which people live, not with the cultural strategies that make those conditions livable (Frith 1996: 51).

Hilary Pilkington's social-anthropological study of youth culture in Moscow (Pilkington 1994) adopts the Soviet bureaucratic distinction between 'formal' and 'non-formal' (*formal'nye i neformal'nye*) cultural communities. In this manner Pilkington manages to reduce the emphasis on conflict and confrontation and open up for a more nuanced perspective of 'multiple incursions and separations between dominant and subordinate cultures.' However, when it comes to explaining what makes a culture 'subordinate,' and why, she does not manage to free herself entirely from concepts of binary opposition.

In her book *Up from the Underground* (2001), the sociologist Anna Szemere studies Hungarian rock music before, during and after the velvet revolution. Szemere is well aware of the reduction caused by two-dimensional models of oppression and resistance. She argues that such perspectives easily produce a false impression of an alternative cultural environment as uniform and free of internal conflicts. Often, she notes, this underpins further descriptions of the environment's collective resistance to a regime, a

resistance based on common, universal ideals, such as 'freedom' or 'democracy' in a strictly western sense of the words. Nonetheless, Szemere points out, any cultural environment is fragmented and defined by a diversity of strategies. Some of these strategies may even appear counterproductive to researchers who aim to identify the common interests of a given cultural community. Thus, she maintains, east-European rock was not isolated from the ideas and influences of other social groups that possessed other, sometimes contradictory, creative strategies.

Szemere is also among the first scholars to explore the consequences of rock musicians' fundamental aversion towards the label 'political' which, as shown above, has much in common with east-European authors' aversion towards the dissident label.[112] Hungarian rock bands of the 1980s, much like their Leningrad counterparts, borrowed an ideology of authenticity from the dominant discourse of 'high culture'. This gave the concept of the autonomous work of art a key position in their artistic self-image, Szemere observes. Without resorting to romantic views of cultural authenticity or over-extending her use of the concept, Szemere outlines and explains a context-bound and historically determined artistic autonomy, which the rock musicians apply when they insist that their art is larger than, and beyond, politics.

Szemere's observations demonstrate the need for more sophisticated and flexible theoretical perspectives than those offered by countercultural theory. The cultural anthropologist Aleksei Yurchak, himself a representative of the last Soviet generation, offers a possible alternative based on Sloterdijk's and Zizek's concepts of cynicism. In his article *The Cynical Reason of Late Socialism* (1997), Yurchak discards the concept of 'resistance against the system,' arguing that the vast majority of Soviet citizens were demonstrating instead their lack of interest in official power. His statement that citizens regarded Soviet power as immutable and omnipresent echoes Andrei Burlaka's assertion that nobody believed that the 'system' would be broken. Since official slogans could not be contradicted, he argues, they were ignored instead.

Instead of counterculture or a cultural underground, Yurchak prefers to talk about parallel culture. When in the official sphere, he argues, people developed a way of suppressing psychologically their notion of the system's ideological falsity. Simultaneously they engaged in the creation of parallel events and parallel meanings inside and in spite of the official sphere. Instead of opposing and openly resisting official culture, citizens re-defined the game. They simulated support for official ideology through a conscious suppression of its official meaning, which they replaced with a more honestly-felt parallel meaning. Yurchak turns to the first of May parade for illustration:

> The parade itself, being perceived as an unavoidable official event, became also an easygoing, exciting, and happy celebration during which many norms of public behavior were suspended: one could scream loudly, be drunk in public, and exchange playful remarks with complete strangers, as long as one carried and shouted official slogans (Yurchak 1997: 164).

112. That this problem is not limited to Mircea Cartarescu is confirmed by western publishers' marketing of authors such as Ivan Klíma or Milan Kundera.

Yurchak's informants confirm that the smiles, laughs and waving of the crowds as they passed the tribunes of party officials were honest and genuine, but not for the reasons defined by Soviet ideology. Power, he stresses, was not subverted by confrontation or ridicule, but transformed into 'a trivial backdrop of a seemingly more meaningful parallel event.' These were not necessarily conscious, rational strategies, however. As such Yurchak compares them to Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'strategies of behaviour' (Bourdieu 1990: 62).

If these strategies represented those of the vast majority of citizens, Yurchak adds two alternatives, represented by the activist and the dissident. The former believed in the official ideology, the latter protested openly against it. To studies based on binary models of oppression and resistance, the indifference towards dissidents displayed by the masses becomes something of a paradox. The acceptance of Soviet power as immutable and omnipresent, Yurchak argues, meant that many perceived the behaviour of dissidents as irrational. The lack of support for dissidents, then, becomes connected with a strategy of protecting the parallel sphere. By turning to open protest, the dissident lost the benefits of the parallel cultural sphere and exposed him- or herself to repression. By sympathising with the dissident, a citizen would be putting his or her own parallel sphere at risk. Instead, Yurchak argues, citizens employed various 'strategies of non-involvement', which were made possible by the mechanisms of the parallel sphere. Eventually, he concludes, this non-involvement reached the level of a crisis. It eroded Soviet society from the inside as ideology ceased to convincingly represent reality.[113]

Rock musicians in Leningrad did not regard themselves either as dissidents or, to use Zizek's term, as radical political agents. Rock did not simply talk back at the Soviet authorities and their ideology. Not only did it insist on changing the subject, it also spoke another language: A language of the parallel sphere. As Smirnov bluntly puts it:

> You will not find songs in the 1982 repertory of Å [Akvarium] about who should take over the post of General Secretary after Brezhnev's death. But social problems interested BG to the extent that they existed in the real lives of '100-rouble engineers' (Smirnov 1999: 207).

While several aspects of rock culture were at odds with Soviet ideology, most notably its individualism, it does not simply follow that rock was a counterculture with the default aim of targeting that ideology. What has formerly been interpreted as anti-Soviet resistance could perhaps better be considered an alternative to a more common attitude of late-modern cynicism. In other words, rock may have been more cynically a-Soviet than rebelliously anti-Soviet. The cynical strategies of non-involvement and retreat into a parallel sphere meant that rock could not exist officially in the Soviet Union. Its existence would imply an official recognition of a parallel cultural sphere, a recognition which would literally deflate official ideology. This is why the rock environment's faith in implanting rock into Soviet culture was naïve, as Burlaka puts it. The whole project was utopian because it implied bringing the parallel cultural sphere into contact with the official sphere. Perestroika, which Yurchak interprets as a response to the 'crisis of non-involvement,' became the first phase in open negotiation between those two spheres.

113. Yurchak addresses these issues in a recent article, eloquently entitled *Soviet Hegemony of Form: Everything Was Forever Until It Was No More* (2003).

Whereas the attempts to incorporate rock into official cultural life may appear essentially utopian in the cultural climate of the early 1980s, they were in many ways the only sensible strategy given the circumstances. If rock was to be brought to a mass audience, it had to become officially accepted by the 'everlasting' Soviet power. But unlike VIAs, which conformed to official demands by either supporting the ideology, or by performing 'songs about nothing', rock bands stubbornly insisted on performing and recording on their own terms.

6.2.4. The Borzykin controversy revisited

Returning briefly to the case of Mikhail Borzykin addressed in the previous chapter, Aleksei Yurchak's notion of parallel culture suggests that Borzykin touched something deeper by bringing overt social and political problems into his songs. In songs like *My idem* and *Vyiti iz-pod kontrol'ia* he insisted on the responsibility of the individual to find his/her own way and turn his/her back on collective illusion-building. By thematising the conflict between the official and parallel spheres he was threatening the sphere which the rock environment had carved out for itself and on which the LRC establishment's symbiotic relationship with the cultural authorities depended. Not only was the established aesthetic conception of rock at stake, but also the whole project of elevating rock to a position in 'high culture'. In the eyes of the old rock guard, Borzykin became a traitor to the rock cause by sacrificing poetic complexity, eternal values and existential problems for the sake of banal social complaints. By singling out Borzykin as a slogan-carrying political provocateur, the older rock generation sought to defend the autonomy of their parallel cultural sphere.

Chapter 7 'You can't rid a song of its words': Rock lyrics

7.1. Rock lyrics in Popular Music Studies

7.1.1. Introduction

The status, function and purpose of rock lyrics and the search for a relevant approach to their analysis are much-debated topics in Popular Music Studies. In recent years, as interdisciplinary approaches have gained greater status and attention, musicological approaches have shown an increasing interest in lyrics, breaking with a past tendency to ignore the words of a song. Meanwhile, works in Sociology and Literary Studies are attempting to account for musical meaning. However, the old boundaries between the academic disciplines still obstruct approaches on the practical level. As a result, many works repeat the old mistakes, neglecting one or more factors that contribute to the song's meaning. This is to some extent overcome by an increased interest in the listener-oriented approaches of Ethnomusicology, which have contributed to a shift from material aesthetics towards regarding musical meaning as inseparable from the listening process. Referring to Baudrillard, ethnomusicologist Steven Feld explains: 'The musical object is never isolated, any more than its listeners or producers are. Its position is doubly social; the object exists through a code, and through processes of coding and de-coding' (Feld 1994: 85). This development has proven most significant for the understanding of song lyrics.

7.1.2. The key to a song's meaning

The British sociologist Dave Laing's observation that 'the words of a song give us the key to the human universe that the song inhabits' (Laing 1969: 99) still expresses the core view held by popular music theorists today. Twenty-seven years later another sociologist, Simon Frith, argues that a song, with its melodic and rhythmic structures, is basically understood by means of its words (Frith 1996: 159). Frith stresses that the relationship between music and lyrics is complex, since music has syntagmatic and narrative aspects while words have a musical side.[114] Without challenging these basic notions, more recent works in Ethnomusicology and Musicology, such as Feld (1994) and Michelsen (1997), argue that song lyrics should be regarded not only in relation to the music, but also in relation to the discourse that surrounds the song, style and performer(s). Michelsen (1997) approaches lyrics and speech about music as a semantic field in order to problematise the interrelationship between music and language. This has enabled him to consider the relationship between intra- and extra-musical meaning in his analyses of two songs by Metallica and Björk respectively.

Once it has been established that a song lyric must be interpreted both in relation to the music and to the wider discourse that surrounds it, attention may be turned to the question of how listeners interpret the lyrics. Rock lyrics are, as performed words, radically different from the predominantly graphic medium of written poetry. In his study of rock lyrics from the perspective of Literary Studies, Ulf Lindberg emphasises that the voice of a poem is imagined by the reader (Lindberg 1995: 46). The reader's understanding of the poem's message is in part determined by his or her relationship to this imagined voice. By contrast, a rock lyric is performed by a concrete voice on a recording or in a concert

114. An extensive account of approaches to song lyrics in popular music studies from the 1960s to the late 1980s is found in Middleton 1990: 227-246.

situation, where the singer's physical interpretation of the song contributes to the message. Even when a rock listener consults a record sleeve or the internet for the written lyrics in order to grasp the full verbal message of a song, processes of interpretation have already been activated by the singer's voice, the music and fragments of the lyrics. These processes are defined by Steven Feld as the listener's 'interpretive moves.'[115]

A given listener's interpretive moves might or might not include an interpretation of a song's lyrics. How much attention is given to lyrics varies both individually and culturally. Some listeners find words completely irrelevant to their listening enjoyment and ignore them completely. For others, paying attention to lyrics is a natural part of the listening process. Some rock styles favour the latter approach, others do not. Listening habits can also vary with the cultural experience and/or generation of the listener. If rock lyrics are not ignored, then they are usually perceived gradually. Initially, the listener's attention is attracted by repeated phrases or specially emphasised words or lines. The listener might be intrigued by or dismiss such 'hook lines'. If the former applies, he or she will focus more attention on making out what is sung, which again may result in renewed interest or dismissal.

One technique that facilitates listener identification with and investment in rock lyrics is the play with *shifters* (Lindberg 1995: 64-65). 'Shifters' is a collective term in linguistics for words that refer to an unspecified entity beyond the text itself (e.g. personal pronouns, articles, temporal and spatial adverbs). They allow listeners to 'fill in' the *hes*, *shes*, *its*, *theres* and *thens* with people, places and times from their personal experience.

Commenting on Smokey Robinson's song lyrics, Simon Frith notes that the preferred language of popular music is everyday speech and that pop songs aim to 'make plain talk dance' (Frith 1983: 37). However, both Laing (1985) and Frith (1983, 1988) acknowledge that the language and the function of lyrics vary greatly between different kinds of songs. Based on Frith, Laing, as well as Brolinson and Larsen (1981), Lindberg defines three main types of rock lyrics: *Focused lyrics*, where music is subjected to semantic content; *words musified*, where lyrics leave an openness in the message to be specified by musical elements, and the musical qualities of words and lines are as important as their lexical and grammatical meaning; *freely shaped lyrics,* where lyrics merely contribute to musical emotion and are open to improvisation (Lindberg 1995: 63). Of course, these are not absolute categories. The lyrics of one song will often combine all three in a hierarchy of functions.

This brief account of the main tendencies in theoretical approaches to rock lyrics is far from exhaustive.[116] However, it should provide the necessary background for an investigation into the role of lyrics in Russian rock songs. As will become evident from the following, the Russian rock generation of the 1980s has a very specific relationship with the words of their songs.

115. 'Interpretive moves,' see 2.1.4, page 8.
116. For more sources on popular music and lyrics, see Frith and Goodwin (1990), Griffiths (2003), and the online journal *Chapter & Verse: A Journal of Popular Music and Literary Studies*: www.popmatters.com/chapter (13.12.2004).

7.2. Speech about rock lyrics: Russian rock and the word

7.2.1. Introduction

Whereas scholars in Popular Music Studies regard song lyrics as mere keys to a song's meaning, Russians tend to concentrate their attention more exclusively on the words of their rock songs. This tendency can be traced from fanzine writings, through interviews with musicians, to rock critics and academics. Since the late 1990s, pioneering Russian research on rock has been published by the Department of Literary Theory at Tver' University, in the form of a series of article collections. The approaches concentrate on the lyrics as 'rock poetry' and, much in the same way as early western Dylan studies in the 1960s, privilege rock songwriters whose lyrics meet the standards of written poetry. This elite of songwriters is awarded the status of 'rock poets' and studied accordingly. Although the Tver' scholars' fifth volume of articles, entitled *Vladimir Vysotsky i russkii rok* (Domanskii 2001), begins to consider sociological aspects of 'rock poetry', music is not discussed by any of the contributors. Some recent works have begun to question this, albeit without venturing into examining the music:

> When it comes to music an interesting phenomenon unfolds in the sources I have been working with. The word itself is used very often, and usually even with a pathos quite uncharacteristic of the rock culture of the 1980s. However, very little is said about music, i.e. the sounds made by instruments, much less than what is said about song lyrics, about organisational problems, relations to the authorities, family life, etc. The exception is one of Akvarium's members [...] the musicologist Oleg Sakmarov. Before he had time to step on stage beside BG, Sakmarov began analysing the work of Akvarium from his professional point of view. And even he approaches the music from the word (Smirnov 1999: 91).

Smirnov's observation is highly relevant to this study. It is connected not only with a dominant belief in the rock community, that the Russian features of Russian rock are to be found mainly, if not solely, in the lyrics, but also with a reluctance to consider Russian influences in the music at all. In the following, by examining various explanations of and comments on the role and special character of Russian rock lyrics, and by discussing these comments accordingly, this chapter investigates reasons for this focus on song lyrics on two levels: One practical and one strategic or ideological. What the latter level entails may, for the time being, be illustrated by the following statement:

> Everybody writes about how our rock clung first and foremost to the lyrics, but it is not acceptable to look for meaning in the songs themselves; it seems it's regarded as bad manners. Because the quality of the songs lies somewhere else. Soviet rock is an exception. Remove the white-glowing philology from Mamonov, his 'krym - mryk - yrmk' and what's left apart from two or three soul-tearing grimaces? And the fact that our rock couldn't survive as 'only music' is the only evidence, in an epoch where all reasons or ideas have disappeared, that in this genre of anglophiles and alcoholics resided an unremovable rudiment of that very same Russian intelligentsia consciousness (Solov'ev in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 255).

The quotations in this chapter are taken from a variety of Russian sources: Roksi 'think-pieces,' fieldwork interviews, rock biographies, anthologies and histories. As will become apparent, the various insiders reveal an astounding level of consensus, and no-one openly disputes the view that lyrics play a particularly important role in Russian rock.

7.2.2. 1980: Russian lyrics - the future of rock

In the earliest issues of Roksi, from the years before the LRC was founded, literature appears as the second main field of interest after rock music. It appears that these two fields of interest found a common ground, as Leningrad bands from the late 1970s began singing almost exclusively in their native language. This resulted in a stream of 'think pieces' on rock lyrics, no less than three of which appeared in the 1980 issue (Roksi 4).[117] The contributors went far in their views on song lyrics as primary sources of meaning, in the songs as well as for the rock community itself:

> [H]ow do we make judgements about the worldview of our rock people? I don't think there will be much dispute over that question - of course on the basis of their work, and by no means the musical, but the verbal, in this case - the poetic work ('pessimistically-inclined editor,' Roksi 4: 5).

The second contributor argues that 'good' rock distinguishes itself from 'bad' rock on the lyrical level. Therefore, he decides, rock songwriters must teach themselves or be taught how to write proper verse:

> It is of course impossible not to give massive attention to the lyrics. I underline - massive. Namely, the choice of words, their interrelationship, is incomprehensible, beyond those who have not written verse, and this includes almost everybody who writes rock songs ('Sergei Slavianin' in Roksi 4: 7).[118]

To 'Slavianin', the crucial role of rock lyrics is not only related to the quality of the song. The lyrics represent to him the last frontier of rock evolution. Not satisfied with that, he continues to describe his vision of Russia's unique role in the future development of rock:

> [R]ock in the west has in its development arrived at the wall, behind which Russia begins, not only with its language, but with its history, customs, order of society. Rock has not been capable of evolving further, since there is almost nothing more to do in rock now without knowledge of the Russian language ('Sergei Slavianin' in Roksi 4: 9).

Considering that Roksi's general mood was usually rather pessimistic, such hyperbolic enthusiasm was probably not devoid of irony. Nevertheless, 'Slavianin's' insistence that the future of Russian rock depends on the development of a native rock language, a language which builds on the Russian literary tradition, appears sincere enough: Russian rock has a mission and the Russian language is the means to fulfil it.

7.2.3. Musical inferiority, lyrical superiority

The visions of the Roksi contributors are reflected in the enduring view that Russian rock compensates for a musical inferiority to western rock through the superior literary quality of its lyrics. This idea is widely accepted among insiders of the Leningrad rock environment, as well as by the Moscow rock critic Artem Troitsky:

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117. 'Think pieces': Rock critic jargon for 'essays,' see 4.5.3, page 48.
118. Since Roksi contributors' names in this period were usually pseudonyms, the names of unidentified authors are set quotation marks.

> [T]he lyrics in Russian rock play a more important role than in Western rock. The reasons for this may be the Russian rockers' awareness that they're borrowing music invented elsewhere, their weaker technical virtuosity, and the fact that the commercial and dancing functions of rock music never predominated here; more value was always placed on the ideas in a song. [...] [T]he purely literary level of our rock lyrics is higher, on the average, than in the West (Troitsky 1987: 34).

> The lyrics, it is a point of some discussion, but I subscribe to the view that early 1980s Russian rock songs had a higher level of poetry than mainstream American or British rock songs. The lyrics were important to convey thoughts about songs heard, books read, about everything that was never mentioned in the Soviet media (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 2).

A significant problem with Troitsky's observation is that his definition of 'Russian rock' is based on a discriminatory selectivity. Not only does he exclude VIAs, with the notable exception of Mashina vremini, he also, as his books published in the UK (Troitsky 1987, 1990a) confirm, consciously avoids hard- and heavy rock in his definition of 'Russian rock.' Instead he concentrates predominantly on the Russian rock avantgarde. He then proceeds to compare this avantgarde to an all-embracing notion of 'western rock,' ignoring the fact that similar literary 'avantgardes' do exist in British and American rock as well.[119] Unlike Troitsky, Andrei Burlaka emphasises that he compares Russian rock to the Anglo-American 'mainstream', but the comparison still remains uneven.

The reasons for the focus on lyrics suggested by Troitsky are more interesting. The view that Russian musicians were conscious of not having invented the music, and concentrated instead on inventing a Russian rock language, finds support in other sources. However, this should not be taken to imply that Russian rock bands have not attempted to re-invent rock by musical means. If one bears in mind the limitations of their instruments and technical equipment and the DIY aesthetics of several contemporary western rock styles, the point about weaker technical virtuosity likewise does not seem to be entirely just. Smirnov, on the other hand, regards poor recordings and cramped apartment concerts, features of both bard songs and early rock, as factors that have contributed to the focus on lyrics:

> [I]t is clear that at the basis of this whole movement of ours was the word. Of course, because people couldn't really hear or engage in any music on tape recordings or at concerts on the level that they were made back then. People were listening, though, to words and their very sparse accompaniment (Smirnov in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 111).

Apartment concerts were not very well suited to dancing either, but this is not the only reason for the lack of 'dancing functions' noted by Troitsky. In the Soviet Union there was a ban on dancing at concerts that lasted until 1987 when, during Akvarium's eight consecutive performances at the Iubileinyi stadium in Leningrad, the police eventually gave in to audience pressure and allowed people to dance. Before this happened, the police presence ensured that audiences remained seated, or at the very least standing still.[120] Dances were a different matter, though, and many rock bands played occasionally as dance bands. However, rules and audience expectations restricted dance bands' repertories, and

119. For the sake of balance, Troitsky could compare his Russian band selection with western bands that operated with similar musical styles. Had he compared his Russian songwriters to the likes of David Byrne, Lou Reed, Patti Smith or Tom Verlaine in the US, or to Ian Curtis, Robert Smith, Steven Morrisey or Lynton Kwesi Johnson in the UK, he would have had greater difficulty in proving his point.

the sound equipment was usually less advanced.[121] That concert audiences were prevented from giving full physical response to the music meant that more attention was given to the lyrics. It also affected the 'danceability' of Russian rock songs, as bands came to associate danceable music with estrada and 'restaurant music,' genres they regarded as opposed to rock.

In a society where rock had virtually no access to the official media, Burlaka argues, song lyrics became an important information channel. His observation is supported by Feinshtein-Vasil'ev:

> [B]efore rock music started sounding through the media, the song as a means of communication was crucial to songwriters and bands. Songs were their way of communicating their thoughts, values, tastes and ideas - what books, poets and musicians they admired and so on. There was a lot of information that they wanted to spread and it turned out such information was in great demand, too (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 5).

> The printed word - mass media - couldn't get into anything that had to do with real life. Everything that was printed and that was related to real life was called samizdat or something. Therefore only poets that read their verses, bards, that is those beyond control, could do it and they were actually heard (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 10).[122]

Although both Troitsky and Burlaka are well aware of the difference between song lyrics and written poetry, they insist respectively that Russian rock lyrics are on 'a higher literary level' than western rock or have a 'higher level of poetry'. Troitsky goes further, saying that the Russian lyrics 'play a more important role' and that 'more value is placed in the idea of a song'. This idealisation of the verbal message of songs is typical of Russian rock critics. Their arguments conceal a disregard for musical meaning, musical ideas, and the poetic potential of music in favour of lexical meaning and semantically expressed ideas. If we relate this to Lindberg's three types of rock lyrics, Troitsky and Burlaka seem to be arguing that focused lyrics, which represent a variant closer to written poetry, are superior in literary terms to words musified and freely shaped lyrics respectively. This underestimates the skill involved in making words and music interact, when compared to the 'classic' skill of poetry writing. While one might accept that focused lyrics are over-represented in Russian, compared to western rock songs, this does not exclude poetic qualities from the other lyrical archetypes or ideas from songs that apply them. On the other hand, Troitsky would be right had he merely stated that Russian rock lyrics play a different role and that their ideas are differently expressed: when compared to western rock lyrics, they tend to rely on verbal meaning to a higher extent.

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120. In practice, concert dancing was not always prevented. Roksi notes that the ban was enforced by security at most Moscow gigs and at about half of Leningrad concerts (Roksi 12: 48). Still, security enforcement was proportional to the level of attention attracted by the event. Thus, at UB 40s concerts in the USSR in 1986, attempts to dance were prevented by force. The singer tried to encourage people to dance, but to no avail (Roksi 12: 48).
121. See interview with Mikhail Feinshtein-Vasil'ev (in Steinholt 2002b: 10).
122. Influences from the bard song are discussed in the following paragraph.

In effect then, not only is the musical side of Russian rock songs regarded as inferior, when compared to Anglo-American rock; songs where music is not subject to semantic content are also considered 'illiterate' and less valuable than music with 'poetic' lyrics. In the rock community words appear to have a higher status than music. In the following we shall turn to ways in which different insiders regard the connection between rock songs and poetry.

7.2.4. Rock is fate is poetry: Rock, bards and literary tradition

One recurring argument for the poetic qualities of Russian rock songs, and for their close ties to the great Russian literary tradition, is their focus on philosophy and eternal existential questions:

> [Russian rock] differs strongly [from western rock] on the lyrical level, because [...] in them, unlike [in] western lyrics, a meaning is sought and primarily the meaning of life. And apparently that makes no sense in America [...] [a]part from Bob Dylan, apart from [...] a few particular [songwriters]. But here [it goes for] everybody. And another thing: If you translate 'rock' into Russian, that word means 'fate', in German it's 'skirt', in English... And so on (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 2).

Since the Russian word *rok* originally means *fate*, the argument goes, Russians naturally take a more serious approach to rock and use it as a vehicle to wrestle with the problems of existence, whereas Germans are more prone to use it as a backdrop for dancing and chasing girls. In a less jocular tone Gunitskii stresses that poetry is preoccupied with fate, which should not be confused with mere social concerns:

> Poetry! The Russian rock song is first and foremost poetic. For some bands social thematics were important, for Televizor more, for Akvarium less, but the interest in social problems was brought about by censorship (Gunitskii in Steinholt 2001b: 2).

Another manifestation of Russian rock lyrics' preoccupation with existential questions is the emphasis on *dukhovnost'* (*spirituality*). A significant part of Akvarium's work illustrates this. According to BG, one of rock's main purposes is to produce a spiritual awakening among its listeners:

> Speaking of rock [and] roll it is impossible not to speak about religion. For this there is a very simple and very atheist reason. Religion is spiritual life and rock [and] roll is spiritual life. Religion has been taken from us since childhood. Rock [and] roll is to us the only form of spiritual life. [...] Rock [and] roll leads to religion because religion can explain [...] this spiritual life, unlike rock [and] roll, which in itself explains nothing. Religion is the explanation, rock [and] roll is the force. [...] We have been torn away from our roots for many years, were bereft of any contact with our roots, with the powerful and eternally living folk tradition, as they love to say among us. When this contact was all broken, such a strong hunger came over us, such a thirst that set people howling like wolves. But instead of devouring each other they went back and started growing anew, using any means appropriate in order to find unity, find understanding and a feeling for one another, find rituals to help us grasp all this, find the feeling for nature. But rock [and] roll, unlike genuine folk culture, is a very fast-moving thing. Rituals and traditions change every two weeks. Yet its foundation remains the same - a search for unity with God, with the world, with the universe... (BG in Zhitinskii 1990: 225-26).

Ideally speaking, then, Russian rock should commit itself to offering its audience guidance, if not revelation. It is there to make people think, to communicate with people's bodies through their minds, rather than the other way around. In the light of such definitions of 'rock poetry', Burlaka and Troitsky are able to situate rock songs within the Russian poetic tradition:

> Possibly you could track down the poetic tradition from 19th century poetry to the age of decadence (early 20th century) to the cultural opposition of the 1920s to 40s to the poetic boom of the *Ottepel'* and the bards to... to the Rock Club (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 8).

> Rock lyrics here have a direct tie to our poetic tradition and reflect its lexical and stylistic heritage. That's probably explained by the fact that 'serious' academic poetry is really very popular in the USSR. Books of verse often become bestsellers, and the most popular poets - such as Voznesensky or Yevtushenko - sometimes read their works in sold out sport palaces, just like rock stars. In the late fifties we already had a recognised school of bard performers, poet intellectuals who sang their verses and played an acoustic guitar accompaniment (Troitsky 1987: 34).

Historically, the Russian musical 'underground' originates in the pre-revolutionary *gorodskoi romans* (*city ballad*) and the *blatnaia pesnia* ('*underworld song*'). Stites and von Geldern describe both as urban genres which bore no relation to politics or protest. Some 'underworld songs', they note, were variants of 'cruel song' with sentimental pleas for pity, others revelled in the criminal or semi-criminal milieu. And, Stites and von Geldern emphasise: '[T]hey all depicted a life that the Bolsheviks sought to eliminate or refused to recognize' (Stites and von Geldern 1995: 72). The camp songs which emerged in the years following Stalin's death represent a further development of the *blat* paradigm. Although not initially preoccupied with politics, the context and function of the camp songs were not static. Recontextualised from their initial camp setting, the songs gained a political function in the eyes of many. The songs gained a political significance in the public consciousness as part of the critique of the Stalinist past. Similar political functions continued to be attributed, to varying degrees and in various ways, to camp songs during the Brezhnev era of the 1960s and 1970s.

Many features of camp songs can be recognised in the early bard songs (*bardovskie pesni*) of Galich and Okudzhava, and to a lesser extent in those of Vysotsky.[123] However, as an urban genre the *bardovskaia pesnia* or *avtorskaia pesnia* (*author's* or *authored song*) should also be seen in the wider European context and be associated with singers such as the French Jacques Brel and Georges Brassens, who had a significant influence on the Russian bards; with Wolf Biermann in the GDR; and with Mikis Theodorakis during the junta years in Greece, even though his melodies were rooted in the subdued local rebetika tradition of the interwar years and most of his lyrics were not his own.

A dominant feature of European bard song was social and political satire. This also applies to the songs of Galich, Okhudzhava, Vysotsky and their followers, although their political messages tended to be more finely obscured and encrypted. The two former singers built their identity as performers on the common experience of the World War II and the Stalin era. The avtorskaia pesnia could treat themes such as religious faith, love of the motherland or the fear and cruelty of war in a natural and de-ideologised way. Other songs depicted the problems and worries of everyday life, or portrayed the Russian Character

123. Notably, the bard culture was also the first to benefit from and develop magnitizdat. See 3.4.8, page 29.

with humour or powerful satire. The nature of the lyrics, which were predominantly written in the form of short narratives, and the usually quite basic guitar accompaniments meant that the bards saw themselves, and were perceived, primarily as storytellers and poets rather than as musicians:

> B. Okudzhava defined his genre thus: 'poets singing their poems.' B. Grebenshchikov: 'The song is born within man never in the form of verse, not as music - the one wakes and brings forth the other' (Smirnov 1999: 90).

> [W]hy was Vladimir Vysotsky our national hero? Practically Vladimir Semenovich replaced western rock, even though he played only his three familiar chords [...] It was the timbre of his voice and what he sang about that worked magically on Russians. As I said in the beginning, rock [and] roll must have an element of pathology, because if it hasn't got pathology it becomes estrada, and we regarded rock as art over here, you know. [...] And in Russia, pathology is to be in prison, and just that is seemingly an absolute form of pathology. And much of our music is about how I sit in jail, how bad I'm doing. That's in fact the Russian emotional equivalent to rock [and] roll (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 11).

In France, Serge Gainsbourg subjected the bard song to musical experimentation and combined it with jazz during the 1960s, rock and reggae in the 1970s. He also developed his notorious ability to create moral panic through his sexually provocative lyrics. In the post-1968 atmosphere of left-wing political radicalism a new generation of bards emerged in Europe. Some of them were also influenced by events on the other side of the Atlantic and oriented themselves towards rock. Meanwhile little was seen of such experiments among bards in the Soviet Union, where the impact of the sexual revolution was minimal and the onslaught of political radicalism virtually irrelevant. Instead, the musical and lyrical style continued largely unchanged throughout the 1970s. Although the Russian bard song retained its element of social protest, the radicalisation of the European song tradition in the wake of 1968 may have led westerners to focus excessively on the political agendas of singers like Vysotsky. In the USSR, the bard culture initially arose among the new academic elite which had been forming since the 1950s, when the Soviet authorities responded to the greater demand for higher education. It remained with the older generation, while the younger turned to rock.

However, the heritage of the bard song remained at the back of the minds of many rock songwriters. Troitsky, who goes further in his comparison than Feinshtein-Vasil'ev, compares the significance of the bards' lyrical and musical influence on Russian rock directly with the impact of Afro-American music on American Rock-'n'-Roll (Troitsky 1990b: 52). Yet when it comes to the lyrics of bard and rock songs Troitsky overlooks one important difference. While narratives dominate the former, European rock songs stand closer to British character song, where the singer acts the protagonist rather than tells his or her story. This fact has not led Russian sources to consider any lyrical influence of western rock, though. Instead, they prefer to regard the music as exclusively western and the lyrics as exclusively Russian. Still, admittedly, narrative songs, mostly with acoustic accompaniment, do represent an undercurrent in LRC rock of the early 1980s, even though rock songwriters are reluctant to see themselves as direct heirs of the bards:

> [Maik's] things are, of course, quite uneven, but there are works which can be read from the page - that's very rare for rock poetry. In general, the rockers passionately deny being successors of the bards, because everybody has to be a Jesus Christ, a founder of a brand new religion that never existed (Smirnov in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 111).

Aleksandr Zhitinskii (1990: 191-196) conducted a survey among rock songwriters in order to hear their opinions on, among other things, the existence of mutual influences and syntheses between rock and the avtorskaia pesnia. The following were among the answers he received:

> Of course it has. On the level of self-expression rock and the avtorskaia pesnia are very close. Rock music *is* that avtorskaia pesnia, realised in another musical language. The very word *avtorskaia* describes both genres. With BG, for instance, the two genres often interact. Obviously with us too (Andrei Makarevich, Mashina vremini, in Zhitinskii 1990: 195).

> In my case it couldn't be otherwise, because I am an author and I play only rock music. [...] Generally I have almost no interest in the bards, compared to rock music (Viktor Tsui, Kino, in Zhitinskii 1990: 196).

> Mutual influence... Yes, on the level that practically all bands play and sing their own material and it is precisely the author who normally sings the song. Another question is that the lyrics not always contain the necessary quality level, but in any case any attempt in this area may be welcomed. It has already been mentioned, but is well worth underlining once more, that however paradoxical it may sound, rock music is a *folk* music in the most positive sense of the word (Maik Naumenko, Zoopark, in Zhitinskii 1990: 196).

In an interview with the Moscow rock fanzine Urlait, the songwriter and guitarist Iurii Naumov, whose music is described as a synthesis between blues and avtorskaia pesnia, adds a surprisingly different view:[124]

> I was raised on western rock, and when people say that Vysotsky was the first Russian rocker that might even be right, but with me it triggers protest because my roots are not here. I was 'awoken' by the sound, not the words (in Zhitinskii 1990: 265).

The songwriters are not prepared to regard avtorskaia pesnia as a genre-specific term for the work of the bards. To them the term includes their own work. Rock, then, becomes a different way of expressing similar thoughts and emotions. In this, the songwriters established a distance between their own work and that of the bards. And, as Naumenko observed, whatever the extent of bard tradition influence, it gives no guarantee of poetical skill. Nevertheless, the songwriters' identification with literary tradition did have an influence on what LRC bands sang about.

7.2.5. Thematic preferences: Can rock and roll be Platonic?

> Third, our rockers don't sing about the same things as Western rockers do (which flows from the second point). In the entire enormous repertoire of Time Machine [Mashina vremeni] there's not a single clear-cut love song, let alone one about sex (Troitsky 1987: 34).

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124. Naumov, originally from Novosibirsk, came to Leningrad and joined the LRC in the mid 1980s. Alekseev, Burlaka and Sidorov (1991: 171) describe his music as follows: 'Iurii Naumov is among those musicians, whose work is hard to classify and is situated outside traditional frames. His songs carry the marks of blues aesthetics and are simultaneously close to the city ballad, the bard song, and folk-barokko melodicity.'

Troitsky's observation is interesting from a number of perspectives. It indicates one point where rock defined itself in opposition to the estrada: It tended to avoid sexual thematics. Troitsky also exposes the curious argument that the absence of sexual thematics somehow guarantees a higher literary level to the lyrics. Speaking of literary tradition, it is tempting to ask how the likes of Gogol, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Blok or Fet would have responded if deprived of the topic of sexuality. When it comes to Mashina vremini, Makarevich's multiplicity of islands, candles and lanterns of hope arguably tell as much about 1980s VIA ideals of 'songs about nothing', as they do about poetic mastery. And, finally, Troitsky surprisingly does not relate the relative asexuality of Russian rock lyrics to censorship.

Unlike Troitsky, Andrei Tropillo argues that LRC bands were concerned with sexual thematics, but on an entirely different level than what he regards as the pornographic. He cites songs by Maik, BG, Strannye igry and Alisa as examples. When confronted with the view that it is up to the listener to introduce the sexual thematics into many of the lyrics he mentions, he admits:

> In [Russian] rock [and] roll there is none of that chattering on the theme 'come here', 'I want you', the so-called 'lovey-dovey' [*liubov'-markov'*] [...] All such things flow out into the pops here and that's the point on which it differs [from rock]. In that sense rock started something [new] and proved its existence to the councils in Moscow [...] (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 25).

Tropillo concludes his answer by arguing, that since there are so many love songs in Leningrad rock, he finds the whole question of sexual thematics rather irrelevant. Admittedly, however, while LRC bands have few songs about sex, they do occur, especially in the case of Maik, who stubbornly insisted on translating rock-and-roll motifs, including sexual ones, into the Russian context. As with the song *Drian'*, analysed in Chapter 8, this caused him difficulties with the censors, especially during the early years of his LRC membership. The following examples compare motifs from two of BG's more daring lyrics of the pre-perestroika period with The Stranglers' *Princess of the Streets* from the 1977 album *Rattus Norvegicus*. The contrast between the two bands' approaches to the subject hopefully indicates where Tropillo draws his line between the sexual and the pornographic:

She's so wise
She's so sleek
She read all that matters, that much is clear
She goes hunting dressed in flowered silk
Watch your 'oi'

(Akvarium: *Beregi svoi khoi*, 1982)

She knows how to move
She knows how to move herself
To the full
She knows the trick to the full
Mama, what're we gonna do,
When she's moving herself

Blood-red silk, prophetic dreams
Willow twigs, phases of moon
To the full
She knows the trick to the full;
Mama, what're we gonna do
When she's moving herself

(Akvarium: *Ona mozhet dvigat'*, 1985)

She's the queen of the street
What a piece of meat (special treat)

She's real good-looking
She makes me sigh
Blue jeans and leather
Her heels are high
She's no lady / She'll stab you in the back
She's no lady / She's princess of the pack

(Stranglers: *Princess of the Streets*, 1977a)

The Stranglers' lead singer Hugh Cornwell's explicitly randy-sounding, panting lines contrast sharply with BG's clear-voiced, innocent *naïveté*. The women in BG's songs might be both attractive and dangerous, but they are also intelligent: They demand respect and get it. Cornwell's protagonist, on the contrary, questions the woman's morals with the peculiar logic of a genuine male chauvinist: She does not want me - ergo she is a prostitute. The music and sound of the first and third examples are similar, although *Princess* has a heavier beat which strengthens the impression of Cornwell's drooling protagonist staggering down the street. *Beregi* and *Ona mozhet* remain within the safe limits of excitement and sexual fascination: lighter, dizzier, happier, even danceable. The former is boosted by distortion-powered guitar riffs, the latter is played as a bouncy boogie-woogie.

Unlike that of The Stranglers, BG's protagonists have not yet become personally involved with the girls they describe, and their fascination mingles with boyish insecurity: 'Be careful!' Presumably, the distance and lack of commitment between the women and the main characters were decisive in making the songs tolerable for censors. Nevertheless, not everybody were convinced of BG's moral standards. After performing *Ona mozhet* on a local TV show in 1986, the band answered questions from the audience; elderly ladies and suit-clad Komsomol officials posed spiteful questions like: 'Who is she, the one who knows how to move herself?' BG replied drily: 'Mother Earth' (Vasil'eva 1997: 42). In *Beregi*, however, BG uses the word *khoi*, which might be regarded as an interjection (*oi!*) but has no apparent semantic meaning. The word appears distorted or omitted in most refrains, which

emphasises its phonetic resemblance to *khui* (a slang term for the male sexual organ), and which transforms the chorus line's warning into a: 'Watch your dick.'[125] In sum, then, the two Akvarium songs demonstrate a successful balancing act on the edge of the sexually explicit.[126]

The tendency of LRC bands to avoid certain topics is reflected in the few and relatively innocent songs about sexual topics. This is in keeping with arguments suggested above: That lyrics are valued above music and rhythm, that rock should stimulate thinking rather than dancing, that songs about physical love belong in the estrada, whereas rock should be concerned with more serious matters. In the first half of the 1980s, while rock was still under pressure from the cultural authorities and was struggling to prove itself worthy of a place in the Soviet cultural landscape, it had to be economical with shock effects such as those demonstrated by The Stranglers. At the time, rock music was in itself provocative enough.

7.2.6. Lyrics, not poetry

Although few appear to question the crucial function of the lyrics in Russian rock songs, some sources make a more conscious distinction between poetry and rock lyrics. For some, this involves allowing musical elements to contribute to the lyrical meaning:

> And what did appear banal and meaningless on paper, achieves sense and its own particular sound [*zvuchanie*]. And it becomes clear, at least, that the lyrics of rock songs (this applies to any kind of rock) are not poems, and it is not possible to approach them as poems. What are they then? They are LYRICS ('A. Gorkin' in Roksi 4: 13).

> [Rock poetry undoubtedly exists,] though I'm uncomfortable with the word 'poetry.' I write lyrics [*teksty*]. Together with music, where the one 'carries' the other with it. Rock poetry... It might be called clumsy, but is often, compared to poetry as such, more honest, open, self-ironic, self-parodying. Therein lies the specific character of rock, which is so seldom understood and accepted. I am not prepared to print my lyrics, I can only sing them (Maik in Rybin and Startsev: 218).

> I think that even when listening to songs by BG or Shevchuk, you don't have to know the lyrics to receive pleasure from their songs. You grasp a few phrases of the refrain and that does the trick (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 5).[127]

The final quote demonstrates that an insistence on the special significance of lyrics in Russian rock is not necessarily at odds with a more sophisticated understanding of how song lyrics function. The three observations take into account above all the interaction between words and music. Burlaka emphasises the special function of rock lyrics in the

125. The relation between *khoi* and *khui* is discussed in 8.2.15, page 130 ff.
126. Zoopark's *Drian'* is a song that went a bit too far to be left unchanged by censors, see 8.3.14, page 149.
127. Iurii Shevchuk: Songwriter and leader of DDT, a band from Ufa which moved to Leningrad and joined the LRC in 1985. Shevchuk is considered to be one of the great rock poets besides BG, and in the late 1980s DDT became one of Russia's most famous rock bands. DDT is still active, although its popularity since the mid-1990s has been more moderate.

pre-perestroika era as carriers of information. Otherwise his observations are in line with those of western popular music scholars. Whereas it can be argued that Russian listeners today focus less on the verbal messages of songs, some bands still pay much attention to language and lyrics and are most conscious about their roots in Russian literary tradition:

> What we do is living folklore, a contemporary folklore that was formed in the times of the Soviet Union. We use a lot of primary school folklore. All the stories, tall-tales, legends, table-stories, quotes from movies - everything was thought out during the Soviet era. The musical works of N.O.M. lean on our literary classics: Saltykov-Shchedrin, Gogol, Kharms. The absurd atmosphere of N.O.M. originates in the dawn of the 20th century. A very important writer for us is Andrei Platonov. He founded a new literary language, not any artificial 'novoiaz' [lit. *'new language*'], but a morphologic language, of immense importance to the art of N.O.M. (Andrei Kagadeev in Steinholt 2001d: 2).

Many of the bands that have remained preoccupied with literature, like N.O.M. or Auktsyon, began their careers as LRC members. Meanwhile, most younger Russian bands of today tend to have a more relaxed attitude towards lyrical mastery. This may change, however. Since the mid-1990s new St Petersburg rock bands again prefer to sing in Russian.

7.2.7. Conclusion

The hegemony of lyrics in Russian rock songs is the result of many coinciding factors. Whereas the musical impact of the bard song on Russian rock is clearly still a subject of dispute, the practice of recording apartment concerts was adopted by the rock environment in the 1970s. Combined with the lack of electric instruments and reliable amplification, together with the ban on concert dancing, this increased the attention given to the words of rock songs. Furthermore, rock's lack of access to the official media gave song lyrics an additional function as a channel of information. The procedure of song *litovka* (sanctioning) was also primarily a matter of examining the lyrics. In addition to all this comes the very nature of the project of the Leningrad rock environment itself from the time the first attempts were made to start a rock club. In Andrei Burlaka's words: 'There was something like a naïve faith that we had a chance to implant rock into Soviet culture if we could overcome some stupid old idiots' (Burlaka in Steinholt 2001c: 8). Other sources put it less bluntly:

> It seems to me rock is always art, and as such it should not submit to the particular circumstances of the moment, but deal with universal human values (Startsev in Zhitinskii 1990: 318).

> [...] And then I said, that in 200 years only Russian rock will remain, like Russian ballet. And it will come to that, because it is stored here [points to his head]. [...] Well, that is, pops is accessible, they [the people] want to listen to something accessible, that doesn't demand that you go through something. They want to hear music to which you can peel potatoes. But Russian rock, if understood as the thing I worked with, is a kind of music you can't peel potatoes to. You'd cut your fingers. And therefore rock and pops are different things (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 25).

For rock to achieve the status of a legitimate art form in Soviet cultural life, it had to be infused with the authority of 'high-culture'. By the early 1980s it was already clear that the VIAs had failed to make rock accepted as a serious musical form. Rock was under constant and heavy criticism from the Union of Composers for its primitivism. To leading

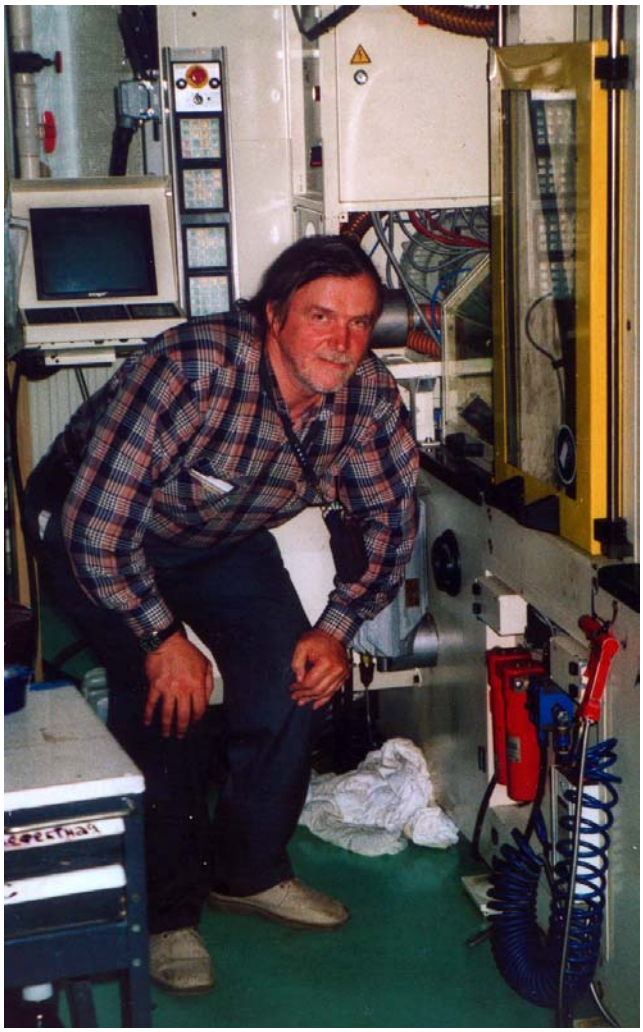
music ideologists the peril of rock consisted in its ability to make citizens degenerate by bringing them down from the lofty heights of harmony to the depths of rhythm's brute barbarism.[128] Instead of fighting these assaults directly, rock songwriters turned to literature for artistic legitimacy. The authority of the word has a strong tradition in Russia and the Soviet Union. The songwriters were able to prove to their fellow countrymen with their lyrics that they were *nashy* (*'ours'*), not merely representatives of a foreign and decadent music. Their preoccupation with the literary became a testimony to their 'Russianness.'

As exemplified by the authors and rock apologists Aleksandr Zhitinskii and Andrei Voznesensky, the Union of Writers proved more prepared to acknowledge aesthetic values in this controversial genre. As such, the songwriters' literary strategy was relatively successful. It became a fundamental prerequisite both for the increasing acceptance of rock in the mid-1980s and for its tremendous popularity during the perestroika years. Even so, this success came with a touch of irony. By whole-heartedly heeding the old saying *iz pesni slova ne vykinesh'* (*you can't rid a song of its words*), Russian critics and academics came conspicuously close to the opposite: Ridding their songs of music.

128. For an example of this kind of argument, see Anatolii Doronin and Arkadii Lisenkov: *Chto proku ot roka*, Molodaia gvardiia 5, 1986: 214-31.

Graffiti at Ulica Rubinshteina 13.

Kolia Vasin in his office at Pushkinskaia 10. Below: sample pages from Vasin's Russian rock diaries documenting Mashina vremeni gigs in Moscow and Leningrad 1976.



Andrei Tropillo giving a tour of the compact disc factory at the new AnTrop complex. Below: The monumental sign left behind by the former residents, Melodiia Leningrad.

Above: Mikhail Borzykin performing with Televizor at Klub Piatnitsa, October 2001.
Below: Rock journalist and former Roksi editor Aleksandr Startsev.

Chapter 8: Song analyses

8.1. Introduction

8.1.1. Purpose

The 'text-in-context' approach to music as performance and communication introduced in Chapter 2 enables a perpective on music similar to Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of speech genres. With this concept Bakhtin proposes that each sphere of language use develops a relatively stable set of utterances (Bakhtin 1986: 60). These spheres may be compared to musical conventions and rock songs may be regarded as musical-lyrical-performative equivalents to speech genres. Thus, rock songs come to represent relatively stable utterance types which interact, and are entextualised, decontextualised and recontextualised, in a variety of rock music communities.[129] These communities are in turn in constant dialogue with other cultural spheres. Such a perspective implies that the songs cannot be approached as closed entities. Acknowledging that songs have functions similar to those of complex utterances facilitates an approach to them as primary sources of information in their own right. By the use of a panel of informant listeners to provide musical descriptions and associations, and by relating the song lyrics to similar lyrics in western rock, the following analyses focus on the songs as situated, not only in the context of a specific local cultural environment, but also in complex webs of wider musical and lyrical discourses.

On one level, then, the songs should provide new information about the preferred stylistic influences in LRC rock, and on another level, how these have interacted with local culture. In other words: How rock has changed through being recontextualised in a Russian setting. The analyses seek to describe stylistic traits that characterise the phenomenon 'Russian rock' as a local rock style, not merely as an imitation of western performers. In another sense, the song approach will prepare a wider platform for verifying and discussing views and information from both Russian and western sources.

This said, how much analyses of four songs can show is of course limited. They cannot serve as representative prototypes of LRC rock. However influential the bands and however carefully chosen the songs, they can show no more than a few facets of the styles represented by LRC bands in the relevant period. On the other hand, if one ignores the songs, one also ignores the core and focal point of the rock environment. As demonstrated in Chapter 6, this is a common problem with sociological approaches to music-centred cultural communities. The intension in this study is to use the songs actively in relation to other sources, in order to test and diversify argumentation.

In short, the primary focus of the analyses is to investigate how the four selected songs relate stylistically to the western rock tradition, how they combine stylistic influences and whether notable influences from Russian or Soviet culture can be identified. To interpret a song's meanings or possible meanings is secondary, but constitutes a natural part of the stylistic investigation. The analyses and conclusions will in any case reflect my own subjective readings of the songs. The small panel of informants is not so much a guarantee of objectivity as, a measure of ensuring greater diversity in the descriptions of the songs' musical aspects and potential webs of references. It thus creates a wider and less personally determined framework for my readings of the songs.

129. For a further discussion of Bakhtin and music studies, see Weisethaunet (2000).

8.1.2. The musical part of the song analysis

For this study it has been important to avoid drawing conclusions based solely on a song's lyrics, isolated from the music. The initial step taken to avoid this is to begin the analyses with an investigation of the musical features of the song, then account for the lyrics in relation to the music. A reception survey, based on a panel of informants with different views and musical experience is another key premise for a relevant and nuanced musical analysis. To guide the reader through the analyses, notation and tables of musical events in time are included in Appendix 2, and the recordings are attached on a cd.[130]

In a study of Russian music one would expect at least a significant part of such a panel to consist of Russian informants. This is not the case with this study, which relies exclusively on western respondents in the musical analyses. There are three main reasons for this. First, the lyrics will be immediately comprehensible to a Russian listener and unavoidably favour the lyrical message of the song over its musical meaning. As shown in the previous chapter, Russian audiences have a strong tradition of listening to the lyrics, and a tendency to regard them as principal carriers of a song's 'meaning'.[131] Second, the sources for the socio-cultural part of the study, the project's fieldwork and written sources from within the rock environment, already provide a rich resource of reviews and listener experience with a lyrical focus. Third, another problem with using Russian music respondents is related to the massive social and societal changes that have taken place during the last twenty years. Early on in the fieldwork it became apparent that informants were accounting for their experiences in the Soviet-era rock environment in highly diverse, sometimes conflicting ways. Sometimes the apparent discrepancies that ensued were related to personal defensive strategies that people employed when faced with their own role, committment and acts of cooperation under the old rule.

Had the object of this study been the role of Russian rock in individual processes of identity building, musical evaluation, or musical memory, these questions would have been of central importance. Such an investigation might be encouraged, but remains beyond the scope of this study of Leningrad rock's musical 'Russianness' and its stylistic relationship with western rock.[132] The dominant Russian views on the relationship between rock music and lyrics have also been discussed in earlier works, like Barrett and Hansen (1993) or Cushman (1995). Thus, rather than merely repeat these findings, the inclusion of western respondents in the musical analyses will hopefully, by offering new perspectives, help provide new information.

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130. The RiR cd is more closely described in 8.1.15, page 121.
131. The results of my initial attempts to use Leningrad musicians as IOCM informants to map musical influences in the songs were, mildly speaking, unsatisfactory. It proved most difficult to make the respondents consider musical features of a song without resorting to accounts of lyrical meanings and, usually, an established, canonised notion of the song's meaning. The first three responses I collected were conspicuously similar and contained no IOCM. This influenced my decision to rely on non-Russian-speaking music informants.
132. The relationships between music, taste, evaluation, and identity represent a relatively new, but vast and complex field in Popular Music Studies. To open this Pandora's box here would demand a substantial theoretical detour. I shall therefore restrict myself to referring to Steven Feld's theory of musical interpretation, treated in paragraph 2.1.4, page 8. See also the account of various musical competences in Tagg and Clarida (2003: 9ff) referred to in paragraph 2.2.3, page 11. Works on this subject include Frith (1996) on popular music evaluation. An interesting work in progress is *Music and Dance in Everyday Culture* led by David Hesmonhalgh, the first published articles from which can be expected in 2004.

8.1.3. The IOCM panel

For the reasons mentioned above, the panel of informants consists entirely of non-Russian speakers. That none of the informants had heard the songs before proved to be another advantage with a western panel. It made it easier to get their responses on what attracted their attention and what they felt was unusual about the songs. The employment of respondents does not change my status as the main informant of this study. Yet it expands my analysis from a position of my individual speculation on musical meaning towards a role of compiling and comparing data generated by listening amateur musicians, who have employed their personal listening biographies and tactile musical memory on an individual basis.

My approach to music analyses is based on Philip Tagg's method, as outlined in Chapter 2. This method utilises popular perception in order to understand musical structure. One of its key premises is the establishing of a colloquial dialogue about musical structure. The idea is to establish an IOCM (Inter-Objective Comparison Material) of songs associated to by a group of informant listeners. More sporadically, informants have contributed their PMFA (Para-Musical Field of Association) by describing moods, emotions or a particular atmosphere they associated to the song (Tagg 2001: 8). Each of the informants received a recording of the four songs and was asked to note his or her first impressions, including immediate associations to other songs, bands or styles. Informants were encouraged to comment on any features they found relevant, characteristic or unusual about the songs, and, if possible, describe details of instrumentation, sound effects, recording, and mix.

Initially, the intention was to use the same panel of ten contributors for all four songs, but this proved difficult in practice. Some informants felt that certain songs were beyond their competence and did not respond to them, some gave extensive responses to some songs, very brief ones to others. A few did not find the time to comment on all four songs. So, in the end, the panel was expanded to thirteen informants, in order to ensure an even number of responses to each song. Most of the informants are or have been active musicians. Eight are or have been involved in popular music studies in different disciplines: ethnomusicology, musicology, media studies, sociology and literary studies.

I have attempted to include in the panel players of different instruments. The age of the informants spans from twenty-eight to sixty-one years. Regrettably, with only two female respondents I have failed to achieve anything near a gender balance. The initial aim was a minimum of 40% female respondents and initially four women agreed to participate. As it turned out, however, three eventually failed to respond and only one replacement was found. In retrospect it is clear that more should have been done to ensure a gender balance.
The informants are:

Name	(Age)	Instrument	Nationality	Song(s) commented on
Tristan	(28)	bass guitar	F	1-2
Thomas	(28)	guitar	N	1-4
Ulf	(61)	guitar	S	1-4
Odd	(42)	keyboards	N	1-4
Hans	(41)	guitar	N	1-4
Kate	(46)	vocals	N	1-4
Myke	(54)	sound engineering	CAN	1-2
Serge	(40)	drums, sound engineering	CAN	1-4
Karen	(28)	keyboards, guitar	CAN	3-4
Jan	(33)	keyboards	N	3-4

Knut	(32)	keyboards, (balalaika)	N	3-4
Hasse	(50)	guitar, piano	S	1
Philip	(58)	keyboards	UK	1-4

The informants were free to chose how they described the songs. To ensure that priority was given to musical qualities, translations of the lyrics were not supplied initially. Informants who wished were provided with translations of the lyrics after their responses had been filed. Some informants concentrated on instruments with which they have particular experience. Others tried to give a general summary of their listening experience. A few described emotions or visualisations they experienced when listening, others concentrated on the technical aspects of the sound. Many made active use of their record collections to test their associations, but not all were able to come up with concrete IOCM examples for every song.

The role of one of the informants is special, since he is also this study's expert informant on musicological questions. After responding extensively as an IOCM informant, he has also contributed to the process of organising and interpreting informant responses. His extensive responses draw on his development of and experience in the method, as well as on his roles as informant and supervisor. Because of my lack of musicological schooling, I have chosen to refer to Philip's observations as an informant in musicology throughout the musical parts of the analyses. Although Philip for these reasons emerges as the most quoted respondent, his observations have not at any point overridden or been superimposed on observations made by the other contributors. Neither are his comments to be regarded as more nor less 'correct' than those of any other informant.[133]

I have taken care not to exclude any observations made by any IOCM informant, although the length of responses has in some instances necessitated shorter summaries. Direct quotations from informants are set in small capitals. All italics or quotation marks in the quotations are the informant's own, unless otherwise stated. Where a direct translation of a quotation into English has not been possible, the original word or expression applied by the informant has been added in brackets in italics.

8.1.4. General informant comments and the IOCM

The analyses begin with an account of informants' general comments, including PMFA information that is not linked to a voice or a particular instrument. Then the IOCM for the songs is presented, which includes concrete songs, bands or artists, or styles associated to by respondents and, where appropriate, what sound or instrument the association relates to. Where respondents have mentioned bands or styles rather than concrete songs, I have myself searched the relevant band's repertory for examples to illustrate the corresponding observation. Within the frames of this study it has not been possible to investigate the entire output of every single band mentioned. It has not always been possible to identify

133. Someone might still feel that there is something 'fishy' about Philip Tagg's role here, that it somehow limits the validity of my analyses and their results. If so, please consider the following: As a researcher I am allowed to ask myself questions. If I am unable to come up with an answer to such questions, I am allowed to read a book, an article, or conduct interviews in order to find one. Then why, as far as my educational background and research experience deny me a satisfactory overview of musicological questions, should I *not* be able to interview or ask my supervisor in musicology?

concretely all the less specific suggestions proposed by respondents. In cases where several bands have been mentioned as examples of the same musical style, an illustrative sound example of at least one of the bands has been found and included on the audio cd attached to this book.

8.1.5. My contributions to the musical part of analyses

My identification of song examples has made it necessary to occasionally interrupt respondents' descriptions to supply relevant information. I have attempted, however, to limit my own observations to a minimum. I have also added brief additional descriptions of features which have not been commented on by respondents. Similarly, where I consider it appropriate, I provide relevant details from Russian sources about aspects such as instrumentation or the recording process. My own opinions are confined to footnotes while comments of a more general nature are supplied in the relevant paragraph, immediately after the informant responses. In addition I have chosen to give a short summary of the song's 'order of events' immediately after the presentation of the IOCM.[134] These 'order of events' sections are supplied with more extensive graphic timetables and scores in Appendix 2.

8.1.6. Systematising IOCM survey responses

After the 'order of events' section, each song is described by instrument, starting with the vocals and the vocal persona. The definition of the vocal persona constitutes a key element in the analysis and the description of timbral and inflectional qualities, posing the question of what sort of person in what state of mind would use the kind of voice the singer uses. This is related in turn to the vocal techniques (Tagg 2001: 13). The rhythm section (drums, percussion and bass) is described before guitars, synthesizers and other instruments. Rounding off the mandatory part of each music analysis is an account of the song's recording and mix. The order in which the instruments appear may vary according to each individual analysis. Occasionally, paragraphs describing a riff, modality or other features of the song have been added.

I have chosen to present informant responses by instrument because the majority of responses were themselves organised in such a manner, offering a relatively easy way of structuring the information. That informants were relatively free to choose the form of their response resulted in a variety of accounts, all of differing length and style, and with different focal points. The main advantage of allowing a free form of response was a greater diversity in the information gathered than would have been provided by a standard questionnaire. A disadvantage of presenting responses by instrument is that some have scarcely been commented on. I have attempted to supply relevant information left out by respondents.

8.1.7. Lyrics and their translation

Each song lyric is presented in my English translation. The original lyrics appear in Appendix 3. The translations have been undertaken on the basis of published versions of the lyrics found in biographies, lyric collections, or on the band's internet site. The written version has then been adjusted and expanded to include all that is sung on the recording. In some cases the differences between the printed and the performed lyric have proven to be significant. Thus, the translation of song 2 takes into account both the printed and

134. For an example, see 8.2.3, page 123.

performed version. In the translations, my aim has been to recreate the aesthetic atmosphere of the original, while remaining as close as possible to the idiomatic Russian of the original. This means that I have only occasionally been able to recreate the rhythm or rhyme patterns of the originals.

Each analysis and discussion refers to the Russian lyrics. In my text, Russian words and expressions are transliterated, and accentuated where rhythmic or prosodic features are being discussed. In the analysis of rhymes, rhythm and other structural features I do not add translations of each word or line in brackets, but refer to verse and line by each example, and leave it to the reader to consult the English translation. In the discussion of words, expressions and metaphors, however, translations are given, unless the English and Russian words are obviously similar (e.g. *informatsiia* - *information*). Both the Russian and their corresponding English words are set in italics, the translation (whether into Russian or English) in brackets.

8.1.8. Characters and motifs

The aspects of the lyrics considered in the analysis will depend on their relevance to the given song. However, each lyric analysis starts with a survey of its main characters, its motifs and use of shifters. For song 2, I have decided to summarise each of the many situations and motifs in my own words, but have chosen to keep the sentences in italics, although they are not direct quotations from the translation.

8.1.9. Rhymes and rhythm

The description of shifters, characters and motifs is followed by a section on rhyme and rhythm, starting with an account of rhyme patterns, repetitions, assonance and alliteration. As to the classification of rhymes, I have included approximate rhymes and generally followed the definitions of modern Russian rhymes given in Unbegaun's *Russian Versification* (1956: 133-151).

Unbegaun relies on the traditional distinction between four main types of rhyme: '*masculine'*, which end on a stressed syllable; '*feminine*', where one unstressed syllable follows the stressed; *dactylic* rhymes, where two unstressed syllables follow, and *hyperdactylic* - three.[135] In 'masculine' rhymes that end in a vowel the vowel and the preceding consonant must correspond to make a full rhyme. In all other rhymes there must be a correspondence between the stressed vowel and all the following consonants and vowels. In modern Russian poetry, however, there is a tendency to ignore the last consonant: *úmer - dúme*, *lesá - slesár'*. Unbegaun terms this *truncated rhyme*. In 'feminine' rhymes one consonant rhymes with another, phonetically similar consonant: *óseni - brósili*. Dactylic and hyperdactylic rhymes are even freer in modern poetry and can be considered as assonances. What is important in such rhyme-assonances is the correspondence between the consonants immediately before the stressed vowel. What follows after the stress is of less significance.

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135. Speaking about stress on the ultimate or penultimate syllable of metric units in terms of 'masculine' and 'feminine' feels more than slightly awkward in the 21st century. However, when applying the terminology of a long-standing work first published in the mid-1950s, replacing terms feels a bit awkward as well. My use of quotation marks are meant to signify that I apply the terms in a gender-neutral sense. I hope the reader can live with this compromise and its gust of patriarchal mould.

For the songs where significant effects depend on assonance and alliteration, the relevant lines are quoted with repeated phonemes or phoneme groups marked in bold, immediately followed by an account of the most significant chains of repeated phonemes, e.g.:

> T**y** v**ykh**ó**d**ish' **na** k**úkhniu no** v**odá** z**d**és' g**o**r'k**á**
> (a + o + o + á + o + á / n + n + n / d + d + d / y + y / u + iu / kh + kh)

These accounts are meant to show tendencies, rather than cover all possible assonances and alliterations. I have attempted to mark the following relatively consistently: All alliterations; the occurrence more than twice of the same phoneme, succession of phonemes or phonetically similar phonemes; recurring stressed vowels and their corresponding diphthongs; consonants and unstressed vowels that occur in successive words with a stressed syllable (prepositions tend to become unstressed in Russian speech). Note that in Russian the unstressed 'o' is pronounced close to /a/ when it occurs before an stressed syllable, and somewhat less sharp (closer to schwa) when it follows one. Similarly, the unstressed 'e' is pronounced similarly to /i/, particularly when occuring before the stressed syllable.

This is why assonances occur between the front vowels 'e' and 'i' and between the back vowels 'a', 'o', 'ia' respectively. In addition, assonances appear between 'u', 'iu' and 'ió', 'ó'. For this reason the stress has been indicated consistently. Please note that the Russian letter 'ë,' (always stressed) otherwise transcribed as 'e,' is transcribed as 'ió' in the parts of the analyses which concern its prosodic qualities (rhymes, assonances and alliterations). All consonants occuring at the end of a word are unvoiced, which sometimes makes assonances appear between pairs of voiced and unvoiced phonemes: 'b' and 'p', 'v' and 'f', 'd' and 't', 'g' and 'k', 'z' and 's', 'zh' and 'sh'. I do not distinguish between soft and hard consonants in my account of assonances and alliterations, and therefore mark the soft variant graphically (-') only where it is followed by soft or hard sign in the cyrillic original.

A short account of the lyric's metre, whether regular or irregular, follows. None of the four songs follow a consistent metre throughout, but in some cases, certain metric units prevail. Significant aspects to investigate here are whether inversions or irregularities in the metre are used to emphasise particular words in the lyric, whether the rhythm of the lyric contributes to the song's mood and message, and if so, how.

8.1.10. Language and language informants

The next part of the analysis is an investigation of the language, in particular of idiomatic expressions and metaphors. A panel of Russian informants has been invaluable in explaining and translating words and expressions and their nuances, as well as controlling my interpretation of motifs and metaphors. The four native-speaker informants are not themselves musicians, but represent the present-day audience of Russian rock music. For practical reasons their names do not occur in the analyses, but I shall introduce them here: Aleksandra (34), Andrei (28), Anastasia (25), and Sergei (32).

8.1.11. Thematic comparison with western rock songs

The lyrics are then compared to a LCM (Lyrical Comparison Material) of thematically similar, western rock songs. In selecting song lyrics for comparison I have first considered songs and bands represented in the IOCM, then tried to trace songs with similar thematics and motifs, chiefly within the stylistic frames offered by the IOCM. In some cases the LCM gives an idea of the how the treatment of relevant recurring topics and motifs has developed with time and between shifting styles. I have then attempted to relate the song analysed to corresponding lyrical currents in western rock music.

8.1.12. Interpretation

From the starting point of comparison between the song and its IOCM/LCM, I proceed to an interpretation of the song in relation to its local context. In so doing, it has been my priority to unveil the song's spectrum of potential meanings, rather than to concentrate on one narrow reading. However, the lyrical message is always considered in relation to the background of findings from the musical part of each analysis, something which may occasionally rule out certain readings of a lyric.

8.1.13. Terminology

The components of each song are referred to as follows:

Verse:	Group of lines forming a unit in a poem or a song.
Chorus:	Part of song that is (most commonly) repeated after each verse.
Line:	Verse or chorus unit graphically contained within a single shift.
Intermission:	Short instrumental component appearing between verses and/or choruses. Referred to by some informants as 'bridge'.
Interlude:	Shorter or longer variation on the song's main theme, featuring a part of the song lyric. Referred to by some informants as 'break'.
Break:	(*Drum break*) Rhythmic shift between main components of song, e.g. between verse and refrain, chorus and intermission, etc. Not to be confused with *pause*.
Lyric:	Singular: The most stable part of the verbal message of one particular song (e.g. *'Aristokrat's* lyric'). Plural: Verbal message of song or songs in general (e.g. 'the lyrics of a song').
Vocal effects:	Voice-produced sounds, shouts, speech, etc., verbal or non-verbal, which are open to improvisation and do not constitute a part of the stable lyrics.

8.1.14. The RiR cd

The four songs analysed in this study are included on the attached Rock in the Reservation cd as follows: *Aristokrat* - track 1, *Drian'* - track 24, *Poslednii geroi* - track 46 and *Syt po gorlo* - track 76. After each song follow excerpts from its IOCM and LCM. The latter is limited to the lyrical analysis, except where the same band or artist appears in both categories. To simplify identification of tracks, all tracks concerning *Aristokrat* are named A (followed by track number), and similarly: *Drian'* - D, *Geroi* - G and *Syt* - S. For each mention of a IOCM or LCM track, its identifying letter and corresponding number are given in square brackets, e.g.: Yes: *Owner of a Lonely Heart* [S-84], i.e. sound example for *Syt po gorlo*, track 84.

For reasons of practicality and information capacity, the IOCM/LCM tracks are kept as short as possible and no longer than 0'30", with the exception of track S-99 - an alternative version of the full song track S-76. For the same reasons I have not been able to include every mentioned IOCM or LCM on the cd. In deciding which tracks to leave out I have given IOCM priority over LCM, considered the significance of each example in the text and considered whether its features had already been represented by a similar track. Quotes from songs which are not included on the cd are marked '[NI]' ('Not Included'). I encourage the reader to use the cd actively when reading the analyses. The full table of contents for the compact disc listed in Appendix 1, page 207ff, offers a few keywords which indicate what informants have responded to. Some also include relevant musical features of the LCM. However, critical and independent listenings are most welcome.

The tables of 'musical events in time' illustrates on a time-line how the main components of the songs analysed are repeated, and when each instrument is playing in the course of a song. It is intended to make it easier for the reader to follow the descriptions and discussions of the four songs. For readers of notation, scores for first verse and chorus are provided as well. Both resources are found in Appendix 2, page 211ff. The original and transliterated song lyrics included in Appendix 3, page 211ff, are included for Russian speakers and for readers interested in the sound valour of the original lyrics, to facilitate their testing and evaluation of my translations and analyses.

8.2. Song 1, Akvarium: *Aristokrat* (1982) [A-01]

8.2.1. General informant comments

All informants agree that *Aristokrat* is a reggae track which differs stylistically from Jamaican reggae. Most also agree that the song has certain European characteristics, although the panel of listeners give slightly different answers when it comes to how the song breaks with the Jamaican tradition. Tristan hears POP MUSIC LINES PLAYED IN A REGGAE GROOVE which he qualifies as COLD REGGAE. Ulf hears elements in the instrumentation and mix that suggest WHITE REGGAE to him.[136] Thomas places the sound of the song in-between Jamaican reggae and what he calls the COLDER (*kjøligere*) UK reggae, performed by such new-wave and punk bands as The Clash or The Ruts [A-13, A-14]. He finds the sound A BIT COLD, similar, he thinks, to that of reggae-influenced UK bands, but he finds the CASUAL WAY OF PLAYING and the USE OF PERCUSSION closer to the Jamaican. Philip identifies the vocal timbre as EUROPEAN and points out several aspects in the manner of playing that break with Jamaican reggae.

Odd supposes that Akvarium have listened not only to reggae but also to post-punk bands such as The Police [A-15, A-16] or The Pretenders. He also hears some ROCK-'N'-ROLL AND COUNTRY INFLUENCES. The RHYTHMIC INCONSISTENCIES of *Aristokrat*, Hans observes, place it OUTSIDE THE REGGAE IDIOM. He adds that the saxophone playing belongs stylistically to the rock mainstream. Kate hears a REGGAE VOICE WITH A CERTAIN 'INDIAN' FEELING to it while Serge notes influences from reggae and older Rock-'n'-Roll. Myke finds *Aristokrat* MORE COMPLEX THAN JAMAICAN REGGAE and hears in it AN AMERICAN REGGAE SOUND with traces of EASTERN-BLOC POP. The vocal timbre and melody give the song a STRANGE, UNUSUAL FEELING, he notes.

Hasse relates the song stylistically to the late 1970s, early 1980s. The MELODY AND PHRASING, he says, could VERY WELL BE FOUND ON A JAMAICAN RECORD FROM THE 80S, while other aspects of the song appear less Jamaican to him. The recurring chord progression is treated as an ostinato, something Hasse describes as VERY COMMON IN REGGAE. On the other hand he finds the progression ||: G | G | C | D | Em :|| LESS TYPICAL IN REGGAE, although, he adds, Bob Marley did not always follow the harmonic tradition so strictly either. Among the least Jamaican-sounding instruments on this recording, Hasse singles out the bass and the saxophone.

8.2.2. IOCM

Tristan:	The Police (bass line, vaguely) [A-15].
Ulf:	Jimmy Cliff: *The Harder They Come*, 1972 [A-09] (but slower).
Thomas:	Dillinger: *Marijuana in my Brain*, 1979 [A-02].
Odd:	Police: *Every Breath You Take*, 1983 [A-16] (INTERRUPTED CADENCE), Pretenders (vocal phrasing), Roxy Music (saxophone), Jerry Lee Lewis and Roy Orbison (vocal effects).

136. To categorise music in terms of 'white' and 'black' is problematic. The same applies to the cold/warm dichotomy, which might easily be interpreted as a value judgement based on racial prejudice. The use of the terms 'white' and 'cold' in this context should not be regarded as qualitative judgements, but as a means to describe Akvarium's song in terms of Jamaican and European features on a purely stylistic level.

Hans: Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up*, 1973 [A-06]
(tempo, guitar, rhythm, 'issim-skissim'),
Get Up Stand Up Live version, 1975 [A-17] ('oi'-shouts and vocal effects).

Hasse: Bob Marley and The Wailers: *Rastaman Chant*, 1973 [A-03] (rhythm),
Curtis Mayfield or Bobby Womack [A-11] (guitar fills).

Philip: Marley: *Redemption Song*, 1980 [A-08] (melodic progression),
Chuck Berry: *Havana Moon*, 1956 [A-10] (guitar).

8.2.3. Order of events

Aristokrat does not just start with the rhythm guitar. Hans remarks that its entire structure seems to be held together by that instrument. During the four-bar intro, bass, drums and stick percussion join in a steady rhythmic groove that keeps running throughout the song. A second guitar joins in from the middle of the first verse, adding short fills. Each of the two verses (8 bars) is followed by a twice repeated chorus (2 x 4 bars). The vocals pause on the last two 4/4 beats of the final bar in each chorus before the next chorus repeat or verse. Verses and choruses share the same groove and are just fractionally distinguished from one another, mainly by the vocals and the bass. From the end of the final chorus, shouts and vocal effects replace the singing voice and after another twelve bars, at 2'58", the saxophone solo commences. The sax continues playing for more than two minutes, right up until the very end of the song. The fade-out covers the five last bars.

8.2.4. Voice and vocal persona

The voice introduces the song by speaking one word, *gadwah*.[137] The verses and choruses are sung. After this, from 2'18" onwards, the vocals revert to speech, shouts and a variety of vocal effects. Kate describes the singing voice as OUTSIDE THE ROCK IDIOM, NICE, STRAIGHT and WITHOUT AGGRESSION. A GOOD, TRAINED VOICE with a LAID-BACK WAY OF SINGING, she continues, with a SLIGHT NASALITY and CLEAR DICTION, but WITHOUT STRONG INDIVIDUAL CHARACTERISTICS. The voice, she notes, could belong to a singer of adult contemporary. Philip also finds the vocal mode CLOSE TO BALLAD SINGING. To Kate's observations he adds that THE VOICE IS HEAD-REGISTER and that ITS TIMBRE IS IDENTIFIABLE AS EUROPEAN.

The vocal line consists of AN ALMOST MACHINE-LIKE TWO-NOTE CHANT, Philip observes, AN ALMOST CONSTANT STREAM OF WORDS with LITTLE OR NO LET-UP BETWEEN PHRASES. The vocal line, he adds, is not unlike that of religious mantras or of children's teasing chants. He notes that the singer pronounces the lyrics distinctly, without appearing to preach, to make dub-reggae proclamations, or to add interjections to his song. Shouts and vocal effects follow, but do not appear in the chant of verses and refrains (unlike in some songs of the IOCM, e.g. Dillinger's *Marijuana in my Brain* [A-02], which has a similar two-note chant). Philip, referring to Shepherd (1986), also characterises the singer's head register as A TYPICAL 'NICE-BOY' FEATURE. The ensuing effect, he says, is that the song's protagonist comes across as a good, friendly guy, who does not want any trouble with anyone. Philip finds him NEITHER PARTICULARLY HAPPY NOR SAD, but MAYBE A BIT DISTRACTED. He thinks the vocals might be SUGGESTING SOMETHING REMOTELY FUNNY.

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137. As spoken, the word does not seem to correspond directly to a Jamaican expression, but this may have to do with the singer's slightly Russified imitation of a Caribbean accent. Hasse suggests the word might come from *Gad Jah* (*God Jah*).

The chorus introduces a singalong effect as other male voices, singing in parallel intervals, join the lead vocalist, Philip notes. The effect, he says, may be characterised as one of HAPPY CHAOS CREATED BY STRONG DELAY TREATMENT OF THE VOCAL LINES AND BY LACK OF SYNCHRONICITY IN THE ENUNCIATION OF CERTAIN PHRASES. He adds that the initial word *gadwah*, as well as the various exclamations and words after 2'18", have a raspy, sometimes hoarse quality. Hans recognises some of the words shouted as quotations from Bob Marley songs, or from Jamaican reggae in general, but notes a certain RUSSIFIED PRONUNCIATION. He traces BG's shout *isimskisím* back to Bob Marley:

We sick an' tired of your issim-skissim game
Dyin' an' goin' to heaven in a Jesus' name, Lord
We know when we understand
Almighty God is a living man

Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up*, 1973 [A-06] (first half third verse)

Hans also identifies shouts of *oi-oi-oi*, similar to those in *Aristokrat*, in Marley's 1975 live version of *Get Up Stand Up* [A-17]. The live recording was widely distributed in the west, so he finds it likely that BG and Akvarium may have taken some inspiration from it. Other vocal effects produced in the final part of *Aristokrat* are long, blabbering, bubbling noises, lip-smacking and various moans. Odd links what he describes as the ANIMALISTIC GROWLS (*mrrrr-lyder*) to early Rock-'n'-Roll singers such as Jerry Lee Lewis or Roy Orbison.[138]

8.2.5. Drums and percussion

Serge sums up informants' descriptions of the drums and percussion line-up. He identifies DRUM STICKS HIT TOGETHER, TIMBALES-LIKE PERCUSSION, A DRUM KIT WITH KICK AND HI-HAT, AND SOME VERY SMALL CONGAS-LIKE TOMS HIT WITH STICKS. Philip assumes the timbale-like sound to come from toms that have been tightened. Informants have problems identifying which beats are marked by the different percussion instruments, which may hint at certain rhythmic inconsistencies. Thomas merely notes that the relatively large number of percussion instruments are SPREAD OUT IN THE SONIC PICTURE (*lydbildet*) and sound ALMOST ACCIDENTAL. Unlike Hans, he associates this with Jamaican reggae. Hasse does not find the rhythm SO VERY TYPICALLY REGGAE-LIKE, but NOT DIRECTLY UNUSUAL EITHER. He notes that the dominating percussion parts (timbales/toms) are NOT QUITE PLAYED IN THE JAMAICAN WAY. On the other hand, he finds the actual drum sound (its timbre) similar to that of reggae.

The West African tradition of LAYING DOWN BASIC RHYTHMIC PATTERNS IN THE HIGH REGISTER AND MORE COMPLEX PATTERNS IN A LOWER REGISTER seems to be followed in this song, Philip observes, but, he notes, the drums are PLAYED HESITANTLY. This observation complements Hans' comment that the drums and percussion instruments SEEM TO FOLLOW THE RHYTHM GUITAR, instead of the other way around.

138. It should be noted, though, that similar sounds and shouts are quite common in dub reggae. The deep-echo shouts and sounds in *Aristokrat* have close counterparts in early 70s Jamaican dub reggae, e.g. Bob Marley's *Keep on Moving Part III* [A-07] in Lee Perry's dub version.

8.2.6. A curious bass-line

The bass is what Tristan finds the most unusual about *Aristokrat*. Its rhythmic pattern diverges from what is common in reggae and, he underlines, it sounds WEAKISH COMPARED TO THE USUAL FAT, GREASY, UP FRONT REGGAE BASS. Hans, too, notes that the bass MERELY IMITATES REGGAE BASS LINES. In *Aristokrat* it has a FREE ROLE similar to reggae bass, he states, but IT FALLS OUT OF THE RHYTHMIC PATTERN. Myke agrees: THE BASS LINE IS PECULIAR, NOT VERY REGGAE-LIKE. Philip observes that BY MISSING ONE BEAT FROM MORE OR LESS EVERY BAR AKVARIUM'S BASS PLAYER HAS AT LEAST UNDERSTOOD ONE BASIC FEATURE OF REGGAE BASS. However, he says, REGGAE BASS LINES NORMALLY FOLLOW A MUCH MORE REGULAR PATTERN. Akvarium's bass FLUCTUATES MORE IN TERMS OF WHEN IT PLAYS WHAT, Philip concludes. He adds that he would expect the bass to play an ascending pattern following each missed downbeat, while in *Aristokrat* the bass player plays both rising and falling figures. Most of the informants who comment on the bass line, then, agree that its unpredictability breaks with reggae aesthetics. Hasse, on the other hand, merely observes that its sound is TOO HARD AND THIN, that Jamaican reggae bass is MIXED DEEPER AND WARMER.

8.2.7. The rhythm guitar

Hans notes that the rhythm guitar consistently marks the backbeats (the two and four in each 4/4 bar). It is this consistency that gives it its central role. But, Hans continues, the AFTERBEATS ARE MARKED WITH DOUBLE CLICKS, i.e. that the guitarist STRIKES 'DOWN-UP' or even does three strikes: 'DOWN-UP-DOWN', which sounds out of line with the Jamaican reggae idiom. Philip, on the contrary, thinks the 'WHACK-A-WHACK' EFFECT IS NOT PLAYED, that THE GUITARIST PLAYS JUST ONE STRUM and that the second click is produced by the heavy echo effect.[139] Hans, referring to his own experience of playing reggae guitar, disagrees with Philip on this point. He argues that, although there is a prominent echo effect on the guitar, one strike with an echo is not sufficient to create the rhythm guitar sound he hears in *Aristokrat*. He also associates the rhythm-guitar sound to *Get Up Stand Up* [A-06].

To these observations it could be added that the rhythm guitar is the first audible instrument, that it holds a key position in the rhythm section, and that it is played half-damped. Furthermore, the rhythm and lead guitars sound as though they have been recorded from the same instrument in successive takes. This final feature apparently made it hard for some informants to distinguish between the two at certain points.

8.2.8. The lead-guitar

The chord sequence of the lead guitar, ||: G | G | C | D | Em :||, reminds Philip of a line in Marley's *Redemption Song*: || G | G | C | D | Em C ||. Hans and Hasse both confirm this observation. The LOOSE LEAD GUITAR makes Thomas associate to Jamaican reggae. Ulf finds that the lead guitar HAS A COUNTRY SOUND, but notes that it PLAYS ROCK PHRASES. Odd also hears COUNTRY INFLUENCES towards the end of the song. Philip, as well, describes it as A CLEAN FENDER SOUND WITH A TOUCH OF COUNTRY TO IT. In addition he associates the GENTLE, WAFTING GESTURES of some of the shorter lead guitar fills to Chuck Berry's *Havana Moon* [A-10], where the guitar has a CARIBBEAN THING about it (as, one might add, do Berry's vocals, which imitate a Caribbean accent). The steel guitar much used in Country music derives from Hawaiian guitar, which has 'been mixed up with' Caribbean guitar in white music, he explains. With this he suggests that the Country

139. The song's copious use of echo (delay) effects is discussed on page 126.

sound is not so foreign as it might seem at first, but that it signals 'white' reggae. The first descending guitar lick, Philip comments, MIGHT SUGGEST A TUMBLING LEAF, and MIGHT BE A QUOTE FROM A ROCK BALLAD. Interestingly Hasse hears soul inspiration rather than a Country sound in the lead guitar phrases. To him it sounds as though it is INFLUENCED BY CURTIS MAYFIELD [A-11] OR BOBBY WOMACK, IN MUCH THE SAME WAY AS THE PLAYING STYLE OF MANY JAMAICAN GUITARISTS.

8.2.9. The saxophone

Another instrument which informants link to non-Jamaican music is the saxophone. Ulf describes the sax as TALKATIVE, ROCK-INSPIRED AND POWERFUL. It makes Odd vaguely associate to Roxy Music. Hans finds the sax QUITE OBTRUSIVE. He underlines that the sax playing is mainstream rock and stresses that the instrument is not typical in reggae. Serge links the saxophone solo to older rock-'n'-roll. To Hasse it DOES NOT SOUND JAMAICAN either. Philip adds that it sounds GENTLE, RELAXED AND MILDLY HAPPY. Not mentioned by informants is the very brief, but stylistically similar, sax solo in Marley's hit *Easy Skanking* [A-12] from 1978. It has the same mood as Aquarium's sax, but is somewhat lower in the mix.[140]

8.2.10. The mix

The feature of the song's mix that most informants react to is the level of echo used and the fact that it is applied on nearly all the instruments. Tristan gets the feeling of BEING INSIDE A ROOM COVERED WITH CERAMIC TILES, A CONFINED SPACE WHERE NOTHING ABSORBS THE SOUND (an aquarium?).[141] He supposes that in Jamaican reggae, unlike in *Aristokrat*, echo and reverberation (reverb) effects are NORMALLY RESTRICTED TO A FEW SELECTED PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS. Ulf calls the effect an 80S DIMENSIONED (MEGA) ECHO and Thomas agrees that reverb and echo levels are higher than he remembers having heard in reggae recordings before. Serge sums up: NOTICEABLE USE OF ECHO ON MOST SOUND SOURCES, INCLUDING DRUMS, GUITAR, SAX AND ESPECIALLY VOICE. He assumes the effect to come from a tape echo unit, identifiable because of a SLIGHTLY MUFFLED SOUND QUALITY IN THE REPETITIONS, COMPARED TO THE SOURCE. He also thinks that THE SPEED HAS BEEN ALTERED AT CERTAIN POINTS TO CHANGE THE ECHO PITCH, especially on the vocal track towards the end. Philip supports the idea of a tape echo and compares the sound to that of an Echoplex unit.

In Hasse's opinion the echo effects COME CLOSE TO JAMAICAN DUB-TECHNIQUE, BUT SOUND LIKE THEY HAVE BEEN TAKEN FROM ANOTHER TRADITION. He finds the echo delay rate faster than that of Jamaican reggae, where echo was almost exclusively produced using REVOX TAPE RECORDERS SET AT 3¾ IPS.[142] The IOCM confirms, along with my own efforts to find

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140. That Marley also occasionally used saxophones does not necessarily restrict the mainstream qualities of that instrument. By the time the song was released, Marley had long been criticised by other Jamaican reggae musicians for adapting his music to a mainstream audience. It is possible that this 15-second sax phrase [A-12] may have inspired Akvarium's long solo.
141. When supplied with Aristokrat's lyrics after his response was filed, Tristan found it a funny coincidence that 'aquarium' is used in French slang to denote a badly ventilated, smoke-filled room: 'Abinmerde, c'est un aquarium ici!'
142. ips = inches per second. Standard reel-to-reel speeds are 38 cps (centimeters per second) which equals 15 ips and similarly: 19 cps = 7 1/2 ips; 9 1/2 cps = 3 3/4 ips.

a reggae track with the same wide use and high level of echo, Tristan's observation that reggae echo usually restricts itself to a few instruments. Hasse confirms this by adding that, in A CLASSIC DUB, the ECHO IS APPLIED FIRST AND FOREMOST ON THE DRUM RIM-SHOT, MORE SELDOM PERCUSSION INSTRUMENTS OR THE VOICE.[143]

8.2.11. Jamaican and non-Jamaican features

If one bears in mind that not all informants necessarily agree on every point mentioned, the IOCM panel's description of *Aristokrat* in terms of its Jamaican and non-Jamaican features may be summarised as follows:

Jamaican	*Non-Jamaican*
-'Casual' way of playing -Melody and phrasing -Chord progression treated as an ostinato -Two-note chant -'Timbale' timbre and sound -Percussion spread out in the mix -Basic rhythmic patterns in higher, more complex in lower register -Bass misses one beat from more or less every bar -Rhythm guitar marks 2 and 4 in each 4/4 bar -'Loose' lead guitar -Lead guitar soul inspired (Mayfield, Womack) -Echo close to Jamaican dub technique	-Vocals has European timbre, close to ballad singing / adult contemporary -No declamation or interjections in the singing -Rhythmic inconsistencies -Way of playing 'timbales' -Hesitant drumming -Drums and percussion follow rhythm guitar -Bass is weak-sounding and plays irregular patterns -Bass imitates reggae bass lines -Bass plays unpredictable lines -Bass sound is hard and thin -Rhythm guitar 'double clicks' -Lead guitar Country influences -Sax is Rock-'n'-Roll or mainstream rock -Sax is loud in mix, 'obtrusive' -Echo applied to all or nearly all instruments -Echo level is higher -Echo delay rate is faster -Echo sounds as if taken from other tradition

8.2.12. The lyrics

The lyric cited here is taken from the recorded version on the album *Tabu*, and on which the printed version, published in Akvarium's collected lyrics *Polnyi sbornik tekstov pesen Akvariuma i BG* (Grebenshchikov 1993: 153), is based. In three instances the recorded version is given precedence; the written form *svoéiu* (second verse, lines 3, 4 and 5) is sung in its shorter form *svoéi* and, in the last refrain, BG sings *ískrenno rad* where the printed version uses *ístinno rad*. Similarly, the singer uses the metrically more fitting spoken

143. The consequence of echo on the voice only is that the subject, not the environment, is situated in that 'sound'. In early dub reggae extreme levels of echo (delay) can occur, as in Lee Perry's Marley dubs from the beginning of the 1970s. For example, the vocals in *Keep on Moving Part III* [A-07] has copious echo with up to fifteen-twenty distinct return signals that beat Akvarium's hands down. But whereas Perry applies the effect to the voice throughout, he does not use it on any instruments, save for occasional strikes at the sax. Significantly, however, early dub reggae of this kind became widely known in Europe or the US only several years after *Aristokrat* was recorded.

variant *óchenno rad*, where the printed lyric uses *óchen' rad*. I have also added the chorus repeats, since the final chorus diverges from the others. Finally, I have written the second verse as 1 x 8 lines instead of 2 x 4, since the singer's break at that point corresponds with that of the first, 1 x 8 line verse.[144] The spoken words and exclamations that precede and follow the lyric are listed and commented on separately below.

Aristocrat
Oh, they walk on the green light;
Oh, they walk on the green light;
They ain't telling them "no",
When they walk on the green light.
I could give them advice,
Give them some idle advice,
But they know where there's butter and bread,
When they walk on the green light.

And I'm on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Sitting on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Consuming sensimilla like an aristocrat;
Sitting on the rooftop…

And I'm on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Sitting on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Consuming sensimilla like an aristocrat;
Sitting on the rooftop…

I don't see no reason for brawling with me,
I don't see no reason for cursing at me,
I don't see no reason for even quarrelling with me,
You can pick a quarrel with your wife instead.
You can pick a quarrel with your wife instead,
You go start a row with your wife instead,
But I have my very own 'oi',
I don't see no reason for brawling with me.

And I'm on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Sitting on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Consuming sensimilla like an aristocrat;
Sitting on the rooftop…

And I'm on the rooftop and I'm very glad,
Sitting on the rooftop and I'm truly glad,
Consuming sensimilla like an aristocrat;
Sitting on the rooftop…

144. The smaller size of the spacing in the book might suggest a typographical error.

8.2.13. Characters and motifs

In the first verse, the protagonist introduces two groups of people: those who walk on the green light, the conforming masses, and those who safeguard the rules. The latter '*they'* is referred to only once, in line three: *oni ne skazhut im net*. As long as common people abide by the rules, *they* do not interfere, do not *say no*. The protagonist then presents himself in contrast to the conforming masses. He has knowledge he assumes they do not have. He knows he could advise them to act otherwise, but on the other hand he can see the practical reasons for their behaviour and, at least for the moment, he abandons the idea of teaching them. Instead, in the chorus, he describes his own state of happiness. He is sitting on the roof, smoking *sensimilla* (*marijuana*), and as the first verse implies, watching people in the streets from above. 'Elevated' both physically and mentally, he compares himself to an aristocrat. The second verse marks a shift to the peace of mind experienced by the protagonist. He dismisses any kinds of critique, objection or quarrel. He has no wish to have anybody question any aspect of his state of mind or his behaviour. Like the romantic outsider hero he wants to be left in peace. In the fourth line he addresses a 'you', and tells him to keep his quarrels for his wife. He does not want his peace of mind disturbed and is in no mood to defend himself. Instead he returns to the chorus and revels in his sphere of intoxicated happiness.

8.2.14. Rhymes and rhythm

Repetition plays a dominant role in *Aristokrat*. Each of the two eight-line verses and four-line choruses have a single end rhyme. The patterns of rhymes and repetitions are different in the two verses. In the first verse, lines one, two, four and eight are repeated with only minor variations in the opening: *O, oní...* / *Kogdá oní...* The final word in these four lines, *svet*, rhymes with *net* (line three), *sovét* (lines five and six), and approximately with *khleb* (line seven). In Russian poetry, approximate rhymes are often used to add emphasis to the divergent word. Here *khleb* (*bread*) differs from *svet*, *net* and *sovét* (*light, no, advice*) by its reference to a concrete object. Thus it emphasises the notion that the people who walk on the green light are chiefly concerned with their material needs.

In the second verse, lines one and eight are identical. Compared to these the verb *skandálit'* is replaced by *rugát'sia* and *dázhe ssórit'sia* in lines two and three respectively. The ending *so mnói* is retained in all these lines, however, and rhymes with *zhenói* (lines four, five and six) and *khoi* (line seven). Lines four and five are also identical, while line six differs from them only through the infinitive *skandalit'* replacing *rugát'sia*. Line one of the first chorus is introduced by *A* (*And*), apart from which it is identical to line two. In line two of the second chorus, *óchen'* is replaced by the longer *iskrenno*, but the final word *rad* retains the rhyme with *aristokrát* in line three. Line four, on the other hand, repeats only the first half of lines one and two. It thus ends on the word *krýshe*, which breaks with the pattern of 'masculine' end rhymes. In addition to the end rhymes, the first verse has rhymes between the last words of the first half of lines one, two, four and eight (*idút*) and those of lines three (*skázhut*) and seven (*znáiut*). An assonance is also observed in the third line of the refrain between the similarly accented verb *potrebliá**iu*** and noun *sensimíl'**iu***.

There is no consistent rhythmic meter in *Aristokrat*. Although the frequent repetitions establish recurring patterns, these are not shared by the two verses. The last unit of each line, however, is iambic, with the exception of the last line of the chorus. Apart from line six of the first verse (*dát' im...*), which starts by repeating the middle part of the preceding line, all lines open with unstressed syllables, the number of which varies from one to three.

The first metric unit tends to be marked less firmly by the singer than the second. This adds to the light and happy effect created by the many unstressed syllables at the start of each line. It also has the effect that the central rhyming words *idút*, *skázhut* and *znáiut* (*walk*, *say*, *know*) in the first verse are emphasised.

8.2.15. Language, expressions and metaphors

The title word *aristokrat* has quite negative connotations in a Soviet context.[145] But in the song the word is used in a positive sense. By the time the protagonist compares himself to an aristocrat, he has already stressed that he has no wish to exercise power over the people he observes. The nature of his 'aristocratic' position is not that of a member of a ruling elite. It is restricted to describing the luxury of distancing oneself from everyday worries and petty quarrels, to get high on marijuana and observe society from the outside, from above. As such, the title word might have more in common with the Jamaican expression *aristocrat* or *ristocrat*, as it occurs in the artistic name Risto Benji, or in Roman Stewart's song *Diplomat* (1991): 'Some a dem a gwan like dem aristocrat / Some a dem a gwan like dem a diplomat' [NI]. In a reggae context, then, the word *(a)ristocrat* has the positive qualities reflected in Akvarium's song. This links the expression to the spoken and shouted 'quotes' from reggae songs that follow the final chorus.[146]

To *walk on the green light* represents routinely following the rules. And in some detail, one might add. Crossing the road on the red light might result in a fine, but it is hardly a major offence. The people observed by our *aristokrat*, then, are in his view carefully abiding by the rules and regulations of the official sphere, rules that he has broken by withdrawing to his rooftop observation post. The advice he could give the rule-abiding people in the streets, but decides not to, is described by the adjective *dosúzhii*, which translates as *idle*, but also appears in the expression *dosúzhoe vrémia* (*spare time*). This unuttered *idle* or *spare-time advice* also includes the encouragement to create one's own rules, take chances and abandon the humdrum, just like the *aristokrat*. Knowing, though, that following his example of withdrawal will not guarantee people *butter* and *bread*, help secure their material everyday needs, he rejects encouraging others to join him in his stance of distanced spiritual contemplation.

The chorus celebrates the happiness ensuing from the protagonist's twofold distancing. He is 'high' both physically (sitting on the roof) and mentally (getting stoned on sensimilla). He is *sitting*, observing *them* walk. He is comfortable, relaxed and in a mood for absent-minded observation and reflection. He is *on the roof*, which implies that he is on top, with an overview, watching things from above, from a different angle. His alternative viewpoint enables him to see patterns ignored by the participants in their everyday struggle below. The word *krýsha* (*roof*) also appears in the slang expression *u negó krýsha poékhala* (lit. *he lost his roof*), which corresponds to the English expressions *to lose one's marbles*. In one sense, then, the *aristokrat* is 'sitting on the top of his head', he has left his everyday worries behind. He is *very glad*. Happy, intoxicated, amused by what he sees, by the effect of enstrangement and excitement offered by the height and the view. He is generally empowered, inspired, happy to be different, to be in his own 'little bubble'. The role of the

145. Zoshchenko's character of the *Aristokratka* in the humorous short story of the same name, reflects negative qualities: an extreme superficiality combined with an obsession with the material.

146. My best thanks to Hasse for this information.

drug in this state of happiness is revealed in line three of the chorus and is linked to the title word *aristokrat*, through its association with marijuana smoking. The main character is *consuming sensimilla like an aristocrat*, like a well-respected rastafarian. This also implies that he, at least for now, can afford to enjoy the luxury.

The act of smoking is not made explicit. BG uses the verb *potrebít'/potrebliát'* (*to use, to consume*), which sounds awkwardly formal when compared to Jamaican weed-smoking jargon (*burn the ganja, have kaya, light my spliff,* etc.). Since BG and Akvarium elsewhere in the song demonstrate more than a minimum of knowledge of Jamaican expressions, this deviation from reggae aesthetics might well have more to do with discretion in the face of censorship, than with disregard of stylistic conventions.[147] On the other hand *potrebliáiu* fits the line very well rhythmically. The key word chosen for the drug is *sensimíl'ia* (Jam. *sensimilla*, also: *sensi*, *sinsemilla*), while the common term in Russian, *marikhuána*, is carefully avoided throughout the song. The latter would almost inevitably attract the attention of censors, hence the effort to 'make it strange'. It would be interesting to know how the band explained the word *sensimilla* when the song was sanctioned. Although they are not part of the sanctioned lyrics, the words and shouts following the final chorus also avoid the word *marijuana* in their listing of Jamaican expressions.

In the second verse the protagonist repeatedly stresses how he shuns anyone who wants to brawl (*skandálit'*), shout and swear (*rugát'sia*) or quarrel (*ssórit'sia*). He wants no criticism, no stress to disturb his peace of mind. Addressing a 'you' in the lyrics, a more or less concrete witness to his behaviour, he asks him to go *rugát'sia* and *skandálit'* with his wife instead of bothering him. It makes no sense to quarrel with the *aristokrat*. He has *svoi sóbstvennyi khoi* (lit. *his own 'oi'*).

The word *khoi* does not, as far as I have been able to confirm, occur in any Russian dictionary. Does BG have his personal interpretation of it or does the word have some narrow, local slang connotation? No informants have been able to verify any such connotations. However, the word *khoi* also appears in another song on the *Tabu* album, *Beregi svoi khoi*, where it plays more explicitly on its phonetic proximity to *khui* (a common vulgar word for the male sexual organ).[148] Most of the Russians with whom I have discussed the word *khoi*, (a few were visibly embarrassed by the question and responded aggressively: 'Well, what do *you* think?') interpret BG's use of *khoi* as a tolerably ambivalent (for both rockers and censors) substitute for the nastier *khui*.

In his biography of BG, Smirnov explains the euphemism *khoi* as a re-writing of *khui*, similar to that used in the official transliteration of certain Chinese family names (1999: 121). The most urgent example of a name in need of such modification is the common Hui, which was politely modified from 'Khui' to 'Khuei' or 'Khoi' in Russian. Observe also the case of rock star Viktor Tsui's Korean family name, which spells 'Tsoi' in Cyrillic, a strategic move made to prevent discriminatory puns. Returning to the word *khoi* in the light of this, we must assume that it plays actively on references to the penis. In addition

147. BG already refers to Jah (*Dzha*) in his lyrics for the album *Sinii Al'bom* (1980) (Smirnov 1999: 127). His approach to reggae and its language testifies to a certain genre-consciousness, and he has mentioned Rastafarianism among the religions he took interest in at the time (along with Zen-Buddhism and Hinduism). BG's mother was employed at the Institute of Sociology of Leningrad University and BG himself worked there briefly, until 1980. Thus it is not unlikely that the songwriter's knowledge of Rastafari culture exceeded popular knowledge at this stage. Ernest Cashmore's work on the Rastafarian movement in England was published in 1979.

148. The relation between the two words in another Akvarium song is considered in 7.2.5, page 106 ff.

to the obvious physical advantages it represents for any male mammal, having one's own *'oi'* or *dick* emphasises such qualities as pride, potency, power, pleasure, integrity and individuality. From a Russian point of view, this in turn affects the oi-shouts, both single and repeated, which Hans recognises from Marley's 1976 live version of *Get Up Stand Up* [A-17].

The words and sounds spoken or shouted are listed below. Words open with capital letters, shouts have exclamation marks. Possible sources of the expressions are listed where applicable.

Word/sound	**Translates**	**Possible source**	**Time**
'Gadwah'	God Jah?		0'00"
[verses and refrains]			
Oi-oi-oi (sung)		Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up* Live (1975)	2'13"
Oi! Oi! Oi! Oi!		as above	2'18"
Sensimilla	Marijuana	Black Uhuru: *Sinsemilla* (1980)	2'23"
mmm!			2'27"
Rub-a-dub	1. Make/do a dub. 2. Dance tight to dub music.		2'30"
Isimskisím!	'-isms' and schisms of European culture (pejorative)	'Íssim-skíssim' Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up* (1973)	2'34"
Kaya	Marijuana	Bob Marley: *Kaya* (1978)	2'39"
Ganja	Marijuana	Peter Tosh: *Legalize it!* (1976)	2'42"
Sensimilla! Khoi!		*Sinsemilla*, *Get Up Stand Up*	2'43"
Sensimilla! Khoi!		as above	2'47"
Sensimilla! Khoi!		as above	2'51"
Sensimilla		*Sinsemilla*	2'55"
Khoi!			2'57"
[sax solo starts 2'58"]			
mmm			2'59"
U menia est' khoi!	I have 'oi'!		3'15"
U tebia est' khoi!	You have 'oi'!		3'19"
'Gadwah'			3'25"
brrr			3'30"
brrr			3'34"
ots!			3'41"
?			3'44"
blblbl...			3'45"
ots			3'52"
Khoi			3'54"
ooooh			3'58"
oaaah			4'01"

Word/sound	Translates	Possible source	Time
bopbopbopbop...			4'09"
Ganja		*Legalize it!*, *Kaya*	4'20"
Khoi			4'23"

8.2.16. Roll up, light up, drop out: Marijuana songs

Songs dedicated to marijuana and its effects have long been a part of western popular music, and it is only possible to touch upon the subject very briefly within the framework of this analysis. For a more detailed account of the relationship between marijuana and popular music, see Fachner (2001: 30-82).[149] As jazzman George Melly (2003) confirms, in the 1930s black jazzmen and -women referred to the weed in their songs as *Mary Warner*, *Mary Jane*, *muggles*, *gage* or *shuzzit* and to users as *vipers*. In the 1950s, references to the weed were still quite subtle, due to the anti-marijuana campaigns launched in the US by the Federal Bureau of Narcotics, which had been formed after the prohibition law on alcohol had been lifted. At the same time the beat writers, Kerouac, Ginsberg, Burroughs and others, did their fair share to advocate jazz music and lifestyle, drugs included. But before considering drug references, the similarities in scene and a perspective between *Aristokrat* and the following song, which lyrics Hasse associated to, should be noted:

When this old world starts getting me down
And people are just too much for me to face
I climb my way up to the top of the stars
And all my cares just drift right into space

On the roof it's peaceful as can be
And there the world below can't bother me

The Drifters [US]: *Up on the Roof*, 1961 [A-18] (first verse and chorus)

The Drifters' rooftop is described more as an ideal site for a romantic couple than for drugged contemplation. Steve Cropper and Otis Redding's *(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay* offers a similar perspective, where the acceptance of loneliness has replaced romance:

I'm sittin' on the dock of the bay
Watching the tide roll away
Ooo, I'm just sittin' on the dock of the bay
Wastin' time

Otis Redding *(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay*, 1968 [NI] (first chorus)

Towards the mid-1960s, with Timothy Leary and his followers promoting LSD and other hallucinogenic substances, drug references in rock became more common and more direct. Paul McCartney confirms the impact of jazz and beat poetry on the drug habits of rock musicians:

149. Bromell (2000) gives an extensive account of rock and psychedelics in the US in the 1960s. For more thorough accounts of reggae music see Barrow and Dalton (1997). Sources on Rastafarianism: Chevannes (1994, 1998), Cashmore (1979, 1984).

> [...] Wir alle lasen Ginsberg und das Beats-Geschreibe. Jeder tat das [...] [U]nser Drogenkonsum stand 1967 in einer langen Musikertradition. Wir wussten von Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington und Count Basie, dass sie zeitlebens gekifft hatten. Nun war unsere Musikerszene dran, ihre Erfahrungen zu machen (in Fachner 2001: 32, his translation).

The Beatles' experience with hallucinogenic drugs is openly reflected in the 1966 album *Revolver*. Whether *Tomorrow Never Knows* refers to marijuana or LSD may be discussed, but is less significant here than the motif, recognised in *Aristokrat*, of breaking away from reality:

Turn off your mind, relax and float downstream,
It is not dying, it is not dying
Lay down all thoughts, surrender to the void,
It is shining, it is shining

The Beatles: *Tomorrow Never Knows*, 1966 [A-20] (two first verses)

In Jamaica, rocksteady singer Hopeton Lewis was among the first, but far from the last, to praise the herb and its significance for a relaxed attitude to life:[150]

Don't take it so hard, my friend
Or you won't live until the end
What a cool, cool collie
What a cool, cool collie

Hopeton Lewis: *Cool, Cool Collie*, 1966 [A-19] (opening verse)

As reggae entered the UK from the mid-1970s, singers such as Bob Marley and Peter Tosh introduced Jamaican slang terms for marijuana to British bands with their reggae songs:

Some call it tampee
Some call it the weed
Some call it Marijuana
Some of them call it Ganja

Legalize it - don't criticize it
Legalize it and I will advertise it

Peter Tosh: *Legalize it*, 1976 [A-21] (first verse and chorus)

I feel so high, I even touch the sky
Above the falling rain
I feel so good in my neighbourhood
So here I come again

Got to have kaya now, got to have kaya now
Got to have kaya now, for the rain is falling

Bob Marley & The Wailers: *Kaya,* 1973/1978 [A-05] (end first verse and chorus)

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150. Thanks to Hasse for providing me with the Hopeton Lewis example.

Excuse me while I light my spliff
Oh God I gotta take a lift
From reality I just can't drift
That's why I am staying with this riff

Take it easy, easy skanking
Got to take it easy, easy skanking
You see we're taking it easy
We're taking it slow, taking it easy
Got to take it slow, so take it easy
Easy skanking, easy skanking
Oh take it easy, easy skanking

Bob Marley & The Wailers: *Easy Skanking*, 1978 [A-04, A-12] (first verse and chorus)

I've got a stalk of sinsemilla grooming in my backyard
I've got a stalk of sinsemilla grooming in my backyard
Don't cut down the ganny tree
'Cause it makes the best tea for me

Black Uhuru: *Sinsemilla,* 1980 [A-22] (beginning first verse)

Following the first reggae releases on European labels, The Clash made a cover version of Murvin and Perry's *Police and Thieves* on their 1977 debut album [A-13]. Other bands, such as The Ruts, followed suit and embraced reggae, blending it successfully with punk [A-14]. This continued with new-wave and ska bands such as The Police [A-15, A-16] or Madness. In addition, dub reggae had a significant impact on the UK post-punk scene with bands such as Bauhaus, The Cure or Magazine [A-23]. The development of reggae-derived styles in the UK is of relevance here because Akvarium's album *Tabu*, with the possible exception of *Aristocrat*, owes much to UK post-punk aesthetics. Whereas the lyrical references to marijuana are usually less direct among UK bands, ska-, dub- or reggae-inspired grooves were sometimes used to help associations:

I took a little poison
I took it carefully
It built for me a house on fire
This poison takes after me

Magazine: *This Poison*, 1981 [A-23] (Chorus)

Russian hippies were well acquainted with cannabis from their travels to Central Asian or the Transcaucasian republics.[151] In Leningrad, rock songs about hashish or marijuana were usually confined to private parties, not played at concerts or recorded. An 1986 amateur recording of the blat song *Anashá* (*hash*), performed by giggling and chuckling musicians at a party, has been added to the most recent release of Kino's *Nachal'nik Kamchatki* album. The song also demonstrates that the use of cannabis in the Soviet Union was by no means an exclusive rock phenomenon.

151. An account of Soviet hippies is given in 3.4.2, page 23.

8.2.17. High on a Leningrad rooftop?

Aristokrat does not, at first, appear to be a very provocative or controversial song. The singing voice is soft, the shouts are playful and happy. The lyric emphasises tolerant withdrawal and relaxed observation. No-one is condemned, no-one confronted, those who want to quarrel are merely warned, if quite firmly, that criticism will be met with disinterest. BG's and Akvarium's awareness of the word *aristocrat* in its positive Jamaican sense seems evident. Apart from the Russian language there are no concrete references to Russia in the lyric, and even this abstract reference to 'Russianness' is reduced somewhat by BG's slight Caribbean-imitating enunciation. On the other hand, strictly speaking, to the eyes and ears of the Soviet ideologists, the word *aristokrat* was all but positive. It is not very likely that knowledge, if they had any, of Jamaican reggae or rastafarianism would have altered their view. Also, as in many other cities, the exhilarating activity of roof walking was forbidden in Leningrad. Worse, by refusing to contribute actively in everyday life, the *aristokrat* is being a *bezdel'nik* (*idler*), a good-for-nothing. Again, according to Soviet ideology, his self-centered, idle withdrawal testifies to moral corruption. And as if this was not enough, he is also taking drugs, whether censors had the vocabulary to discover it or not. Contrary to the Brezhnev era's many official parodies of the romantic 'spiritual drunkard' and norm-breaker, *Aristokrat* represents the idealisation of a similar character.

In another sense the song could be read as a celebration of the ideal way of life in the eyes of the Leningrad rock environment: To withdraw from Soviet reality and live for the music and by its rules. Seen in the light of Yurchak's concept of the parallel sphere, then, the *aristokrat* is indifferent to the conformity of others in the public sphere.[152] His ideal appears to be to extend his private sphere to incorporate his whole existence. He avoids confrontation and retracts instead into a sphere ruled by the conventions and ideals of rock culture. From there he observes everyone that surrounds him in a different light. For this he expects criticism, but he would rather not listen to it. His mind is made up and he sees no reason to argue, no reason to defend himself against accusations. He has his own *'oi'*.

152. Yurchak's notion of parallel culture is discussed in 6.2.2, page 92 ff.

8.3. Song 2. Zoopark: *Drian'* (1983) [D-24]

8.3.1. General informant comments

The general comments on this song revolve around its minimalistic sound and traditional blues-based rock riffs. Tristan describes the sound as CHEAP, UNPROCESSED, HOME-MADE, BASIC, and UNPROFESSIONAL. He misses SWING AND GROOVE, but notices a WEIRD HYPNOTIC FEELING and STRANGE PREACHING in the song. The majority of informants link it to traditional, blues-based rock from the mid-to-late 1960s and/or early-to-mid 1970s: A CLASSIC ROCK MODE (Ulf); a TRADITIONAL STRUCTURE with chords, riffs and instrumentation TYPICAL OF 60S-70S (BLUES-) ROCK (Thomas); A STANDARD ROCK SCHEME (Hans); A ROCK AND ROLL GROOVE (Myke); SITUATED IN BLUES-BASED ROCK MUSIC (Philip). Interestingly, about half the informants also identify punk or new-wave qualities in the song. For Tristan this is a possible explanation for its CHEAP SOUND, but also related to the quality of the voice. Thomas describes the manner of singing as VERY POST-PUNK. Myke observes PUNK TENDENCIES in the manner of playing and in the voice. Philip recognises elements of both Dylan and Johnny Rotten in the singer's *Sprechgesang*. Three informants fail to mention, or exclude, punk influences. One informant, on the contrary, does not refer to late 1960s or early 1970s rock and roll.

8.3.2. IOCM

Tristan:	Lynyrd Skynyrd: *The Needle and the Spoon*, 1974 [D-25] (chords, rhythm, not sound).
Ulf:	Tradition after Rolling Stones [D-34] and The Stooges [D-35] (laid-back guitar riff).
Thomas:	The Stooges [D-35] (generally); Pere Ubu and B-52s [D-38] (rhythm guitar); Bauhaus [D-36] and Gang of Four [D-37] (vocals).
Odd:	J. J. Cale [D-28] (generally); Late 1970s Eric Clapton (guitar arrangements and sound); Cale's and Clapton's respective versions of *Cocaine*, 1976/77 [D-28] (vaguely).
Hans:	The Doors: *Hello, I Love You*, 1968 [D-29] (vaguely).
Kate:	Mick Jagger [D-34] (vocals).
Serge:	The Tubes' *Remote Control* album, 1979 [D-31] (guitar and synth [sic] sounds)[153].

153. The Tubes [D-31] constitute a little mystery among the IOCM for *Drian'*. The album *Remote Control* is generally fast, upbeat fusion-rock with an air of soul on the vocal side. Some guitar riffs vaguely resemble *Drian's*, but they are much faster. The album is not in line with the informant's general associations to punk and new-wave either. The synth sound of the opening song of the album, though, is similar to the long distortion notes of the lead guitar in *Drian'*, and is probably the main reason for the association. Since it is alone in breaking with the overall pattern of the IOCM, I have chosen to leave this single example out of the following discussion.

Philip: Cream: *Sunshine of Your Love*, 1967 [D-26];
Howling Wolf: *Smokestack Lightning,* 1956 [D-27];
Kinks: *All Day and All of the Night* and *You Really Got Me*, 1964 [D-33];
Deep Purple: *Smoke on the Water*, 1972 [D-32] (intro and distortion);
Bob Dylan [D-40] and Johnny Rotten [D-30] (vocals).

8.3.3. Order of events

Part of what informants describe as a traditional rock scheme relates to the 8-bar, blues-based rock-and-roll riff. A four-bar intro opens with a bare, no-effect, electric lead guitar playing the three-chord chorus riff, introducing rhythm guitar drone, bass and drumkit. The voice joins in with the first verse, a double couplet (eight bars), followed by intermission and chorus. Then follow another five eight-bar sequences of verse (four bars) intermission (two bars) and chorus (two bars). There are no interludes or solos in this SYSTEMATISED MONOTONY (Ulf) and the song's finale consists of three additional chorus repeats, followed by a two-bar fade-out sequence. After listening to its full five minutes, Kate's description of *Drian'* as MUSICALLY VERY BORING does not seem entirely unfair.

8.3.4. Voice and vocal persona

Six informants made comments on the voice. Tristan notes an effect of PREACHING, a SOMEWHAT DEPRESSED VOICE that CRITICISES with a SOFTENING TOUCH OF IRONY. Ulf comments on its ROUGH DECLAMATORY MODE and EXTREME ARTICULATION. Thomas hears a marked POST-PUNK COLDNESS AND ARROGANCE and Myke A PUNKY WAY OF SINGING. Chiefly concerned with the vocals, Kate describes it as a NASAL, COMPLAINING, and SLIGHTLY WHINING (*litt sytete*) rock vocal. Compared to Mick Jagger's, she finds it A BIT LIMP (*slapp*) and A BIT NICE FOR THE ROCK IDIOM, as if it DOES NOT QUITE SUCCEED IN BEING TOUGH. But the TIRED-SOUNDING GLISSANDOS on the word *drian'*, the *Sprechgesang* and BORING MELODY nevertheless reminds her of Jagger [D-34]. She also notes that, unlike Jagger, the vocalist addresses the listener WITH PHONETIC PRECISION AND CLEAR DICTION throughout. Philip links the STYLISED *SPRECHGESANG* of *Drian'* to 1980s rock and hears elements of both Dylan's [D-40] LAID-BACK SINGING STYLE and Johnny Rotten's [D-30] NASALITY AND CYNICAL ATTITUDE. The vocals, he finds, express disgust and come close to DIRT-THROWING AND WHINGEING, MAYBE EVEN SWEARING.

The protagonist of *Drian'* appears to be IN A BAD MOOD, DEEPLY PESSIMISTIC, ANGERED, PUT DOWN BY SOMETHING OR SOMEONE, Philip notes. He adds that the main character seems to have reached a limit and might well turn openly aggressive, even violent, if provoked further. In Tristan's view he appears to be preaching to someone, listing up, declaiming. But on the other hand, as Kate remarks, he does not sound convincingly tough or macho, as if he directs a fraction of the irony in his voice towards himself. Maik's clear, almost

exaggerated diction may also be regarded as a punk feature. While Mick Jagger made a point of restricting distinct pronunciation, most punk singers tend to depict their entire rants in capital letters.[154] The disgust and tiredness in the voice also point to punk, but its rhythm in the long *Sprechgesang* phrases also has a touch of rockabilly bounce.

8.3.5. The riffs

The rhythm guitar alternates between three blues-based rock riffs. The intro/chorus riff is introduced identically to the verse riff, but where the former ascends, the verse riff descends, supported by a chromatic descent on the bass. In addition to the two three-chord variations, an intermission introduces each chorus by a twice repeated riff of two chords, played in ascending order. Philip underlines that, being BASED ON A MINOR BLUES PENTATONIC SCALE (b7 - 5 - 4 - b3 - 1, descending, with the occasional addition of b5 before 4), the *Drian'* riffs, complete with the b5 halfway through, resemble that of Howling Wolf's *Smokestack Lightning* [D-27] and a vast number of blues and rock songs. This can be observed in many songs in the IOCM. The intro/chorus riff in *Drian'* is basically the same as the verse riff in Lynyrd Skynyrd's *The Needle and the Spoon* [D-25]. The duration is the same, but the rhythm differs slightly. Its melodic progression resembles the vocal line in *Hello, I Love You* by The Doors [D-29] (1 - 1 - b7 - 1). The chromatic descent also resembles that of Cream's *Sunshine of Your Love* [D-26], which also has a b5 in the middle of the riff, similar repetitions, the same notes emphasised (in E) and an electric guitar sound that comes closer to *Drian'* than that of *The Needle and the Spoon*.

Secondarily, although the chord patterns differ, the full guitar chords, rhythm and melodic contours of J. J. Cale's *Cocaine* [D-28] (1 - b7 - b3 - 1) and its intro (I - I - bVII - I) easily come to mind. The same could be said of the riffs from The Kinks' *You Really Got Me* [D-33a] (also 1 - 1 - b7 - 1) or *All Day and All of the Night* [D-33b] (1 - b7 - b3 - 1), which also sport a guitar distortion effect not unlike that in *Drian'*. The minor pentatonic scale is not unusual in punk rock either, as the verse riff of the 1977 song *Submission* [D-30] by the Sex Pistols confirms (with its I - bVII - bIII - I). It also features both monotonous repetitions and guitar distortion, similar to those in *Drian'*.

There is more to informant associations than the pentatonic blues scale, however. Thomas points out that the THIN, CROOKED (*ganske skakk*) sound of the rhythm guitar reminds him of new-wave bands like Pere Ubu or B-52s, e.g. the unprocessed-sounding and carelessly played guitar of B-52s' *Dance This Mess Around* [D-38] (1981). Serge also associates to 1980s punk and new-wave in general. The droning notes and short fills played by the lead guitar make Philip associate to the distortion effect in Deep Purple's *Smoke on the Water* [D-32] (which also has the progression V - bVII - I),[155] but compared to that the distortion effect in *Drian'* is more feeble, as if resounding through a long tube. Tristan suggests the distortion effect comes from the SATURATION OF AN UNDERSIZE AMPLIFIER. Philip thinks of a MID-60S DISTORTION EFFECT, as used by The Kinks (e.g. *You Really Got Me* [D-33a]). But

154. There are of course notable exceptions from this tendency, e.g. The Clash's *White Riot* (1977). The subject of rock pronunciation is discussed in Nehring (1997: 142): 'This account of the relation of lyrics and performance echoes a well-known interview with Mick Jagger in *Rolling Stone*, cited elsewhere in *Rock and Roll Will Stand*, in which he attributes his notoriously indechipherable singing to a Fats Domino dictum, to the effect that, "you should never sing the lyrics out very clearly." To the interviewer's observation that "you can really hear *I got my thrill on Blueberry Hill*," Jagger replies: "Exactly, but that's the only thing you can hear, just like you hear *I can't get no satisfaction*."'
155. Philip adds that in parallel fifths, the initial Deep Purple riff can also be heard a fifth lower, as I - bIII - IV.

then, as Thomas and Serge note, a flanging effect has been added, which, the latter explains, was unusual in the 1960s and early 1970s. Myke touches on another important aspect of how *Drian'* breaks with western rock aesthetics of the late 1960s early 1970s. It lies, he says, in the WAY OF PLAYING. Whereas the songs by Cream or Lynyrd Skynyrd are compositions with various interludes and solos and more prominent use of instrumental techniques and ornamentals, Zoopark's song is bare, basic and monotone by comparison. *Drian'* remains in a rock-and-roll mode, but the amateurish manner of playing hints at the DIY aesthetics of punk. By comparison, *Submission* [D-30] demonstrates a similar, but more extreme aesthetic attitude. In interviews, Maik Naumenko confirms that the links with punk aesthetics are not accidental:

> We deliberately play a dirty [*gryaznyi*] rock-'n'-roll, without bothering much about the clarity of sound and the like. The main thing is the general kick, sound intensity, energy, vibrations (in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 118).

In the early years of Zoopark's career many critics and fans perceived the band as punk. Challenging the argument that punk was virtually absent in the LRC, Andrei Tropillo instantly brings up Maik as an example: 'I think we generally have more of the punkish in our music than there is in many other cultures. That goes for Maik, too, excuse me [...]' (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 32).

8.3.6. The rhythm section

When compared with the IOCM, songs spanning from the mid-1960s to the brink of the 1980s, *Drian'* shows some significant differences. Firstly, as Tristan points out, the song appears quite static, short on swing and drive. Admittedly it has neither the danceable groove of *The Needle and The Spoon* [D-25], the heavy forwards motion of *Smokestack Lightning* [D-27], the tension of *Sunshine of My Love* [D-26], nor the distinct pogo beat of *Submission* [D-30]. As noted by Philip, this owes much to the drumming, which he describes as HESITANT, ALMOST APOLOGETIC. The bass, too, he notes, seems to be HOLDING BACK A BIT. Apart from sounds in the higher register, notably the cymbals and hi-hat, as Kate notes, the rhythm section is much lower in the mix than is the case with the IOCM. Especially the toms and the bass drum, but also to some extent the bass guitar, sound blurred and tend to be drowned in the overall sound picture.

The passive role of the rhythm section might, in part, be related to the recording process. At that time sound engineer Tropillo had no access to four-track recorders and had to use bouncing technique, which causes the sound quality of the tracks first recorded to deteriorate.[156] The Beatles' producer, George Martin, explains the differences:

> When we first got four-track, it was an enormous relief not to have the worries about how many generations of sound quality had been lost which we had suffered in twin-track. [...] It doesn't take a mathematician to calculate that four-track was still terribly limited. The only way we could get round it was to dub from one four-track to a second four track - and that, of course, meant losing sound quality. [...] What four-track gave us was simply four separate recordings which, being on the same tape, were locked together physically, so that when you mixed them to make your final product, they *had* to be in sync. [...] Perhaps most important of all, if we weren't satisfied with one track, we could replace it without having to do the whole performance again (Martin 1979: 148-49).

156. Bouncing tracks: The technique of transferring one recorded track, or blending several previously recorded tracks, onto a single unused track on the same multi-track tape. The previously recorded tracks may then be erased and reused (Wadhams 1988: 28).

Without the benefits of four-track, Tropillo could not avoid sound deterioration. Therefore he would usually record the drums first, alone or along with the bass. Then guitars and other instruments were added and, finally, the voice, which was thereby favoured in the mix from the outset. Tropillo usually recorded no more than three takes and the final recording was assembled from the best parts of those takes, cut and pasted together. This meant that the metre had to be strictly adhered to, which also reduced the possibilities of changes in the beat. Thus, the bouncing technique may have easlily reduced attack in the rhythm section, contributing further to the song's relative stasis.[157]

There was also a lack of drummers in Leningrad in the early-to-mid 1980s and the few competent ones were much sought after. That one of those few, Aleksandr Kondrashkin, was at one point involved in no less than eight bands simultaneously, is symptomatic. The man behind Zoopark's drumkit here is, with all due respect, no star drummer. Mikhail 'Fan' Vasil'ev, himself a drummer, bass player and a frequent sound operator at LRC concerts, says the following about weak drums and loud voices in 1980s Leningrad rock:

> [...] I was always told that if the words aren't audible, it just isn't at all right. But in my imagination the drums were supposed to be louder, like in civilised countries. [...] In vocal-instrumental ensembles, which the Soviet authorities accepted, drums were excluded completely. They used them so that they should be heard as little as possible, [because] it was held as a western tradition. And in Russian bands the one who sings is usually the leader of the band. And when somebody, his wife or friend, tells him they can't hear what he sings, he immediately comes to the sound-man and says: 'What exactly do you think you're doing, you cur?' [...] I had the same problem when I told Akvarium's sound operator [...] 'Hey, make the percussion and drums louder so there's some drive!' And then over came Grebenshchikov and said his wife told him that his voice was inaudible (Feinshtein-Vasil'ev in Steinholt 2002b: 9-10).

In order to make his point, Vasil'ev knowingly exaggerates the marginal role of drums in VIAs. Examples of the opposite include the Turkmeni official jazz-rock orchestra Gunesh, in whose compositions an impressive number of drums and percussion instruments play a decisive role. But even if the 'anti-drum policy' was far from as categorical as Vasil'ev claims, it would not be unfair to say that discrete drumming was the dominant tendency in Soviet estrada music.

8.3.7. The mix

As one would expect in the light of Tristan's description of it as CHEAP, BASIC and UNPROCESSED, the sound in *Drian'* is relatively dry and shallow. The largely unprocessed instruments and lack of reverb, save for on the voice, where Serge notes a SHORT REVERB/ ECHO with direction TOWARDS THE LEFT, enhances its crude minimalism. The recording thus bears witness to DIY standards and Tropillo's experimentation in order to learn sound engineering from scratch.[158] To add breadth, the rhythm guitar is panned to the right and the long growl of the lead guitar is introduced from the extreme left. Both are subsequently adjusted towards the centre, but keep gravitating, each towards its separate speaker throughout. The final chord exits towards the left. As Ulf points out, the voice is

157. Other and later studio recordings by Zoopark include tracks with tighter accompaniment and more drive. Moreover, there is all reason to believe that Zoopark's songs had a lot more drive when performed live, but this is hard to verify because of the appalling quality of the few existing live recordings from this period. At least the recordings I have seen and heard confirm that Naumenko's band knew how to make good, noisy live sets.
158. See Tropillo interview (Steinholt 2002c: 8 ff).

quite loud and extremely articulated. It plays a dominating role and restrains the already weak drive. One unintended effect which was partly hidden by the heavy use of echo in *Aristokrat,* is more apparent *Drian'*: The panning does not always succeed in compensating for tangible gaps in the sound picture, which tend to occur when an instrument leaves the mix.

8.3.8. The lyrics

The lyrics presented here correspond to the recorded song, while the alternative words and phrases in brackets refer to Maik's written original, as quoted in Rybin and Startsev (2000: 99). The original is slightly harsher, but also more consistent, which is why I have chosen to include it in the analysis. The most notable difference in the recorded version is that Maik sings 'with my wife' instead of 'with his wife'. This tiny change has quite an impact on the logic of the lyrics, and will be discussed more extensively below. Also, the reference to abortion is replaced in the recorded version of the song. Most likely, the original lyric was performed only at home or at house concerts. Possibly, the changes were made as concessions to the censors, who wanted to reduce the 'amoral' aspects of the song.

Dirt
You're dirt.
If that word knows how to offend.
You're dirt.
I don't want to love you, but can't bring myself to hate you.
You're not the kind of person I'm capable of living with.
When you lie to my face, I'm ready to kill you.
You make eyes at everyone behind my back,
You break my plates one after the other.
You're dirt.

You sleep with my bass-player and keep playing bridge with my (his) wife.
I can forgive him for that, but tell me what to do about you?
Everybody takes turns with you, but you're just flattered,
But soon another will take your place.
You're dirt.

You sold my guitar to buy yourself a coat.
They call you all day, don't blame me, but I don't know who.
But that is no business of mine no more,
Forward, child, proudly and bravely!
You're dirt.

You beg for pin money and spend it on your friends.
Thank God that folks like you don't have kids.
You want everything to be exclusively first class,
Sorry dear, but you break all records. (But can you really handle the 502nd abortion?)
You're dirt.

Again you're sobbing on my shoulder, but I don't believe your tears.
For my part the devils may take your pretty face.
But soon, very soon, you're gonna get older.
Hurry up, and then, maybe you'll make it.
You're dirt.

No, you're not the kind of person I'm capable of living with.
When you lie to my face, I'm ready to kill you.
Most likely we weren't made from the same dough,
And soon another dirt will take your place.
You're dirt.

Zoopark 1983 (Maik Naumenko 1980)

8.3.9. Characters and motifs

Vasilii Solov'ev writes in his contribution to Maik's biography, that he sometimes finds the lines 'you're dirt / you sold my guitar to buy yourself a coat' more appealing than the opening lines of Pushkin's classic poem *Ia vas liubil* (Rybin and Startsev 2000: 254). The comparison is not entirely random: Maik's rock song does share the motif of hurt male vanity with Pushkin's poem, although its form might be less formal and delicate.

The first three lines of the opening verse presents the protagonist's purpose. He wants to offend, to distance himself from the 'you'. An introductory explanation follows in lines four and five, then the accusations begin. Initially, the actions described target the protagonist: *You lie (I could kill), you flirt (behind my back), you break (my plates).* The second verse reveals more negative traits of the 'you' by focusing on the relationships between the 'you' and the protagonist's bass player; the bass player's (in the recorded version - the protagonist's) wife; *everybody (takes turns with you)* and *another (will take your place).*

Verse three adds another breach of the protagonist's trust, and another negative aspect of the relationship between the 'you' and 'them', before the 'I' makes a statement: *I don't care any more, just go about your business!* The next verse is restricted to further descriptions of the 'you'. In the original it thematises the relationship between the 'you' and children: *You don't have kids - 502nd abortion*, but this is toned down in the recorded version. Verse five opens with the only intimate situation between the 'I' and 'you'. But it is a sad scene marked by lack of trust: *You cry on my shoulder, I don't believe you*, and it is immediately followed by the explicit dismissal: *You can go to hell for my part*. In line three, the protagonist warns that age will soon put an end to this kind of behaviour, and in the last line mockingly urges the 'you' on. The final verse repeats the initial explanation for the protagonist's rant. Then follows the only reference to the two characters as 'we', but only to emphasise that they do not belong together, and that eventually: *Another dirt will take your place*.

8.3.10. Rhymes and rhythm

The opening verse, with its double couplet is the only one that deviates from a pattern of four-line stanzas with rhyme pattern AABB. It does so by way of an introduction of four extra lines, the first and third of which are identical and the second and fourth of which rhyme. The second half of the first verse joins an AABB structure similar to the other verses. The rhymes are as follows:

verse 1: *obídet' - nenavídet'* and *zhit' - ubít', spinói - drugói*;
verse 2: *zhenói - tobói, léstno - mésto;*
verse 3: *pal'tó - któ, déla - smélo*;
verse 4: *druz'éi - detéi, sórtu - rekórdy* (originally: *sórtu - abórtu*);
verse 5: *slezám - chertiám*, *postaréesh' - uspéesh'*;
verse 6: *zhit' - ubít', tésta - mésto*.

Among these, rhymes 2B and 5A are approximate rhymes and only 4B in the performed version breaks the rhyme pattern. In the first verse, only lines two and four have 'feminine' endings. From the second verse onwards a pattern is established with 'masculine' A-rhymes and 'feminine' B-rhymes. Repetition is also a much used effect in *Drian'*. Most strikingly, *ty* or other forms of the second person pronoun occur in nearly every line (except verse one, line two; verse three, lines three and four; and verse six, line three, which interestingly uses the first person plural: *my*). On the whole, *ty*, *tvoi* and their oblique forms open 19 out of 34 lines. The 'you' is under obvious attack here. In some of the lines that consist of two sentences, the verbs in each part rhyme internally:

Verse 1, line 4: *khochú (tebiá) liubít' - (ne) mogú nenavídet'*
Verse 2, line1: *spish' - igráesh'*
Verse 3, line 1: *prodalá - kupíla* (approx.)
Verse 4, line 1: *kliánchish' - trátish'*

Assonances and alliterations are used extensively throughout the lyric. Because of the length of the lyric I will restrict myself to presenting examples from the first verse and one sample line from each of the other verses.

Verse 1, line 2: L**í**sh' **èt**o **s**l**ó**v**o** s**posób**n**o obí**d**e**t'
(è + o + o + o + o / í + í + e / s + s + s / ó + ó / b + b)

Verse 1, line 4: **Ia ne** kh**o**ch**ú te**b**iá** l**iu**b**ít' i ne** m**o**g**ú nena**v**íde**t'
(e + e + í + i + e + e + í + e / ia + iá + o + o + a / n + n + n + n / ú + iu + ú / t + t' + t')

Verse 1, line 5: **T**y n**e tót** ch**e**l**o**v**é**k, **s** k**otó**rym **ia s**p**osó**b**e**n zh**í**t'
(tót + otó + osó / t + t + t + t + t' / o + o + ia + o / e + e + é + e + í / ó + ó + ó / s + s + s)

Verse 1, line 6: K**o**gd**á t**y **l'**zhi**ó**sh' mn**e** v **li**ts**ó**, **ia** g**otó**v **te**bi**á** ub**ít'**
(o + á + ia + o + iá / e + i + e + í / t + t + t + t' / ió + ó + ó / l' + l)

Verse 1, line 7: Ty **s**tr**ói**sh' v**sé**m gl**ázk**i** u m**e**n**iá za s**p**in**ói**
(s + s + z + z + s / i + é + i + e + i + i / á + iá + a / ó + ó)

Verse 1, line 8: Ty b'**ió**sh' m**oí** t**a**r**é**lk**i o**dn**ú** z**a** dr**u**g**ói**
(ió + ú + u + ó / o + a + o + a / í + é + i + i / d + d)

Verse 2 line 1: Ty **spísh' s** m**oí**m b**asísto**m **i igráesh'** v b**rídzh**
(í + í + í + i + i + e + í / o + a + o + á / s + s + s + s / sh' + sh' + zh / r + r)

Verse 3, line 3: **No** m**né do è**t**ogo davnó ne**t **dé**l**a**
(o + o + è + o + o + a + a / n + n + n + n / é + e + é / d + d + d / g [/v/] + v)

Verse 3, line 4: Vp**eriód**, **dét**k**a**, b**ódro i** sm**é**l**o**!
(d + d + t + d / e + é + i + é / a + o + o / ió + ó)

Verse 5, line 3: N**o skóro**, **ó**ch**e**n' **skóro t**y p**o**s**tarée**sh'
(o + o + o + o + a / ó + ó + ó / e + ée / r + r + r / skóro + skóro / t + t)

Verse 6, line 4: I sk**óro drugáia dri**á**n' z**á**i**m**iót tvoió** més**to**
(o + áia + iá + ai + o + o / ó + u + ió + ió / t + t + t / dr + dr)

From these selected lines it is possible to deduce that the most prominent effects of assonances and alliterations in *Drian'* are twofold. With regard to consonants, repetitions of the dentals /t/ and /d/ are the most frequent, which give the effect of the vocal persona spitting out his words. Secondly, chains of similar-sounding vowels shift between back and open (o, a, ia, è, y), often pronounced in the song with throaty disgust, round vowels (ó, u) and sharp frontal ones (e, i). These faster or slower shifts might be said to reflect the vocal persona's alteration between depression and disgust, as well as a certain ambivalence in his feelings towards the 'you'.

Drian' does not keep to a strict metre. Rhythmic units of two unstressed, one stressed and one unstressed appear relatively frequently, however, and the many unstressed syllables produce a staccato effect. All lines and the majority of rhythmic units begin with unstressed syllables, but in verse three, line four, there is a notable inversion of the metre in the exclamation: *Vperiód, détka, bódro i smélo!* The main metric tendency appears to be followed more consistently in the opening lines of the verses. The metric inconsistencies correspond to the mood of the protagonist, however, as it is reflected in the vocal persona. He appears too provoked, disgusted and tired to keep a steady rhythm, while at the same time he seems to be trying to convince himself. Also, the effect of the many unstressed syllables contribute to the impression of a reprimand, or what Tristan acknowledges as STRANGE PREACHING.

8.3.11. Language, expressions and metaphors

The title word *drian'* (*dirt, trash, filth*), a single-syllable word with exclusively negative reference, is typical of punk songs and very unlike the long song titles of the rock-and-roll IOCM. The word *drian'* itself, though, has a bookish air to it. In Maik's usage it is subjected to a poetic revitalisation, serving to re-vitalise the dead metaphor 'immoral is dirty'.[159] Apart from the bookish title word, the language in *Drian'* is simple and based on everyday informal language. Rock fans I discussed this with confirmed that this is one of Maik's stylistic traits. Some called Maik's songs *ulichnaia poèziia* (*street-poetry*) and praised him for his contribution to the formation of a Russian rock language, based on everyday youth jargon. Nonetheless, a weakness for anachronisms and anglicisms is also remarked upon. His friend and biographer Aleksei Rybin describes Maik's language as follows:

> [S]ome strange, old-fashioned manner of speech, full of words like 'ves'ma', 'sudarynia', 'premerzkii', that weren't used by the majority of Piter (Leningrad) rock fans. His clean-spoken, accurate phrases were mixed with an enormous quantity of anglicisms, comprehensible to far from everybody, and jazz-hippie slang: 'kochumai', 'starichok', 'premerzkii saund' [...] (in Rybin and Startsev 2000: 67).

This knowledge is useful in examining certain expression in *Drian'* as well. In the first verse, line seven, *stroit' glazki* (lit. *to make eyes at*) appears, which is a popular Russian expression for visual flirting. It occurs in everyday speech as well as in literature. Slightly more vulgar, yet not unprintable, is *sniat'/snimat' kogo-nibud'* (verse two, line three), as in the common expression *sniat' dévochku ná noch'* (*have a girl for a night*). Adding to the connotations, *sniat'/snimat' chto-nibud'* usually signifies to *take something off*: hat, shoes, a piece of clothing, etc. *Dengi na bulavki* (*pin money*), verse four, first line, has a more archaic value. Like the corresponding English phrase, it refers to a time when housewives received allowances from their husbands. *Dengi na bulavki* refers to money for personal, unspecified

159. The usage has not generated any following, though. Russian punk bands prefer to use the more vulgar word *govnó*.

spending. This is a key phrase for understanding the relationship between the characters, and will be discussed further below. Harder to translate directly is the phrase *tvoe krasívoe litsó kátitsia ko vsém chertiám*, verse five, line two. Directly translated, it says: *your pretty face rolls to all (the) devils*.[160] The *devils* could of course be another reference to the many short-term lovers, but native speakers I have conferred with tend to understand it less literally, more as an signal that the protagonist has lost interest in her pretty face.

Among all the motifs and phrases in *Drian'*, that appear stylistically in line with the rock and roll idiom, one line stands out: *Vpered detka, bodro i smelo* (*Forward, child, proudly and bravely*). This sudden command breaks with the overall mode of the protagonist's abusiveness, gives it a militaristic touch and directs associations towards political slogans, 1920s' Soviet avant-garde, Mayakovsky's poetry, maybe even Brechtian theatre. The command is obviously ironic. Mocking his adversary, the protagonist urges her to continue in the direction she is heading, away from him. In using the form of an official order, telling her to march on proudly and bravely, practically into oblivion, he is mocking official language as well as the woman. He distances himself from both.

In the long list of offences and breaches of trust, three symbolic actions appear. The breaking of plates signifies an act of aggression within the intimate sphere of the two characters, where the protagonist is hurt, provoked or offended. That the plates are broken *one after the other*, suggests that this is a recurrent situation: she repeatedly crushes what is his. The second symbolic action, her selling his guitar in order to buy herself a coat, expands this picture. Whatever else she has done, this is the ultimate offence: she steals the symbol of his artistic creativity, his vehicle for self-expression, to buy herself a piece of clothing. In so doing, she shows disregard for his creative abilities and ignorance of his passion. Instead of listening to his songs, she prefers to keep herself warm. Less subtle is her bridge game with the wife of the bass player she has slept with, which testifies to cold nerves and a deceitful character – a cynical abuse of a friend's trust. The reference to the 502nd abortion in the original lyric may seem utterly absurd to western readers. However, the overstatement is not quite so gross in a Soviet context, where abortion was practised by many as an alternative to contraceptives. Cases from Soviet times where women have been through from fifty to sixty abortions are not unheard of.

8.3.12. Rock songs of insult and abuse

> Rock's great paradox is that it has successively revolted against established notions of manliness while remaining misogynistic [sic] (Reynolds and Press 1995: 18).

That Maik's biographers persistently argue against those who have accused him of sexism does little to change the fact that *Drian'* belongs head and tail in the tradition of misogynist rock songs. Thematically, the song is six verses of disgusted verbal abuse, addressed to a female lover or friend of the protagonist (depending on the version). The misogynist line in the rock-and-roll tradition has produced an array of songs that abuse women verbally, but such songs are rare in 1980s Leningrad rock.[161] In blues-based rock of the 1960s and early 1970s abuse usually targets a third person, like the 'she' in *Stupid Girl* or *Under My*

160. Whether directly or stylistically translated, the phrase echoes the title of Iggy & The Stooges' *Your Pretty Face Is Going to Hell*, from the album *Raw Power* (1973). Apart from this line, though, there are no obvious musical or lyrical links between the two songs.

161. Reasons for the weaker representation of sexual thematics in Leningrad rock are considered in 7.2.5, page 106 ff.

Thumb by the Rolling Stones. However, Chuck Berry's *Maybellene* [D-39], Bob Dylan's *Don't Think Twice It's Alright* [D-40] and John Lennon's *Run for Your Life* [D-41] are all directed at a 'you'. Berry's song poses rhetorical questions about a girl-friend's unfaithfulness, Dylan's is a farewell note to a lover left behind. Lennon's, with its direct threat to the unfaithful girl, is harsher. None of these, however, resort to actual verbal abuse, as in *Drian'*:[162]

Maybellene, why can't you be true?
Oh, Maybellene, why can't you be true?
You've started back doin' the things you used to do.

Chuck Berry: *Maybellene*, 1955 [D-39] (chorus).

I ain't sayin' you treated me unkind,
You could have done better but I don't mind.
You just kinda wasted my precious time,
But don't think twice, it's all right.

Bob Dylan: *Don't Think Twice It's Alright*, 1963 [D-40] (end final verse).

You'd better run for your life if you can, little girl,
Hide your head in the sand, little girl,
Catch you with another man, that's the end, little girl.

The Beatles: *Run for Your Life*, 1965 [D-41] (chorus).

With punk, abuse addressed directly at the 'you' in the lyrics becomes more common. The first example I have been able to identify within the rock tradition is *I Hate You* [D-42] by The Monks.[163] Recorded in 1966, it is in many ways a prototype of the ironic punk, or even post-punk, approach to abuse songs. The Monks are also frequently described as one of the first punk or proto-punk bands. Punk singers also utilise the sneering and vocal glissandos typical of blues-inspired rock vocalists, such as Mick Jagger [D-34], but their anger and aggression tends to be more explicit and they resort to barking or shouting more often. In punk, the clear conscience of the male part is no longer necessarily presupposed. Another novelty in punk is that the 'you' may refer as much to a male acquaintance as to a female lover, as in The Ruts' *You're just a...* (1979). The fierce rant *Oh, shit!* [D-43] by The Buzzcocks, by comparison, relies solely on the word *cow* to signify gender. As an insult it surpasses *Drian'* metaphorically, but Pete Shelley's protagonist does not list any crimes. He is just furious for having wasted his time on *such a fucking cow*.

162. Thanks to Alan F. Moore and other members of the IASPM list for providing me with these examples.
163. Of course, songs abusing women are no more of a rock invention than male chauvinism. There is a long tradition of abuse and insult songs in popular and folk music, in Country, blues and ballads .

Punk abuse sometimes has a class dimension to it, as in *London Lady* (1977) by The Stranglers or *Eat Your Heart Out* [D-45] by The Lords of The New Church. In other punk or punk-related songs, self-irony or self-mockery plays a more obvious role, as in the Monks example (or The Fall's overtly self-ridiculing cover version from 1990, *Black Monk Theme Part 1*).[164] If there is no such self-irony on the part of the protagonist, the abuse tends to backfire on the 'I', as in another song by The Stranglers, *Sometimes* [D-44], where he is unmasked as a sick, violent wife-beater incapable of verbal communication.

Hey woman, I hate you with a passion, baby!
You know my hate's everlasting, baby, yeah-yeah!
Do you, do you do-you-do-you-do-you-do-you-do-you know why I hate you baby?
Ha-ah? Do you know?
Because you make me make me make me hate you, baby!

The Monks: *I Hate You*, 1966 [D-42] (opening verse lead vocal lines).

Admit, admit,
You're shit, you're shit,
You're shit, you're shit, you're shit!

The Buzzcocks: *Oh, shit!*, 1977 [D-43] (finale)

You're way past your station,
It's useless telling you to stop.
I've got morbid fascinations,
Beat you, honey, 'til you drop.

The Stranglers: *Sometimes*, 1977 [D-44] (second chorus)

Shut up and sit down!
Rich bitch,
Eat your heart out!

The Lords of The New Church: *Eat Your Heart Out*, 1982 [D-45] (chorus)

8.3.13. A rock-and-roll relationship

In order to shed light on Maik's initial intentions with *Drian'*, and in order to be able to make a fair comparison of the lyric with lyrics in the Anglo-American tradition, I will first discuss the lyrics in their original form, then account for the changes made in the recorded version and their impact. This is firstly because the changes have apparently been forced upon the songwriter by censors, secondly because of the confusion that ensues from these changes.

164. Thanks to Geoff Stahl for providing me with this example and thereby introducing me to The Monks.

At first sight *Drian'* appears to be a self-justifying rage song of a betrayed male, as in the Beatles example from the mid-1960s, cited above. Its explicit insults, though, point to punk and peak at the frequently repeated *dirt* and at the reference to the *502nd abortion*. With the punk influence one would expect some level of irony, but the irony in *Drian'* is far more subtle than the obvious capital-letter irony typical of western punk. This becomes clear when we take a closer look at the relationship between the protagonist and the woman in *Drian'*. Its abuse seems to be grounded, 1960s-style, in moral arguments. The protagonist is eager to emphasise his clean hands and unquestionable moral standards. He is the victim, she is to blame – a typical rock-and-roll scenario.

She stands accused of lying, flirting with everyone, breaking his plates, sleeping with at least one married man, stealing and selling his guitar, and generally of being a woman of low or no morals. Up until this point, the two have apparently been lovers and living together, since she has access to his home, her bad moves are all referred to in the present tense and she stands accused of going behind his back. She has also received pin-money, apparently from him, although his role is not explicitly specified. He appears to be unwillingly in love with her (*I don't want to love you*) and is incapable of hating her, although he sometimes feels he could kill her. The threat, then, apparently, is not meant to be taken as literally as it appears in Lennon's *Run for your life*. Simultaneously, the protagonist appears to have mixed feelings towards the 'you'. Between each repeating of the word *drian'* his ambivalence is revealed. In the first verse, he comes quite close to admitting he loves her, then returns to swearing as if to convince himself of the contrary. The sheer length of the song also testifies to the protagonist's struggle as he magnifies, in order to free himself from the 'you', her negative sides to improbable proportions

Although it is exaggerated to the point of tragicomedy, the relationship in *Drian's* lyrics makes sense and the lyric appears quite straightforward. Maik's protagonist claims a moral right for his anger. He feels he has been pushed too far for too long and now, finally, over the top. The brutality of his verbal abuse is, in the eyes of the protagonist himself, justified by the countless breaches of trust to which he has fallen victim. Simultaneously, the irony of the song lies in his lover's extensive list of merits. As the list of accusations grows longer and approaches the absurd, one is also led to question *his* character. What kind of man is this? How could he put up with this for so long? His weakness makes him appear in the end like some lovesick fool, unless he himself is just as cold-hearted as he accuses her of being. Both the story and the protagonist's integrity balance on the verge of the credible. The sheer length of the song, the dominating voice, the reluctant rhythm section and the protagonist running out of motives, repeating himself towards the end, all these are factors that may serve to increase irony at the protagonist's expense. Maik's songs often have motifs of painful love, often in spite of an almost chronic unfaithfulness on the part of the female, yet he rarely resorts to abuse and insults, like in *Drian'*.

8.3.14. An unexpected 'marriage' and its implications

Then, in the recorded version, Maik, his diction as distinct as ever, changes one word in the first line of the second verse, and the whole balance is disrupted. Instead of *with **his** wife* (*s ego zhenoi*) he sings *with **my** wife* (*s moei zhenoi*). So, the protagonist is married? Then why is he so intimately involved with this other woman and how can he be a victim of her deceitful character? Now, if we choose to keep on trusting him as a man of morals, his rage becomes questionable. Why should she stop flirting for his sake? How can she go behind his back? Her moral standards are indeed questionable, but why should it matter to him as long as he keeps her away from his china and his guitar? And does not his wife have a say in this? If, on the other hand, we do not believe in his innocence and moral standards,

the protagonist becomes a raving hedonist, which does seem slightly misplaced, given the moral nature of his arguments. If he is a hedonist, we should expect him to argue as such and write an uncompromising, punk-style insult song: bark out his disgust and avoid exposing his wounds.

This unexpected 'marriage' of the protagonist either makes him morally corrupt and thus deprives his rage of its legitimacy, or it turns him into some kind of loud-mouthed, self-appointed moral guardian, who imposes himself on matters that are none of his concern. Another thing that becomes unclear is the threat: *soon another (dirt) will take your place*. In the original version this line suggests that the protagonist, because of his recent suffering, has lost all belief in women, has become deeply pessimistic and does not expect anything better from his next relationship. Read less sympathetically, it underlines his misogynic traits, however much he insists that his position has been forced upon him. In the recorded version, though, it becomes unclear what position he is talking about. Thus, the threat loses its justification. So why make this change and generate all these absurd inconsistencies?

The songs recorded at the AnTrop studio were versions sanctioned by LMDST censors until the LRC received its own, more rock-experienced censor in late autumn 1984. Since the studio operated in a grey zone and distributed recordings could not be protected from surveillance, the lyrics were, as a rule, kept on the safe side. The recorded version, then, apparently received this change from a censor in a touch of Soviet absurdity. The authorities were concerned with the moral aspects of the song, which was partly responsible for Maik's status as LRC's *enfant terrible* in the early 1980s. Extra-marital relations were not to be encouraged and to 'marry' the protagonist may have seemed an easy way to obscure the most obvious immoral aspects of the song.

The other change, the rewriting of the line that refers to abortion, which thus breaks with both the rhyme pattern and the motif of the verse, was also very likely prompted by moral indignation. The censor may have found the side effects of the changes less problematic. From the censor's perspective, most probably, the disruption of the logic of the song served to turn the protagonist into a guardian of morality. But since this role is utterly devoid of rock-and-roll credibility, the rock audience might just as well choose to see him as the prototype rock hedonist, who regards himself as a man beyond morals and remains plainly indifferent to the fact that he is married. In any case, the protagonist as moral guardian appears rather ridiculous, a clown-like character. As such he may, ironically enough, end up as a somewhat grotesque caricature of the censor, who tried to superimpose official moral standards on the song.

8.4. Song 3. Kino: *Poslednii geroi* (1984) [G-46]

8.4.1. General informant comments

Informants primarily associate *Poslednii Geroi* (henceforth: *Geroi*) to British, German, Scandinavian and east-European, rather than American bands and styles. The descriptions of *Geroi* privilege styles such as synth pop, synth rock and post-punk. Ulf labels it LO-FI, MINIMALISTIC SYNTH ROCK. By characterising it as A MINIMALISTIC SYNTH-CONCEPT FROM THE EARLY 1980S, Odd agrees. Thomas dates the SOUND (*lydbilde*) to 1981 and observes SYNTHPOP AESTHETICS, combined with POST-PUNK ELEMENTS in bass guitar and vocals. Hans comments that the CHEAP AND UGLY (sic) synth sounds make him associate to early experimental fusion and east-European new-wave. The same sounds make Karen think of EARLY 8-BIT VIDEO GAMES, COMMODORE 64S and NEUE DEUTSCHE WELLE (German new-wave, henceforth: NdW). Knut and Jan agree that the song is inspired by synth pop, but both note a rock structure in drums and vocals (Knut), guitar phrases and bass line (Jan).

The atmosphere of the song makes Ulf associate to something depressing, like THE ENTRANCE OF THE MACHINES. Philip thinks of a SAD ROBOT. Referring to Collins (2002), he points out that in the 1980s, ROBOT MOVIES, JAPANESE MANGA CARTOONS AND INDUSTRIAL MUSIC all INTRODUCED A MACHINE AESTHETIC that CELEBRATED THE ROBOT AS THE LAST REBEL. The melody and harmony of the intro riff reminds him of Ry Cooder's 1970 version of a SAD AND ABSURD SONG from the economic depression, *One Meat Ball* [G-62]. In Hans' mind, the enduring RHYTHMIC TICKING MIGHT SIGNIFY TIME. The game sequence, of which *Geroi* reminds Karen, is a FIGHT SCENE IN A CAVE. To Thomas, the chorus stands out from the rest of the song. He notes a touch of SINGALONG-LIKE CHOIR (*allsang-aktig kor*) in it, that makes him think of drinking songs.

8.4.2. IOCM

Thomas:	Kraftwerk [G-48] and early Depeche Mode [G-55]; Wall of Voodoo [G-57] (TICKING SOUND).
Odd:	Human League, Ultravox [G-53, G-54].
Hans:	Weather Report: *Birdland,* 1977 [G-61] (synth bass sound); DePress and east-European new-wave (ALARM CLOCK NOISE).
Serge:	NdW band Trio: *Da, Da, Da,* 1981 [G-47] (synth rhythm); Kraftwerk [G-48] (synth bass).
Karen:	Theme from Nintendo game *Wizards and Warriors* [G-60]; NdW and European or Scandinavian early 1980s cold-wave bands.
Knut:	Trio: *Da, Da, Da* [G-47] (background synth rhythm); UK new romantics - early OMD[165] [G-49, G-50] and Ultravox [G-53, G-54]; Twice a Man.
Jan:	Duran Duran [G-56], Tears for Fears and Ultravox [G-53, G-54]; Simple Minds [G-52] (bass line).

165. OMD: Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark.

Philip: Primarily Kraftwerk [G-48], Ultravox [G-53, G-54], early industrial music.
Fleetwood Mac: *The Chain*, 1977 [G-58] (waiting tone in instrumental part);
BBC Radiophonic Orchestra: *Doctor Who*, 1963 [G-59] (synth in instrumental parts, sound);
Ry Cooder *One Meat Ball*, 1970 [G-62] (riff melody and harmony in instrumental parts);
Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band: *I'm The Urban Spaceman*, 1969 [G-63] (vocals, relative stasis).

8.4.3. Order of events

Geroi is based on two alternating riffs, one for intro, instrumentals and 'outro' (henceforth *intro riff*), another for verses and choruses (henceforth *verse riff*). The intro riff is dominated by a synth bass that rests on the second bar and makes a slow ascent at the end of the fourth. The verse riff, a recurring 'walk', is played on a bass guitar. Vocals appear only in the verse riff and the accompaniment does not separate between verses and choruses. The drumbeat and electronic rhythmic ticking are unchanged throughout the song, whereas the guitar alternates between the two different riffs. The only break with this established pattern is made by the vocals, which are subject to some variation in the third verse. In the intro and outro the 4 x 2 bar motif is repeated and there is a quick fade-out over the last bar of the song.

8.4.4. Voice and vocal persona

Kate describes the voice as that of a YOUNG, CHILDISH and INEXPERIENCED TEENAGE BOY. The manner of singing has ASPECTS OF TALK AND SHOUTING and on the whole a certain PUNKISH (*punkete*) quality to it, she adds. Knut recognises the somewhat throaty or HALF-STRANGLED vocals from the singers in bands such as Japan, Duran Duran [G-56], OMD [G-49, G-50], Ultravox [G-53, G-54] and Human League. OMD's *Electricity* [G-50] (1980), where the intro also demonstrates 'CHEAP' SYNTH SOUNDS (Jan), can serve as a good example here. To Knut the vocals SOUND ANGRY AND AGGRESSIVE, as if the lyrics were SERIOUS OR A PROTEST AGAINST SOMETHING. But he stresses that to him, the Russian language appears unfamiliarly HARD-EDGED (*kantete*) and HARD-SOUNDING (*hardt*), and that this might have influenced his associations. Ulf notes that there are CHOIR-LIKE VOICE DUBS in the choruses and that the SINGER DRAMATISES. Philip does not quite agree on the last point. He finds the singing MECHANICAL, a RECITING VOICE with VERY LITTLE EMOTION OR ENERGY INVESTMENT. He also notes that the singer ONLY USES THE TOP FOURTH OF HIS VOCAL RANGE. The phrases, he states, are SHORT, MONOTONOUS AND REPETITIVE. To Philip, the singer appears to be A MACHINE PART OF THE ACCOMPANIMENT, like if he were A ROBOT. The vocals in songs by Kraftwerk [G-48], a band to which several informants have associated, cultivate such machine-alluding tendencies, often with an additional, synthesized robotic effect.

8.4.5. Played and programmed drums

The drum sounds clearly puzzled the informants, but at the same time they seem to have generated many of the IOCM associations. Descriptions of the electronic sound vary in particular: DRUM MACHINE (Ulf); ALARM-CLOCK NOISE (*vekkerklokkelyd*) and CASIO (Hans); TICKING (Thomas); COMMODORE 64 (Karen); SYNTH RHYTHM (Knut); ANALOGUE DRUM-MACHINE and ROLAND DR. RHYTHM (Jan). Among the many creative suggestions as to how

the drum sounds were made, Serge suggests A SNARE DRUM WITH LOW LEVEL ECHO, COMBINED WITH A SYNTH SOUND VERY SIMILAR TO, though MORE DISCRETE than in the NdW band Trio's *Da, Da, Da* [G-47]. Since the other explanations diverge considerably, biographical sources are helpful on this point. The single snare drum was new Kino-drummer Gur'ianov's preferred instrument, but according to BG, he only arrived towards the end of recordings and several different drummers, including Akvarium's Petr Troshchenkov, contributed (BG in Tsui 1991: 99-100). The high-pitched electronic rhythm was played on a tiny Casiotone by BG, who had initially wanted to produce the album.[166] Andrei Tropillo explains:

> [A]t the time, it seems, Lipnitskii had given him one of these musical playthings, it was called Casiotone and was the size of the palm of a hand. There are big instruments named Casiotone, but this was a little such *kassiotonchik* [sic]. [...] If you remember, in *Poslednii geroi*, ta-tam, ta-tam... That was played by hand on the Casiotone, and BG was some kind of Casiotone keyboard player (Tropillo in Tsui 1991:108).

Philip describes the rhythm as METRONOMIC and notes a TOTAL ABSENCE OF VARIATIONS OR DRUM FILLS. He finds the song SURPRISINGLY EMPTY, partly because of the rhythmic monotony. There are many examples of rhythmic monotony in British new pop, *Celebrate* [G-52] (1980) by The Simple Minds is but one example, but usually, unlike in *Geroi*, drum rolls or other variations will appear at some point. Thomas associates the TICKING with Texas band Wall of Voodoo, who occasionally used primitive electronic sounds in their film music-inspired new-wave rock, e.g. in *Me And My Dad* [G-57] (1981). Thomas also notes that SYNTH POP COMBOS LIKE KRAFTWERK would not have used A 'REAL' DRUM.

Knut agrees that the structure of the snare drumbeat is ROCK-INFLUENCED. He also hears CERTAIN INCONSISTENCIES in the rhythm of all the synth elements, which suggest to him that the synth rhythm is PLAYED LIVE, NOT RUN ON A SEQUENCER, as for example in OMD's *Enola Gay* [G-49] (1980), which has a similarly 'primitive' (to judge from the general descriptions offered by respondents), albeit more full-sounding electronic drum sound. *Hiroshima Mon Amour* [G-53] (1977) by Ultravox also demonstrates a relatively static, repetitive synth rhythm with 'unsophisticated' (again judging from responses) electronic sounds. Even Madonna's *Over and Over* [G-51] (1984) demonstrates a persistent, minimalistic synth rhythm not unlike *Geroi's*. Although the sound quality and mix are considerably more advanced in Madonna's song, it shows that Kino's idea was still in fashion.

The main tendency, then, is that informants place *Geroi* in the rock idiom, but note obvious influences from synth pop. This last point has a lot to do with the Casiotone, but also with the synth bass in the song's intro riff.

8.4.6. Bass guitar and synth bass

Jan lists the use of bass guitar as one element that breaks with synth pop. The melodic bass line of the verse riff makes him think of HOW SIMPLE MINDS HAVE USED THE BASS. It is what he LIKES MOST ABOUT THE SONG. He does not find any direct resemblances between *Geroi* and songs by The Simple Minds, however, but again the example *Celebrate* [G-52] may illustrate what he has in mind. Philip notes that the FULL BASS SOUND has RICKENBACKER QUALITIES, which he finds very typical of bass lines from the 1980s. The other informants are more occupied with the synth bass.

166. The recording of the *Nachalnik kamchatki* album is also referred to in 5.4.6, page 74 ff.

The synth bass sounds CHEAP to Hans, and he thinks western bands WOULD NORMALLY HAVE AVOIDED SUCH SOUND QUALITIES. He recalls that fusion bands in the 1970s sometimes used such sounds deliberately. The sound quality of Kino's synth bass thus reminds him of a DELIBERATELY UGLY [sic] SYNTHESIZER NOISE in Weather Report's *Birdland* [G-61]. The same sound reminds Serge of the early analogue synths used by Kraftwerk. The track *Metropolis* [G-48] from their 1978 album *The Man Machine* may serve as an example here. Jan also describes the sound as CHEAP, by which he means THIN SOUNDS FROM MONOSYNTHS WITH NO OTHER EFFECTS APPLIED THAN BASIC SOUND MODULATION. By comparison the synth sounds in the song *Shame* [G-55] (1983) by Depeche Mode, one of the bands Thomas thinks of, are, as Jan suggests, more sophisticated, carefully mixed and with a lot of reverb. Jan also recalls the fact that by 1984, sampling techniques were being used in the West.

Another significant aspect of the synth bass, Philip notes, is that it rests on the second bar. The only song he remembers having heard where the bass makes pauses like these is *The Chain* [G-58] by Fleetwood Mac. The *Wizards and Warriors* game tune [G-60] associated to by Karen also has a lot of stops. Depeche Mode's *Shame* [G-55] also halts, but in Philip's opinion, these do not seem to hold up the rhythm like those in *Geroi*. He underlines that such pauses are most uncommon, especially as the second and fourth bars are usually the points where ONE WOULD EXPECT A BASS LINE TO PLAY SOMETHING INTERESTING. Where the first bar of the bass line seems to signal the start of some motion, this is not followed up, he notes. The way the bass line GETS STUCK (Philip), contrasts the bass lines in nearly every other song of the IOCM. On the fourth bar, though, the synth bass and guitar make a slow ascent over two notes on the third and fourth beat.

Even in the verse, Philip observes, the otherwise relatively lively bass guitar SPENDS A LOT OF TIME ON THE B'S, exactly where one WOULD EXPECT IT TO DO SOMETHING, GO SOMEWHERE. Instead, he notes, it REMAINS IN THE OLD ROUTINE AND NEVER BREAKS AWAY. The repetitive drum and casiotone rhythms and the machine-like vocals may be said to add to this stasis. Philip concludes that these NON-DIRECTIONAL QUALITIES correspond to A DOMINANT FEELING OF THE TIME, THAT THERE'S NO WAY OUT. The BOREDOM AND ALIENATION of *Geroi*, he observes, have their ironic answer already in *I'm the Urban Spaceman* [G-63] by The Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band, although, he underlines, the STASIS of the latter IS LESS OBVIOUS.

8.4.7. Guitar fills

In the only concrete comment on the guitar fills, Jan notes that in synth pop one would EXPECT A SYNTH TO PLAY THE PHRASES, WHICH THE GUITAR DOES in *Geroi*. It SOUNDS A BIT LIKE A SYNTH AT THE BEGINNING, he adds. In the absence of further informant response, I allow myself to add a few comments on the guitar. The intro riff consists of two chords of two-string fingerplay, ending in a brief ascent that follows the synth bass on every fourth bar. The verse riff is a repetitive three-chord progression that accentuates the offbeat in a mildly ska-like fashion. This does not conflict with the aesthetics of synth-rock and new-pop bands of the IOCM. As Knut stresses in his comments to song 4, west European new-wave bands tended to use REGGAE RHYTHMS or REGGAE-INSPIRED RHYTHM GUITAR PHRASES in their songs. He suggests that this is sometimes used TO SIGNIFY REBELLION. Although weakly and subtly, the verse riff guitar chords of *Geroi* also reflect this stylistic trait. The discrete mixing and repetitive fills are perhaps responsible for the lack of informant response to the guitar.

8.4.8. The mix

Thomas, Knut and Jan all agree that Geroi sounds AT LEAST THREE TO FOUR YEARS OLDER (Knut) than its contemporaries in the West. Karen, too, thinks of early 1980s cold-wave bands. This has to do not only with the 'old' and 'cheap' synth sounds, which Hans and Serge emphasise, but also with the mix. Knut finds THE SOUND (*lydbilde*) VERY DRY, UNUSUALLY DRY WHEN COMPARED TO WESTERN MUSIC ISSUED ON RECORDS. The fashion in European music at the time were PRODUCTIONS WITH A BIG SOUND, he explains, and it was common to use LOTS OF REVERB ON THE SNARE DRUM. He hears a less apparent, but similar ROCK APPROACH AND DRY SOUND PICTURE in early recordings by the Swedish band Twice A Man. Jan uses the word NAÏVE to describe the sound in Geroi, compared to the by then MORE DEVELOPED and FATTER SOUND (*feitere lydbilde*) of British new-pop bands. Here Depeche Mode's *Shame* [G-55], mentioned above, or Duran Duran's *The Chauffeur* [G-56] (1982) may serve as examples. In *Geroi*, by contrast, he hears a VERY SPARTAN USE OF EFFECTS, only A LITTLE ECHO. Philip notes that the mid-tonal register of the song is SURPRISINGLY EMPTY, which reminds him of the signature for BBC's science-fiction TV-series *Doctor Who* [G-59].

Some investigation has been necessary to come up with more concrete song examples to compare with *Geroi*. On the whole, the music examples found confirm the information given by informants. The 'dry' sound and 'cheap' synth sounds were clearly no longer the trend in 1984, but a song such as *Hiroshima Mon Amour* [G-53], mentioned above, shows a similar sound aesthetic and rock approach. Even if it is more punk-inspired and simplistic than the grand sound of albums such as *Empires and Dance* (Simple Minds, 1980), the sound of Ultravox's debut LP is bigger and fuller than in *Geroi*. Compared to *Aristokrat* and *Drian'*, however, *Geroi* shows that some progress has been made. The sound quality of the drums is no longer audibly corrupted and all instruments seem to enjoy the same clarity of sound. This suggests that dubbing has replaced the bouncing technique of the earlier recordings. A multitrack recorder might have been used, but Tropillo himself gives no direct answer:

> [...] it all began with me recording on a Tembr DN tape recorder, converted to speed 38 [cm/s] on mono, right? After that I recorded by bouncing on a Studer, then an eight-channel Amplex tape recorder emerged, yes? That was already 1984, 1985. It was a great step forward. But generally I think that one should stick to a minimal formula, because when there are very many possibilities you sow not only what you need, but also what you don't need, and to get rid of the latter afterwards is always very hard (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 26).

The alteration between the synth bass and bass guitar shows that more care was taken to avoid empty gaps in the general sound picture each time an instrument left the mix. Stylistically, the mix is more typical of the early 1980s than the two earlier AnTrop recordings considered here. The leading position of the basses in the mix, the very discrete level of the guitar fills and the more distinct drumbeat testify to this. Even the voice is mixed more moderately. More obviously than with *Drian'*, the lack of drive seems to be a deliberate choice. *Geroi* does not swing because it is deliberately arranged in a way that prevents it. It does not appear to be made with danceability in mind. Rather, as informants note, the music cultivates feelings of depression, stasis, and boredom.

8.4.9. Aeolian mode

The melodic phrase played by synth bass and guitar in each intro riff sequence is in the aeolian mode.[167] In the early 1980s the Swedish musicologist Alf Björnberg investigated an extensive number of rock songs using the aeolian mode. He concluded that:

> A remarkable number of these lyrics deal with subjects as fascination and fear of modern technique and civilisation, uneasiness about the future and the threat of war, alienation in general and in particular situations, static moods of waiting and premonition, historical or mystical events. As a whole the lyrics circumscribe a relatively uniform field of associations which might be characterised by such concepts as 'modernity', 'cold', 'waiting', 'uncertainty', 'sadness', 'stasis', 'infinity in time and space' (Björnberg 1984: 382).[168]

Many of the associations made by the panel of informants in this analysis are in line with Björnberg's observations. It remains to be seen whether *Geroi's* lyrics also correspond to the atmosphere established in the course of the introducing riff.

8.4.10. The lyrics

The lyric is quoted from Tsui (1991: 306), which corresponds fully with the recorded version on the album *Nachal'nik Kamchatki*.

Last Hero
The night is short, the goal far away
At night you often feel like a drink
You go out to the kitchen, but the water's bitter,
You can't sleep here, you can't live here

Good morning, Last Hero!
Good morning to you and to all of your kind!
Good morning, Last Hero!
Greetings, Last Hero!

You wished to be alone but the urge quickly passed
You wished to be alone but you couldn't face it
Your burden is light but your arm's getting numb
And you meet dawn over a game of 'fool'

Good morning, Last Hero!
Good morning to you and all of your kind!
Good morning, Last Hero!
Greetings, Last Hero!

In the morning you opt for a fast getaway
Telephone call's like a 'Forward!' command
You go somewhere you don't wanna go to
You go there to find no-one's waiting for you

Good morning, Last Hero!
Good morning to you and to all of your kind!
Good morning, Last Hero!
Greetings, Last Hero!

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167. A minor scale with halftones between the second and third, and between the fifth and sixth steps.
168. English translation by Tagg (1988: 14).

8.4.11. Characters and motifs

Geroi's musical minimalism is also reflected in the lyric, where the motifs are briefly sketched in sparse lines. This makes it easier for the listener to identify with the situation described, since the gaps in the lyric serve to open it up to individual interpretations. The lyric appears to be the *poslednii geroi's* (*last hero's*) soliloquy, where he includes himself in the 'you' of the lyric, generalising his situation and describing himself from the outside. In the first verse, the last hero is somewhere far from his goal, where he cannot quench his thirst, cannot sleep and cannot live. In the chorus the last hero greets himself, and others like him, 'good morning', thus emphasising the solitude of his situation. He is not unique in his loneliness, though. There are more like him, a slowly but surely dying breed of heroes of a time that is now past. The overdubs of the singer's voice underline the inclusive, generalising character of the 'you', as well as the reference to others like the *geroi*.

At one time the hero wanted loneliness, the second verse continues, but having obtained it, he could not handle it. He is carrying a light burden, but still his arm is growing numb. He stays up until daybreak playing *durak* (*fool*), a simple card game. This suggests that his loneliness is not eased simply by being with, or even interacting with, other people. Come morning, in the third verse, the last hero grows restless. He is ordered to move forward by a telephone call, to go to a place he does not want to go. But when he gets there, he finds no-one waiting for him. There are no concrete references in the song to people other than the last hero, no 'they', no 'them'. All situations where one would expect to find others are left empty: the inhabitants of the flat, the other card players, the person who calls him on the phone, even the people he goes to meet. They all seem like ghosts, as if they did not really exist. The situation described resembles one of a life that has become a continuous loop of empty routines.

8.4.12. Rhymes and rhythm

Tsui's lyric may appear simple and straightforward on the surface. End rhymes are not consistently applied, instead repetition of words, phrases or entire lines occur frequently, especially in the chorus. However, the illusion of a simple structure evaporates when one examines each line or pair of lines, for the most prominent effects of this lyric are created by a rich use of alliteration and assonance. This gives Tsui's song a rhythmic edge that sometimes borders on word games based on phonetically complex sentences.[169] An obvious example of this may be found in line two of the chorus: *tebe i takim kak ty*. This will be addressed after examining the end rhymes. In the first and third verse, end rhymes appear between lines one and three and between lines two and four respectively. In the second verse, however, only lines three and four rhyme. The two forms of *idti* (*go, walk*) in verse three, lines one and three, are not normally considered to be a rhyme in Russian, and represent a lack of tension which contributes to emphasising stasis:

Verse 1:	*daleká - gor'ká*	(lines 1 and 3)
	pit' - zhit'	(lines 2 and 4)
Verse 2:	*ruká - duraká*	(lines 3 and 4)
Verse 3:	*uytí - idtí*	(lines 1 and 3)
	vperiód - zhdiót	(lines 2 and 4)

169. The track *Rasskazhi mne pro pokupku* [G-65] from the album *Khronika pikiruiushchego bombardirovshchika* (1990) by Kommunizm gives an example of such a wordgame in Russian.

Internal rhymes occur in verse 1 line 1: *korotká - daleká*, line 3: *vodá - gor'ká* (approx.); verse two, line three: *legká - ruká*; verse three line two: *zvonók - vperiód* (approx.) and in the middle of line three: *tudá - kudá*. The pronouns *ty* and *tvoi* and their oblique forms are the most frequent anaphoric components. They open seven lines and occur sixteen times in a total of twelve lines out of twenty-four. In addition, verse three, line two, opens with the similar-sounding *tele(fonnyi)*. Verse one, lines one and two, open with *noch'* and *nóch'iu* respectively and along with the opening word of verse three, *utrom*, they relate to the three *dóbroe útro* in each chorus. Repeated phrases occur as follows:

Verse 1:	*ty ne mózhesh' zdes'*	(twice in line 4)
Verse 2:	*Ty khotél byt' odín*	(lines 1 and 2)
	byt' odín	(twice in line 2)
Verse 3:	*Ty ukhódish' tudá*	(lines 3 and 4)
Chorus:	Lines 1 and 3 are identical	
	Dóbroe útro	(lines 1, 2 and 3)
	Poslédnii gerói	(lines 1, 3 and 4)

Alliteration and assonance are often combined, and I have therefore chosen to account for their occurrence in one operation. The most practical way to visualise this is by looking at each verse line separately. As with *Drian'* above, not all occurrences I have noted have equal significance for the effect produced. The descriprion is neither definite nor exhaustive, but will hopefully give a general picture of the most frequently repeated sounds and the extent to which alliterations and assonances are utilised in *Geroi*:

Nóch' **ko**r**o**t**ká** tse**l'** d**a**l**eká**
(á + a + á / k + k + k / o + o / l' + l')

N**óch**'yu **ta**k **chá**s**to** kh**óch**et**s**i**a** pi**t'**
(t + t + t + t' / a + á + o + ia / ch + ch + ch / ó + ó)

T**y** v**ykh**ó**d**ish' **na** k**úkhniu no** v**odá** z**d**és' gor'k**á**
(a + o + o + á + á / n + n + n / d + d + d / y + y / u + iu / kh + kh)

Ty n**e** mó**zhe**sh' **z**d**es' s**pa**t'**, **t**y n**e** mó**zhe**sh' **z**d**e**s' **zhít'**
(e + e + e + e + í / zh + z + zh + z + zh / t + t' + t + t' / s' + s / é + é)

Ty kh**ot**él **byt' o**dín è**to bý**s**tro** p**ro**shló
(t + t' + t' + t + t / o + o + o + ro + ro / y + bý + bý)

Ty kh**ot**él **byt' o**d**ín no n**e smóg **byt' o**d**ín**
(t + t' + t' + t' / n + n + n + n / o + o + o + o / ty + by + by)

Tv**oiá n**ósh**a** legk**á no n**eméet ruk**á**
(o + ia + a + á + o + á / n + n + n)

I **t**y v**str**ech**á**esh' **rass**v**é**t za ig**r**ói v du**ra**k**á**
(r + r + r + r / t + t + t / á + a + a + á / s + ss)

Útrom **t**y **stre**m**í**sh'**s**ya **s**ko**rée u**yt**í**
(t + t + t + t' / e + í + eé + í / r + r + r / s + s + s / u + u)

T**elefónn**yi zvo**nók kak k**om**ánda** - vp**eriód**!
(k + k + k + k / ó + ó + ió / e + e + e / a + a + a / nn + n + n / d + d)

Ty **ukhódi**sh' **tudá** k**udá** n**e khó**ch**e**sh' **idtí**
(i + e + e + i + í / d + d + d + d / t + t + t / u + udá + udá / khó + khó)

Ty **u**kh**ód**ish' **tudá no t**eb**iá ta**m **n**ik**tó n**e zh**diót**
(t + t + t + t + t + t / á + o + iá + a / ó + ó + ió / n + n + n / d + d + d / u + u)

D**óbro**e út**ro po**slédnyi ge**rói**
(r + r + r / o + o + o / ó + ó)

Dób**ro**e ú**tro te**bé **i takí**m **kak t**y
(t + t + t + t / k + k + k / e + i + í / ro + ro / a + a)

Zdráv**s**tv**ui** po**s**lédn**yi** ger**ói**
(ui + yi + ói / s + s)

The most frequently repeated consonants are 't', 'k', which may well have contributed to Knut's impression of the HARD-EDGED qualities in the language of *Geroi*, to which he associates a message of protest, and 'r'. The singer's pronunciation of the second person singular endings, (*-sh'*) is long, hard and distinct, and along with the 'r' is used as a contrast to the plosives. This tendency to sing on the consonants is also common among bard poets, perhaps most prominently in Vysotsky's songs, e.g. *Ia ne liubliu* (1971/1988) [NI]. The back vowels are the most frequent, producing a 'darker' sound. Where they do not contrast with front vowels, the open 'ia/a/o' contrast with round 'ó/ió/u' vowels. However, if the element of protest is less prominent here than Knut may have expected, these sounds also fit the atmosphere of boredom and depression thematised by the lyric.

In the second verse *Geroi* has a consistent, four-foot anapaestic metre. Verse one, line four, and verse three, lines two and four, follow the same pattern, although the latter has an additional, fifth iambic unit added at the end. The remaining verse lines diverge from this metre to varying extents, from a single extra unstressed syllable in verse three, line three, to the inverted metre of verse one, line two, where the inverted metre corresponds to the protagonist's shift of focus from his bored routine to his goal, and back. An anapaestic metre appears to be the rhythmic foundation of the verses, however, since units of two unstressed, followed by one stressed syllable appear in nearly every verse line. In the chorus, the metre is inverted between the two middle metric units, creating a short pause in the wordflow. The first pair of units in each line is 'feminine', the two last 'masculine'. The fourth chorus line has only three metric units, the first of which is 'feminine'. All lines of the lyric have 'masculine' endings.

The repetitions, 'masculine' endings, many alliterations and assonances and the relatively stable metre of the lyric contribute to underlining the stasis and emptiness in the last hero's existence. This compliments the strict musical structure with its monotonous drumbeat and rhythmic ticking, the pausing synth-bass line, and the half-strangled, mechanically reciting voice. All verbs are in the imperfective aspect, and all except those in verse two, lines one and two, are in the present tense. This also emphasises stasis and the general nature of the situation.

8.4.13. Language, expressions and metaphors

Poslednii geroi is a song title quite fitting for its time, the early to mid-1980s. As Philip notes, in the music of Kraftwerk and the subsequent tradition of synth pop, as well as in movies, science fiction novels and cartoons, a machine aesthetic came to the fore. The human hero was replaced by the computer or the robot.[170] In synth pop and synth-pop-influenced rock this is frequently reflected in the use of mechanical electronic sounds, monotone machine-like vocals, programmed drums or drummers playing in order to sound like drum machines.[171] In other words, the tendency was that the status of electronically produced sounds surpassed that of instrumental virtuosity. In rock, punk had revolted against the traditional image of the rock star, and the marginalised position of the hero figure found many different expressions, hence The Stranglers asking:

Whatever happened to Leon Trotsky?
He got an ice pick
That made his fuse burn
[...]
Whatever happened to the heroes?

The Stranglers: *No More Heroes*, 1977b [NI] (excerpt, opening verse)

In a Soviet context, the concepts of 'hero' and 'heroism' were closely related on the one hand to official ideology; on the other hand, Russian literary tradition has left significant marks on them as well. Compared to the corresponding English term, the Russian word *geroi* has some interesting additional nuances. Ozhegov (1989: 132) mentions two archetypes of heroes in the primary sense of the word: 'Person, who has performed deeds of extraordinary courage, valour, selflessness,' namely the war hero and the work hero (*geroi truda*). In addition to a main character in a work of literature, screenplay or cinema, *geroi* also signifies a 'Person, who embodies the spirit of an epoch, a community. *A hero of our time*'. This reference to Mikhail Lermontov's novel *Geroi nashego vremeni* underlines one particular aspect of the Russian understanding of the word *geroi* and its link to a central character in Russian 19th-century literature, namely the *lishnii chelovek* (*redundant man*). The *lishnii chelovek* cannot find his place in society. He is usually a gifted, resourceful person, but society has no need for his talent, no position to offer him where his creative energy might unfold and serve a purpose. As a consequence he becomes idle, marginalised and alienated. These are qualities recognisable from Sloterdijk's concept of an enlightened cynicism that ensues from the irreversibility of enlightenment.[172]

The absence of other concrete characters already suggests that the *poslednii geroi* is an outsider. From the first word of the lyric, *noch'* (*night*), we follow the *geroi* until morning (*rassvét, útrom*). He spends his late night and early morning hours in idle waiting, far removed from his goal (*tsel'*). No further references are made to this goal. It remains vague, abstract and distant, as if the *geroi* himself has lost sight of it. *Tsel'* is the first in a series of allusive key words and motifs in the lyric left open to individual interpretation and identification. Others include *vodá gor'ká* (*the water is bitter*); *byt' odín* (*be alone*); *nósha* (*burden*); *neméet ruká* (*arm is getting numb*); *telefónnyi zvonók* (*phone call*); *tudá, kudá ne khóchesh' uití* (*where you don't want to go*).

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170. For a more thorough account of machine aesthetics and the emergence of industrial music in the 1980s,
see Collins (2002: 93-137).
171. An example of the latter is included on track S-93 of the RiR cd.
172. See paragraph 6.2.2, page 91ff.

The place where the *geroi* is staying cannot support his basic needs. The only thing it can offer him to quench his nightly thirst is bitter-tasting water (*vodá zdes' gor'ká*). In Russian poetry, and rock songs, the symbols of thirst and water are often closely related to the biblical. Thirst is linked to spiritual needs and water symbolises purity, truth, a life-giving nourishment for the soul.[173] In a song by Tsui's contemporary, singer and songwriter Konstantin Kinchev of the Leningrad band Alisa, water is the source of truth, strength and inspiration:

Yes, I myself have burned my bridge
My drink's to those who did not come
There's a scent of water in the underground maze
Here are people like you, here are people like me
Here you don't step aside, here you don't lower your eyes
Compromise is not our game

Alisa: *Kompromiss*, 1986 [G-64] (second verse)

In the light of this, the bitter-tasting water is spoiled, polluted. Its truth has become a lie, or at least it no longer represents *ístina* (*absolute truth*) but mere *právda* (*relative or conditional truth*). An element of falseness has entered the *geroi's* life. The bitter water from the kitchen cannot offer the last hero the empowerment or inspiration he needs, it cannot help him break out of his emptiness, hopelessness and alienation. The location he is in is also generalised and hardly described at all, apart from the mention of a kitchen, a telephone and, implicitly, another room. It is unclear whether he lives here permanently, but no other inhabitant is mentioned. To the last hero it represents a state of limbo, a place where he cannot sleep (*spat'*) and cannot live (*zhit'*). Not even the kitchen holds any positive atmosphere. Its emptiness is significant, since the kitchen is a common site for social activities in Russia. Nancy Ries confirms this in her work on Russian talk:

> While talk is a central locus of value production in all societies, in Russia it has long been highly marked; consider, for example, the constant references to the "kitchen" as the most sacred place in Russian / Soviet society. There, over tea or vodka, people could speak their minds, tell their stories, and spill their souls openly; [...] (Ries 1997: 21).

An empty kitchen signifies that this special social sphere is lost to the *geroi*. He has no-one to speak his mind to, no-one to share his troubles with. Even if he has, he gains nothing from such conversations but a bitter taste.

From the second verse it appears that the *geroi* initially desired isolation, but now that he is alone, he cannot break out of it. He has willingly broken with society or his community, and is now either too proud or too worn-down to turn back. Alternatively, his loneliness might be interpreted as the result of being single, which also allows for reading his situation as a result of failed or lost love and a reluctance or inability (due to isolation) to engage in a new relationship. The hero's arm or hand (*ruká* signifies both as one limb) is growing numb (*neméet*), although the burden (*nósha*) he carries is light. *Nósha* can also signify *vice*, but in this context it might also play on the expression *svoiá nósha ne tiánet* (*a burden of one's own choice is not felt*), meaning that whatever one does with oneself in mind is never hard (Smirinitskii 2002: 349). The last hero's loneliness has started to wear him down, make his arm go numb, even if it is self-induced.

173. See also my notes to the name 'Akvarium' in 5.2.2, page 61.

The lightness of his burden may also imply that the *geroi*, at least in part, enjoys his loneliness, that it is somehow important to the role he plays, and that it is, or has been, a source of empowerment, of self-confidence. He might be reluctant to break out of the emptiness and monotony because he, after all, finds it safe and comfortable.

In this condition the hero greets the new day over a game of *durák*. Durak (*fool*) is a game of cards, not very demanding and more based on luck than on skill. Since it would require a minimum of social interaction, the game is so far the only factor that indicates a social sphere around the *geroi*. However, a game of cards can allow a person to pull back from more demanding and meaningful social interaction. The game seems primarily to help the *geroi* kill time. The last hero is stuck in his old habits, but they no longer serve their original purpose. They have become meaningless to him.

In another sense, the game of durak also refers more generally to playing the fool. In addition to indulging in a game of cards, the *geroi* might, willingly or unwillingly, be acting the fool in relation to his surroundings. Such a reading introduces associations with the clown and the motif of tears and tragedy behind the clown's laugh. This suggests, along with his greeting himself, an ironic distance in the way the *geroi* describes himself. It implies that he is aware of the danger of becoming a parody of himself. The self-inclusive 'you' unites the singer and the listener in a common experience. The singer expresses his view of the reality he sings about. Whereas a 'we' would not necessarily include the listener, the self-inclusive 'you' directs a strong appeal to him or her. Thus, in Roman Jakobson's terms, the second person form combines emotive (expressive) and conative functions, linking the addresser to the addressee (Jakobson 1960: 353-55).

In the third verse the last hero is about to leave. Come morning he grows restless and would like to leave, and the sooner the better (*stremísh'sya skorée uytí*). A telephone call gives him the excuse he needs, commands him to march forward. Like the game of fool, the phonecall also represents a visualisation of the *geroi's* general situation: He is being ordered about by telephone calls. The same applies to the place he goes without wanting to. The imperfect aspect of the verbs emphasises that the situations are repeated. Despite his restlessness, the place where the *geroi* is heading is not a place he wants to go, and when he gets there, no-one is waiting for him. This is another general description of the *geroi's* existence. Whether he is heading home, to spend the day lazing in bed, or to school, to work, that somewhere represents for him a place where he does not fit in, where no-one pays any attention to him. The word *kománda* and the command itself, *vperëd!*, have an official air to them that may suggest an activity in the official sphere. He might have a lonely job as a guard, a caretaker or a stoker, typical jobs for amateur musicians. In any case, the place he is going offers no way out of his situation.

A more restricted alternative reading, which introduces a drug motif, would also be possible here. The loneliness, emptiness, the unsatisfied thirst, the light burden or vice, the numb arm, playing the fool or the fool's game, the wait, the restlessness, the commanding phone call, the last hero's reluctance to go to the meeting place and, finally, no-one showing up, all these motifs correspond to those of rock songs about heroin addiction. Observe the motifs in this archetypal 'cold turkey' (heroin abstinence) song:

I'm waiting for my man
Twenty-six dollars in my hand
Up to Lexington, 125
Feel sick and dirty, more dead than alive
I'm waiting for my man

Hey, white boy, what you doin' uptown?
Hey, white boy, you chasin' our women around?
Oh pardon me sir, it's the furthest from my mind
I'm just lookin' for a dear, dear friend of mine
I'm waiting for my man

Here he comes, he's all dressed in black
PR shoes and a big straw hat
He's never early, he's always late
First thing you learn is you always gotta wait
I'm waiting for my man

Up to a Brownstone, up three flights of stairs
Everybody's pinned you, but nobody cares
He's got the works, gives you sweet taste
And then you gotta split because you got no time to waste
I'm waiting for my man

Baby don't you holler, darlin' don't you bawl and shout
I'm feeling good, you know I'm gonna work it on out
I'm feeling good, I'm feeling oh so fine
Until tomorrow, but that's just some other time
I'm waiting for my man

The Velvet Underground: *I'm Waiting for My Man*, 1967 [G-66]

I have chosen not to indulge too deeply in more concrete readings in order to avoid restricting the lyric's spectrum of meaning. As shown above, the song has many allusions opening gaps that allow for individual readings, and a too categorical approach may easily obscure interesting aspects of the song. Here it is necessary to avoid reducing the song to an imitation of western sources and thereby shifting focus from the *geroi's* Russian characteristics. In the following I shall therefore attempt to relate *Geroi* to other songs about boredom and alienation, rather than to a more narrow tradition of songs about drug addiction. Still, I have found it relevant to expose the song's inherent similarities to such songs in the Anglo-American rock tradition. Bearing this observation in mind in the following may serve to expand, rather than limit, the potential meanings inherent in *Geroi*.

8.4.14. *B'dum, b'dum*: Rock songs of boredom and alienation

Boredom and alienation is a frequently occurring topic in rock songs, and not least in punk, post-punk and new pop of the late 1970s and early 1980s. There are, roughly speaking, two main ways in which the subject is treated: with aggression or with resignation. Among the former, songs fuelled by frustration and anger, *Satisfaction* [G-67] (1965) by The Rolling Stones is an archetypal example. Compared to Mick Jagger's dismayed teenager, the protagonist in The Stooges: *No Fun* [G-68] (1969) sounds more tired and weary. Iggy Pop's

more recent *I'm Bored* [G-69] (1979) adds a touch of cynical humour to the anger and exhaustion in the memorable lines 'I'm bored / I'm the chairman of the bored.' In one of punk's first hymns to boredom, Howard Devoto's spiteful and ill-tempered voice, backed in the chorus by a tired glissando choir, sings:

I'm living in this movie
But it doesn't move me
I'm the man that's waiting for the phone to ring
Hear it ring-a-ding-a-fucking-ding

You know me - I'm acting dumb
You know the scene - very humdrum
Boredom, boredom

You see there's nothing behind me
I'm already a has-been
My future ain't what it was
Well I think I know the words that I mean

You know me - I'm acting dumb
You know the scene - very humdrum
Boredom, boredom

B'dum, b'dum

Buzzcocks: *Boredom*, 1976 [G-70] (verses 2, 3 and chorus)

Although the mood of *Boredom* differs from *Geroi's* more resigned mood, the two songs have several common motifs. Devoto's protagonist describes himself as the hero of a movie that has ceased to move him. Like Tsui's *geroi*, he has already played his part and cannot see any future for himself. And both the Russian hero and the more angry and annoyed Mancunian punk are left waiting, dissilusioned, for the telephone to ring.

World-weariness, sorrow, fatigue and resignation are expressed in various ways in many songs of the IOCM. In OMD's *Enola Gay* [G-49] the teenage-boy vocals are flat, depressed and despondent; Ry Cooder's voice in *One Meat Ball* [G-62] is imbued with hopelessness; Neil Innes' singing in *I'm The Urban Spaceman* [G-63] is, in sharp contrast to the boasting lyric, bored and weary, as is the disenchanted *Sprechgesang* of Ultravox's *Man Who Dies Everyday* [G-54]. But few singers can match the utterly passionless and depressed vocals of Ian Curtis in this song, which like *Geroi* is based on two alternating monotonous chords:

Here are the young men, the weight on their shoulders,
Here are the young men, well where have they been?
We knocked on the doors of Hell's darker chamber,
Pushed to the limit, we dragged ourselves in,
Watched from the wings as the scenes were replaying,
We saw ourselves now as we never had seen.
Portrayal of trauma and degeneration,
The sorrows we suffered and never were free.

Where have they been? (4x)

Weary inside, now our heart's lost forever,
Can't replace the fear, or the thrill of the chase,
Each ritual shoved up the door for our wanderings,
Open then shut, then slammed in our face.

Where have they been? (4x)

Joy Division: *Decades*, 1980 [G-71]

In *Decades*, the darkness is almost total and there is an ominous presence of evil. What in *Geroi* is a vicious circle has become a tragedy, portrayed almost pathologically in powerless resignation and depression. The young men's heroic quest for the chamber of darkness has destroyed them. There is no way out. The situation in Matt Johnson's *Icing up* [G-72] is less dramatic, and the vocal has energy left for some fatalistic black humour. While there is no concrete source for the *geroi's* misery, love seems to have caused the breakdown of Johnson's protagonist:

History repeats itself within the realms of my inexperience
It's the laughter in her eyes that makes me cry
I'm too tired to eat, too lazy to die
See me dwindle, watch me dwell
In my cut-out corner from my plastic world

Matt Johnson: *Icing up*, 1981 [G-72]

As in Tsui's and Johnson's songs, the protagonist in Robert Smith's *Another Day* [G-73] fades away in idle waiting for another day to pass.

The sun rises slowly
On another day
The eastern sky grows cold
Winter in water colours
Shades of grey

Something
Something holds me hypnotized...

I stare at the window
Stare at the window
Waiting for the day to go
Winter in water colours
Shades of grey

The Cure: *Another Day*, 1979 [G-73]

Most of the songs about depression, boredom and alienation treated above tend to be monologues, but the self-inclusive 'you' of *Geroi* is less commonly used than the first person. This move enables Tsui to describe the last hero from the outside, while keeping an ironic distance from the hopeless situation and depression of the *geroi*. In this way he can describe the misery of the last hero while protecting himself from the fiercest accusations of *negativizm*. Besides being a common trait in rock lyrics in general, the repetitions and parallelisms in Geroi are similar to those found in Russian folkloric poetry. The lyric's egocentric focus, however, is a typical rock feature which would hardly be found in folklore.

8.4.15. Bored in the USSR: *bezdel'niki, bezyskhodnost'* and the *lishnii chelovek*

The topics of idleness and boredom occur frequently in Viktor Tsui's early songs. Several motifs from *Geroi* can be found in songs from Kino's first album, *45* (1982), two of which are called *Bezdel'nik* (*idler*):

I walk I walk alone
No idea what to do next
Not at home nobody's home
I'm redundant like a heap of waste
I'm an idler oh mama
I'm an idler, ooh-ooh
I'm an idler oh-oh mama

In a crowd I'm the needle in a haystack
Again I'm a man with no goal
Hang about walk all day
Don't know don't know nothing
I'm an idler oh mama
I'm an idler, ooh-ooh
I'm an idler oh-oh mama

Kino: *Bezdél'nik (1)*, 1982 [G-74]

The idler describes himself with the word *lishnii* (*redundant*). And apart from his economic situation - the song *Vremya est' a deneg net* (*Got time but no money*) opens the 1982 album - there are similarities between Tsui's idler and the redundant man of Russian 19th-century literature. The problem of the 'classical' *lishnii chelovek* is that he, as a wealthy son of the nobility who lives off the villages that his family possesses, does not have to work. This makes him a sophisticated and educated idler, who cannot find any challenging position in society. Bored with life, he easily turns to excesses, fatalism and self-destructive behaviour. Thus, like the *geroi* of the Soviet 1980s, the *lishnii chelovek's* situation is one of *bezyskhodnost'* (lit. *'no-way-outness'*). One of the most prominent attributes of the redundant man is *splin* (*spleen*), or world-weariness. *Splin* has been a frequently recurring subject in Russian literature since Romanticism and is not linked exclusively to the *lishnii chelovek*.

Tsui's *bezdel'nik* is supported by a well-developed social system. As an inhabitant of a major city, he can enjoy the benefits of an infrastructure and a reasonable availability of goods, that matches those of the capital. But the Soviet Union of the 1980s was a society that had in many ways forgotten its youth. Tsui's heroes may have become idlers because they have realised that they have no influence, that nothing they do can change their situation. Society has everything planned: school, army, working careers. There are no fora where youth can make themselves heard. Not even Komsomol activists can achieve much more than secure their individual careers as party officials. Official youth culture does not provide the *bezdel'niki* with the possibility of letting off steam, coming alive. It offers little to help the idler build an identity. He wants loud exhilarating music, parties and excitement. To find it, Tsui's heroes have to construct their own sphere, part reality, part illusion, which enables them to pursue their dreams.

This sends the *bezdel'niki* out in constant search of kitchen parties and gatherings. They define colourful roles for themselves and play them out in order to make life more interesting. But for every time the illusion works successfully there are countless hours of boredom, waiting and futile quests for excitement. After years of maintaining the illusion of a rich and exciting existence, the idler may easily end up a worn-out and disillusioned

shadow of his former self, like the *poslednii geroi*, who is trapped in a maze of habits that have long since lost their value. Alternatively, he 'goes straight', like the protagonist of another song from the album *45*, *Kogda-to ty byl bitnikom* (*Once you were a 'bitnik'*). For in the long run, the loafer's ideal way of life is bound to conflict with society's plans. Sooner or later, in one way or another, he will have to act on society's terms, in conflict with his own:

Hit the sack too late last night and got up early today
Hit the sack too late last night and hardly slept at all
Guess I should have gone to see the doctor in the morning
But now the train is taking me where I don't wanna go

Kino: *Elektrichka*, 1982 [G-75] (opening verse)

8.5. Song 4. Televizor: *Syt po gorlo* (1987) [S-76]

8.5.1. General informant comments

As Thomas puts it, *Syt po gorlo* (henceforth: *Syt*) is a song where A LOT OF FUNNY THINGS ARE HAPPENING (*det skjer mye rart*). Its relative complexity, compared to the three AnTrop songs, has made it more difficult for informants to come up with concrete examples of similar recordings. Some have underlined ambivalence or vagueness in their suggestions, others have compensated by making comparisons on a more detailed level. Although the span of the IOCM is wide, there is no apparent lack of coherence between responses.

Ulf sums it up as A PROFESSIONAL ARRANGEMENT with SPECIAL EFFECTS, a QUITE FUNKY MIXTURE OF STYLES that is NOT SUFFICIENTLY SLEEK (*glattat*) FOR DISCO. Thomas suggests that the band has its origins in new-wave, but underlines that this song has a MUCH MORE MODERN SOUND (*lydbilde*) and that the musicians play with effects and musical styles. The choruses and interlude, he thinks, makes the song different from anything he has heard before.[174] The intro makes him think of A CHILDREN'S SONG, the verse reminds him of a NORWEGIAN NEW-WAVE BAND and the refrain - of a RUSSIAN FOLK SONG.[175] Odd hears MORE EXPERIENCED MUSICIANS and a HIGHER LEVEL OF MUSICAL AND SOUND-ENGINEERING RESOURCES than in the former song examples. Hans, as well, emphasises a more SOLID MUSICAL CRAFTMANSHIP and the MANY EFFECTS in *Syt*. He hears a remote and SLIGHTLY STIFFENED (*stivnet*) SKA INFLUENCE in the song, along with SYNTH-POP ELEMENTS, and notes a STRONG FOCUS ON THE LYRICS. Knut describes the MIXTURE OF STYLES and RHYTHMIC VARIATIONS as ARTY, but the instrumentation as RELATIVELY TRADITIONAL. He adds that *Syt*, like *Geroi*, sounds to a western ear a few years older than it is in reality. Jan agrees that it sounds a bit dated for 1987, but finds it A GOOD DEAL MORE REFINED than *Geroi*. Karen associates it to SOMETHING DISTINCTLY 1980S. She visualises a typical 1980s music video with A NIGHT STREET SCENE [..] WITH LOTS OF NEON EFFECTS PAINTED ON TOP OF THE FILM.

8.5.2. IOCM

Thomas:	Talking Heads' albums *Fear of Music* [S-86] and *Remain in Light*. Pere Ubu, David Byrne [S-86] (Vocals).
Hans:	Men at Work: *Down Under*, 1982 [S-88] (remote ska influence).
Kate:	Frank Zappa [S-85, S-97] (theatrical manner of singing).
Serge:	Falco: *Rock Me Amadeus*, 1986 [S-82].
Karen:	NdW: Klinisch Sauber: *Krieg*, 1982 [S-90]; Das Kabinette *The Cabinet*, 1983 [S-89]. Talking Heads [S-86] (vocals and interlude).

174. Thomas and Karen use the word *break* to denote the eight-bar sequence before the two final refrain repeats of the song. In order to avoid confusion with the expression *drum break*, I refer to this sequence as the song's *interlude.*

175. Arguably, the *lai-lai-lai lu-lai* of the chorus is not so unlike the *ai liu-li liu-li* of *Kalinka*. Notably, long phrases of *lai-lai-lai's* became recurring ingredients in hit choruses of the Soviet estrada during the 1960s and 1970s. It has been referred to as the estrada's answer to the *yeah-yeah-yeah's* of anglophone beat and rock music.

Knut: Norwegian 1980s new rock (*nyrock*): Stavangerensemblet, De Press, Cirkus Modern, Kjøtt [S-91].
New-wave: The Clash (but softer),
The Specials (rhythm),
Magazine [S-87] (manner of singing);
Television (name).
Falco: *Rock Me Amadeus* and other songs [S-81, S-82] (manner of singing).

Jan: Early album by Thomas Dolby [S-83].

Philip: Soviet proletarian hymn [S-78] and Radio Moscow jingle [S-77] (intro);
Falco: *Der Kommisar*, 1982 [S-81] (generally, synth bass and voice);
Ray Anthony Orchestra: *Theme from Dragnet, 1953* [S-79] (chorus tritone);
Frank Zappa *Don't Eat the Yellow Snow*, 1974 [S-85]
(voice in choruses, male choir);
Yes: *Owner of a Lonely Heart*, 1983 [S-84] (brass stabs);
Billy May Orchestra: *The Man with the Golden Arm*, 1954 [S-80]
(bass tritones in interlude);
Michael Jackson (interlude, vaguely; and vocal 'hiccups').

8.5.3. Order of events

Syt starts with a glockenspiel intro that repeats a phrase twice before ending in a square-wave sound. The intro is separated from the main song by a short, but marked pause, before the voice enters a fraction before the accompaniment. Ulf describes the verses as FUNKY and BUILT AROUND A TWO-BAR BASS RIFF. The three eight-bar verses are separated by 2 x 4 bar choruses in 'double' time, in which Ulf notices BACKBEAT AND A POWERFUL FORWARDS DRIVE. The choruses are immediately followed by four-bar instrumentals in the verse tempo. After the third verse and chorus, the instrumental is replaced by a funky, eight-bar interlude with a different riff. After the interlude, two chorus repeats round off the song. A rhythmic 'deceleration' over the last bar gives the impression that the song comes to a halt, the synth organ then fades out quickly.

8.5.4. Voice and vocal persona

Unlike in the three other songs analysed, the singer in *Syt* does not restrict himself to one mood and one mode of expression. As noted by several informants, he plays with a wide range of vocal qualities. Kate hears a GROWN-UP BARITONE/BASS with a FULLER LOWER REGISTER compared to the vocalists in the other three song examples. It is sometimes FORCED and makes use of several modi in A THEATRICAL MANNER OF SINGING, she notes. The theatrical aspects remind her of Frank Zappa [S-85, S-97]. She notes that this singer has the WIDEST EXPRESSIONAL REGISTER among those of the four song examples. She finds that his manner of singing is both THE MOST MUSICAL and THE MOST IRONIC. Ulf notes that the singer utilises PARATEXTUAL SOUNDS and that the refrains and interlude show TENDENCIES TOWARDS CALL-RESPONSE.

Thomas describes the use of various vocal techniques as VERY EXPERIMENTAL and associates to Pere Ubu, maybe David Byrne (Talking Heads) [S-86]. Karen also links the vocals to Talking Heads as well as to lesser known NdW acts [S-89, S-90]. She thinks the chorus CONNOTES OI-PUNK, with its CHANT-LIKE QUALITIES. Serge notices Falco influences in the RAPPING-LIKE manner of singing [S-81, S-82]. Knut, too, associates to SOMETHING AS REMOTE AS FALCO'S VOICE AND SINGING STYLE, but also to something theatrical, not unlike

Howard Devoto's (Magazine) vocals [S-87]. The SING-ALONG REFRAIN and the singer's OCCASIONAL EFFECT-MAKING are typical of the period, he confirms. Philip is the third informant to hear a touch of Falco in the vocal delivery. There is something PSEUDO-OPERATIC, he observes, that might also connote Frank Zappa [S-85, S-97], especially in the chorus, where the voice is AT THE SAME TIME DRAMATIC, IRONIC AND USES A FUNNY NOTE.[176] He notices that the lead vocal sometimes has A SLIGHT HICCUP, A BIT LIKE MICHAEL JACKSON, BUT MORE MANNERED and GROWN-UP. Certain words and phrases are accentuated by the accompaniment, he adds. He finds the singer VERY VOCAL,[177] and notes that he COVERS QUITE A WIDE RANGE.

The vocal persona in *Syt* is changeable like the singing style and develops during the song. Philip notes that the singer STARTS OUT IN A MANNERED WAY, WITH SLIGHT 'HICCUPS' IN A RAP-LIKE *SPRECHGESANG*. He observes that the way the singer ROLLS THE 'R' AND GENERALLY EMPHASISES CONSONANTS, makes him SOUND DETERMINED, as if he makes an effort to be and stay in control. He is NOT JUST BEING DISTINCT IN ORDER TO MAKE HIMSELF HEARD, he PLAYS ON THE PHONETIC QUALITIES and EXAGGERATES ENUNCIATION, Philip notes. This adds to the distinct ironic tone identified by Kate, which makes itself felt to her from the very beginning. In the refrain the vocal SWITCHES MODE FROM HALF-RAPPING *SPRECHGESANG* to the PSEUDO-OPERATIC, Philip continues. The title word that opens the refrain SOUNDS STRAINED AND THROATY in contrast to the CLEAR-VOICED 'lai-lai-lai lu-lai', he notes. On the second round of la-la-las, the voice becomes strained again, as if the singer were struggling to keep something down, as if he felt sick, comments Philip. He adds that the throat noises that follow in the instrumental enhance this effect.

Following Philip's detailed observations, the protagonist shifts his mode again in the second verse, this time almost to A PARENTAL NARRATIVE, A STORYTELLING MODE, MILDLY TEACHING, LIKE IF HE HAD REACHED THE MORAL PART OF A CHILDREN'S FAIRY STORY. THEN IT BECOMES DRAMATIC ONCE MORE, THEN IRONICALLY DECLAMATORY, THEN SELF-SUFFICIENT, ALMOST GLOATING. THE 'HICCUPS' IN HIS VOICE MAKE HIM SOUND SOMEWHAT INCOHERENT, AS IF THE WORDS GET STUCK IN HIS THROAT, Philip observes. In the opening of the chorus THE STRAINED DISGUST RETURNS BEFORE THE 'LAI-LAI'-PHRASE. In the beginning of the third verse the protagonist APPEARS TO BE GIVING AN ADVICE, and he GROWS INCREASINGLY INTIMATE. THEN HE SEEMS TO GET ANGRY, THEN INCREASINGLY WORRIED AS HE APPROACHES THE CHORUS, while THE MALE CHOIR SEEMS TO BE ABOUT TO THROW UP VIOLENTLY IN THE BACKGROUND.

At this point Philip's description stops, but the final part of the song may be described by extending his train of thought. The protagonist pulls himself together for the chorus and interlude, regains his self-confidence and remains in control. Only at the very end does exhaustion enter his voice, and he appears to be struggling even harder to keep something down. As the rhythm staggers to a halt, the seemingly exhausted singer stops on the word *gorlo* (*throat*), just short of the expected *la-las*. His tired voice at this point appears to reflect that performing the song has cost him some effort.

176. By *FUNNY NOTE*, Philip is referring to the unexpected final note in the first chorus line.
177. Philip specifies what he meant by *VERY VOCAL* in the following way: THE SINGER COVERS A WIDE RANGE AND USES A SCHOOLED VOCAL PRODUCTION.

8.5.5. Male choir and the voices in the interlude

Here I shall restrict discussion to the sound or musical qualities of the choir. Comments on its impact on the lyrical message will be discussed below. One of the principal effects of backing vocals is that they expand the lead vocals's monologue into a social microsphere. They set the stage for a rehearsed dialogue. In *Syt*, the dialogue between choir and lead vocals is less obvious, but SUGGESTS THE PRESENCE OF A NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS, a GANG OF BUDDIES in Philip's words. The choir is repeating and confirming, rather than question-posing or answering, he notes. It has A TOUCH OF MASS CHANT to it, he continues, something IN THE DIRECTION OF FOOTBALL CHANTS OR SLOGAN SHOUTING.

The choir effect is created by multiplying the singer's voice, and possibly by adding the voices of other band members through dubbing. By fractionally dislocating each of the dubbed voices, a heterophonic effect is created, suggesting the presence of different individual voices.[178] Serge notices that the lead vocal is STAGED IN FRONT and that reverb and echo effects are applied to the backing vocals. This use of reverb creates an illusion of a large space around the voices. The choir is positioned quite far back in the mix, while the lead vocals appear closer and more intimate.

The presence of a MALE UNISON CHOIR THAT SINGS DRAMATICALLY contributes to Philip's Frank Zappa [S-85, S-97] associations, which he shares with Kate. The choir joins in on the first chorus, where it sings along on the first line. This is repeated in all the following choruses and the choir voices each time join the pseudo-operatic mode of the lead vocals. In line six of the first verse the choir makes a guest appearance, singing along with the lead vocals in a rap-like *Sprechgesang*. The most spectacular appearance of the male choir follows at the end of the third verse, where it makes three guttural ascending glissando roars that increase in intensity and end in an almost unison scream. Philip associates this with someone who is about to throw up violently.

In the interlude, the choir appears to split into four differently panned voices, among which at least one is recognisable as the lead singer's. Each voice in turn delivers one short phrase in the first half of the interlude, and repeats it in slightly different ways in the second half. The singer appears last and bridges his last line to the following refrain repeat with a four times repeated *Yeah!* (*Da!*). The first of every pair of phrases is intoned as a question, the second as a response or affirmation, contributing to the illusion that a short, affirmative conversation is taking place.

8.5.6. The drums

The informants who comment on the drums have certain difficulties in determining whether the drums are played, programmed or both. Hans suggests both. In his opinion *Syt* differs from the other three songs because its arrangement is BUILT AROUND THE DRUM BEAT as the central component. Serge thinks that the drums are PLAYED AS IF THEY WERE ELECTRONIC, VERY MECHANICALLY AND WITHOUT MUCH DYNAMICS.[179] Knut is in some doubt concerning the presence of a drum machine in addition to the drums. He remarks that they sometimes sound SYNTHETIC and that some of the drum rolls SOUND PROGRAMMED, since

178. 'Heterophony [...] means polyphony resulting from differences of pitch produced when two or more people sing or play the same melodic line at the same time. Heterophony can denote everything from the unintentional polyphonic effect of slightly unsynchronised unison singing to the intentional discrepancies between vocal line and its instrumental embellishment [...]' (Tagg 2000c: 6).
179. For an additional sound example of drums played 'like if they were electronic', listen to track S-93 on the RiR CD.

they are VERY MUCH *ON THE BEAT* (*på slaget*). His last point supports Serge's observation that the drums lack DYNAMICS. This might have occurred because the drums were recorded in three takes, where only two drums were played during each take, as Borzykin states (in Steinholt 2001a: 1-2). He also reveals that some rhythm sounds were played on the synth keyboard. Jan notes that the way the drums DOUBLE THE TEMPO IN THE REFRAINS reminds him of punk. Philip characterises the drum fill that separates the final chorus repeats as SLIGHTLY OVERSIZE.

8.5.7. The synth bass

The bass line made little impression on the panel of informants, although it is probably responsible for the occurrence of the word 'funky' in some of the responses. However, some general comments on the synth concern the bass sound as well. These are presented below. Philip, however, associates to the synth bass of Falco's *Der Kommissar* [S-81]. The FAT, BIG BASS SOUND in *Syt*, he says, comes possibly from the ANALOGUE SYNTH SAMPLES (E.G. 'FAT OBIE') AVAILABLE FOR THE KORG M1. He characterises the sound as a COMPLETE SIGNIFICATION OF THE 1980S. He also remarks on the GOOD FUNKY BASS PLAYING in the interlude with its tritones, which remind him of the theme from *The Man with the Golden Arm* [S-80]. One might add that, apart from in the interlude, where it approaches an imitation of bass guitar, the bass line has distinct keyboard qualities to it.

8.5.8. The guitar fills

Knut associates to NEW-WAVE ADAPTATIONS OF REGGAE-INSPIRED RHYTHMS AND RHYTHM GUITARS, when listening to *Syt*. Hans also talks about REMOTE SKA INFLUENCES, but does not explicitly mention the guitar. Jan notices a chorus effect has been added, and that there appears to be QUITE A LOT OF TREBLE. In addition to informant observations, one could note that the guitar plays very short fills, remains modestly in the background and is frequently drowned out by voices and other instruments. It never breaks into full riffs or solo attempts. Borzykin explains that the guitar was panned far to either side, which made it 'come out a bit weakish' (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 2). Jan's association to Thomas Dolby is also interesting here. His song *She Blinded Me With Science* [S-83] (1982) has similar, if more explicitly funk-inspired, guitar fills.

8.5.9. Synth sound effects and brass stabs

Jan finds the use of synth sounds in *Syt* more ADVANCED AND REFINED than in *Geroi*, especially the synth bass, but he still finds them A BIT TOO ANALOGUE AND THIN-SOUNDING FOR 1987. At that time DIGITAL SYNTHESIZERS WERE MUCH USED, MAYBE EVEN TOO MUCH USED IN WESTERN POPULAR MUSIC, he adds. Philip notes that the brass stabs, the MOST PROMINENT SYNTH EFFECT in the song, seemingly have FAR TOO MUCH REVERB on them, which gives them A GLITZY QUALITY. He traces them back to Yes' hit *Owner of a Lonely Heart* [S-84] (1983), which introduced VERY UPFRONT BRASS STABS that seem to RESONATE ALMOST INSIDE THE HEAD OF THE LISTENER. He points out that this effect became very popular with both synth pop and mainstream rock bands throughout the 1980s. In addition to the GENEROUS REVERB, Televizor uses A LOUD, QUICK DECAY THAT REFERS TO AN UNNATURAL, ARTIFICIAL SPACE, he adds.

Besides the brass stabs, there are longer, high-pitch, square-wave-like synth phrases in the intermissions that sometimes verge on solo attempts, Philip comments. Their sound makes him think of a Yamaha DX 7, one of the first mass-selling digital synthesizers.[180] Another synth effect is the staccato trumpet figures that lead up to each chorus. Before the

third chorus Philip observes that the trumpet sound is replaced by a high-pitch square wave, which ADDS A DRAMATIC ALARM NOISE TO THE 'THROWING-UP ROARS' OF THE CHOIR. He also hears a BENT, MUTED SIREN WAIL behind the final word of the first chorus line, and the return of a staccato, high-pitch square wave in the last half of the interlude. In addition to Philip's observations, it may be noted that in the final chorus repeats, the brass stabs establish a pattern instead of making occasional shock accentuations.

8.5.10. The mix

The higher sound quality in *Syt* compared to the AnTrop recordings makes Ulf ask himself whether the song has been MADE FOR EXPORT. Thomas finds the sound (*lydbilde*) of the song much more modern than in the other three, but to Knut, the sound is still THREE TO FOUR YEARS BEHIND WESTERN BANDS. Odd hears a CLEANER and MORE EXPENSIVE SOUND (*dyrere lydbilde*) which, he says, has BOTH 70S AND 80S CHARACTERISTICS, while Serge notes that the song is MIXED LIKE IN THE 70S. Jan observes that the use of effects is more advanced, resulting in A BIGGER, FATTER SOUND WITH MORE REVERB, compared to *Geroi*. But it still sounds A BIT CHEAP (*litt billig*), he thinks; at least he would expect the reverb to ADD MORE BODY TO THE SOUND. Instead, he adds, there appears to be TOO MUCH TREBLE, which reduces that effect slightly. Informants agree, then, that the song has been recorded in a more professionally equipped studio, but some notice a certain dryness of sound, also heard in the earlier recordings. That the mix is more professionally made is also something the informants agree on, although few of them go into detail on this point. The panning, though, appears less static than with the other songs. The synth is located to the left, but some brass stabs appear from the extreme left, some from the extreme right. The male choir is located to the left, slightly closer to the center than the synth, and the guitar to both sides. The big drum roll between chorus repeats moves towards the right.

Borzykin confirms that the studio where *Syt* was recorded maintained an entirely different technological level than the AnTrop studio. It belonged to *Dom Radio* (*The House of Radio*) and had equipment sufficient to record a symphonic orchestra (Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 1-2).[181] However, Televizor and their sound engineer Aleksandr Dokshin had very limited time on their hands, which probably affected the quality of the recording. As the rest of the album *Otechestvo illiuzii* was recorded in a less sophisticated studio, there is an audible difference between the sound quality of *Syt* and the first ten songs on the album. Presumably, it has not been in the band's interest to make this difference too obvious, which would imply that the sound of the rest of the album influenced the mix in *Syt*.

8.5.11. Tritones and aeolian progressions

The first 'la-la'-phrase of the refrain (g g g d c#) ends on an accentuated tritone, Philip explains. This tritone is that relative pitch within the octave regarded as being that furthest away from the keynote. The song's tritone makes Philip associate to a similar one in the theme from the pioneering TV-series *Dragnet* [S-79]. Such tritones and their connotations in popular music and movie scores are discussed extensively in Philip Tagg: *Tritonal Crime and 'Music as Music'* (1998). In the article Tagg explains how, in the

180. Borzykin recalls that Televizor used a Yamaha DX 21 in the recording of the album *Otechestvo illiuzi*
(Borzykin in Steinholt 2001a: 2).

181. *Dom Radio* or *Dom Leningradskogo Radio*: The *Leningrad House of Radio* was the studio and headquarters of government local radio broadcasting in the Leningrad region (Leningradskaia oblast'). Orchestras such as the State Academy Symphony Orchestra of St Petersburg still use these studio facilities for recording today.

European musical tradition, tritones used in specific ways can signify something evil or horrific: the devil, crime, the big city, murder stories. In movie scores such tritones very often suggest a detective- or horror-atmosphere. In *Syt* the bass in the interlude also performs tritones in much the same way as music for detective movies, e.g. as suggested by Philip, in the theme from *The Man With The Golden Arm* [S-80]. In *Syt* the tritones introduce an element of crime in the very refrain of the song, thereby underlining the potentially criminal in the essential utterance of the protagonist.[182] In the interlude, the bass tritones accompany the conversation between the four *Sprechgesang* voices, connecting their 'conversation' to the type of crime treated in the song's lyric. Another musical surprise effect identified by Philip is the UNUSUAL, SUDDEN LEAP UP ONE FULL NOTE at the start of the interlude, FROM G TO A, WITHOUT ANY PREPARATION OR WARNING. This leap might be part of what Karen thinks of when she talks about THE WEIRD BREAK THAT DOESN'T SEEM TO FIT WITH THE REST OF THE TRACK.

Another significant aspect of the song's atmosphere is that the synth bass plays an aeolian progression at the end of the verses, leading up to the refrain and its tritone. As explained in the analysis of *Geroi*, the aeolian mode was commonly used in a certain type of rock music from the late 1970s to mid-1980s to connote such moods as alienation, fear, boredom and/or something fateful.[183] This combination of 'criminal' tritones and aeolian progressions in *Syt* apparently juxtaposes fear and alienation with the notion of something criminal. These musical aspects of the song probably play a part when Karen visualises an urban, neon-lighted night scene. The impact of such aspects on the lyrics will be discussed more extensively below.

8.5.12. The intro

Only three informants comment on the intro. It makes Thomas think of children's songs and Karen think of A MUSIC BOX OR A TOY XYLOPHONE. Only Philip recognises the melody line from the Radio Moscow jingle [S-77] and from the opening phrase of a Soviet proletarian hymn [S-78]. It appears, then, that the intro has a special significance that is not immediately recognisable to western listeners who never tuned in to Radio Moscow. In order not to compete with informant responses, I have chosen to discuss the intro here, immediately after the informant-assisted part of the analysis.

The glockenspiel intro to *Syt* is placed so as to attract immediate attention and exerts an important influence on how the song is understood by a Russian audience. It is marked by different sound qualities and shares neither rhythmic nor melodic features with the song itself. That it resembles a broadcast jingle is not coincidental. The same melody line was, as Philip noticed, used by Radio Moscow, as a jingle for both international and nationwide broadcasts. The jingle [S-77] is apparently played on an analogue synthesizer. A significant flanging effect is added, which may simulate pulsating radio waves. It is also

182. The implicit link between jazz musical features and the criminal underworld in western popular culture also applies to a Soviet context. Not only were the *stiliagi* jazzmen of the 1950s looked upon as a potential fifth column, jazz music was also associated to black market dealers and illegal music distribution (see Stites 1992). In 1955, when a Moscow theatre staged a popular version of Mayakovsky's *Misteriia Buff*, Rock-'n'-Roll music and dancing was used in a scene depicting life in hell (Ryback 1990: 31). This was probably the first official rendition of Rock 'n' Roll in the Soviet Union, at a time when the new style was considered by most as a form of jazz. A closer investigation of the use of 'criminal' tritones in Soviet popular and film music has not yet been conducted, however, and should be encouraged.

183. See also 8.4.9, page 155.

played considerably slower than Televizor's glockenspiel line and without the final note that leaps up one octave. The second repeat of the jingle line in *Syt* is speeded up even more and accelerates slightly towards the end, before it is finally twisted into an alarm-like, high-pitch square wave.

The Radio Moscow jingle uses the melody line from the opening of the hymn *Pesnia o rodine* (*Song of the Motherland*), a.k.a. *Shiroka strana moia rodnaia* (*Vast is the Land of my Birth*) [S-78]. Composed in 1936 by Isaak Dunaevskii with words by Vassilii Lebedev-Kumach and featured in the movie *Cirk* (*Circus*) of the same year, it became an unofficial national anthem of the USSR. The movie became one of the great successes of Soviet cinema and won several awards, including a *grand prix* at the 1937 world exhibition in Paris. Ironically this coincided with the height of Stalinist terror, while the hymn's lyrics boldly declared that nobody smiles and laughs better than the people of the USSR. Even so the words reputedly had to be re-written thirty-seven times before satisfying the censors.[184] The tempo of the main part of the massive choir-and-orchestra version from the movie corresponds to that of Televizor's intro, while the first verse is sung slower, in a tempo closer to that of the radio jingle.

Here, Philip poses the appropriate question of what happens to *Pesnia o rodine* in its metamorphosis. From an alternative national anthem praising the motherland it is transformed into the low-tempo, pulsating radio jingle of a major Soviet radio station [S-77] and then, once more, into the accelerating intro of Televizor's funky synth-rock song. Along the way, the proletarian hymn, a monument of official cultural policy and social order, is initially tamed by slowing it down, translating it into a minimalistic signal and bringing it into everybody's homes. It is thus allowed to enter the private everyday sphere of millions of listeners while retaining its patriotic message in a subtle, domesticated manner.

Continuing discussion on the basis of Philip's initial observations, one could argue that the jingle conveys the notion of the omnipresence and universal validity of official ideology within the private sphere. Televizor's glockenspiel intro appears in turn to be a tongue-in-cheek ridicule of the jingle as well as the hymn. This is evident the first time the phrase is played in *Syt* in the return to the tempo of the original recording, which re-establishes the links to the hymn, and in the addition of the comic final note at the end, one octave higher. When the phrase is repeated the theme is manipulated by accelerating it significantly, making it go slightly out of control. The acceleration insinuates stress, a turn towards the hysterical. The following square-wave alarm underlines this crisis in the jingle, and the panic-like effect persists in its frenetic panning between left and right. The domesticated mode of Soviet official ideology, then, is presented as obtrusive and annoying. It leads to stress, a loss of control, a threat of insanity, and finally triggers an alarm. It might be read as a wake-up call or a warning that something is going wrong. In any case, the intro establishes a link between the song, the Soviet media and Soviet ideology. This should be kept in mind in the following, as we turn to *Syt's* lyrics.

184. Radio svoboda: www.svoboda.org/programs/cicles/cinema/russian/circus.asp (19.04.2004).

8.5.13. The lyrics

Full to the Throat
Good morning, I'm back again
Don't need anything – I've got all that I need.
I take a walk around the kitchen with a proud expression
And meet all demands to call myself full
Yeah, the full know no hunger.
What haven't I got but all there's to have.
When I open the fridge and face the sausage
I feel absolutely confident that I am full.

I'm full, full to the throat,
Lai-lai-lai lu-lai!
Full, full to the throat,
La-la-la-la-la-la-la!

They've fed me for slaughter, but even if so
You don't have to eat, if you don't want to.
And therein lies one main advantage:
As much as you may ask – you could have no more.
And to think of what comes next just isn't worth it;
If you're weak – you didn't eat your porridge.
I have nothing to wish for, no demands to make
I feel absolutely confident that I am full.

I'm full, full to the throat,
Lai-lai-lai lu-lai!
Full, full to the throat,
La-la-la-la-la-la-la!

Watch your step! This is the trick –
Work with your head to service your guts.
You take any subject, and make a quick gulp,
Transforming information to digestive juice.
I've done away with so much good–
My friend the fridge won't let me lie.
But sometimes I'm not feeling well, I guess I feel sick,
But I'm just too stuffed, that is why.

I'm full, full to the throat,
Lai-lai-lai lu-lai!
Full, full to the throat,
La-la-la-la-la-la-la!
And no pretensions
And no offence
And no doubts –
Yeah, I'm full.
And no pretensions
And no offence
And no doubts –
Yeah! Yeah! Yeah! Yeah –

I'm full, full to the throat,
Lai-lai-lai lu-lai!
Full, full to the throat,
La-la-la-la-la-la-la!

I'm full, full to the throat,
Lai-lai-lai lu-lai!
Full,
Full - to - the - throat.

(Televizor, 1987)

8.5.14. Characters and motifs

Syt's lyric comes close to the style of a manifesto as the protagonist campaigns for what he regards as a superior attitude to life. His is a life of plenty, he has everything he desires and there is nothing more he can ask for. In the course of the two first verses, this is expressed in four separate lines (verse one, lines two and six; verse two, lines four and seven). He parades proudly around his kitchen, and the principal cause of his *hauteur* is being full. He meets all criteria for being full, and such statements are the second recurring motif of the first two verses (appearing in verse one, line four, and in the final lines of verses one and two). In the opening verse, the protagonist gravitates around the kitchen, the refrigerator and the sausage, which so far constitute the protagonist's microcosm.

The first sign of ambivalence occurs in the chorus despite the protagonist's firm insistence on fullness as an exclusive blessing. He is full to the throat, brimming over, he has eaten all he can take. In the light of his insistence that this is the ideal way of being, the chorus leads the song's irony to the brink of sarcasm.

In the second verse, the protagonist continues introducing himself and explaining his basic philosophy. From the second line he switches from speaking in the first person to a generalised second person, returning to first person only in lines seven and eight. By using a self-inclusive 'you' the main character decenters the I, observes himself from a distance, and thereby facilitates self-critique. This emphasises a certain insecurity or ambivalence on the part of the main character, which suggests that he is making an effort to convince himself.[185] The past plural *kormíli* (*fed*) in the first line of the second verse briefly refers to a 'they'. 'They' have fed the protagonist for slaughter, but he remains indifferent to the fact, merely stating that no-one is forced to eat if they do not want to. It is clear, however, that such an option has no appeal to the main character in *Syt*. He is content with eating and not thinking about the future, and the weak can only blame themselves for not following his example.

The protagonist opens the third verse by addressing his audience in imperatives, before returning to a self-inclusive 'you.' The listeners are told to watch their step and put their minds in the service of their stomachs. Switching again to a generalised second person, the speaker then introduces a new dimension to his creed. What one is now supposed to swallow is *any subject* (*liubúiu tému*) and what is digested and broken down is *information*. Turning to himself again for the last time, the protagonist confesses, or even boasts, of all

185. For further discussion of the self-inclusive 'you,' see 8.4.13, page 160 ff.

the good things he has destroyed in this way. He presents his friend the refrigerator as his witness. Then, finally, he is forced to admit a single drawback to his ideal existence: the occasional sickness he has to cope with. He quickly reduces this complaint, though, to a minor side effect of the more positive aspect of being over-stuffed.

In the interlude, the utterances of the four voices again confirm the advantages of the protagonist's way of living. He has done away with pretensions, offences and doubts. He is definitely full, up to his neck.

8.5.15. Rhymes and rhythm

Compared with the songs previously analysed, *Syt's* lyric appears less strictly and formally composed. Most of the rhymes are approximate, although they become slightly stricter in the final verse. They follow the general pattern AABBCCDD in the verses, ABAB in the interlude. Some of the rhyming words show assonances instead of end rhymes, like *golódnyi - ugódno* (verse one, lines five and six) or *vpróchem - khóchesh'* (verse two, lines one and two). There is a single internal rhyme in verse two, line two: *mózhesh' - khóchesh'*.

Alliterations and assonances are much less apparent than in *Geroi*, and chains occur mainly in verse one, lines two and four: *Mne níchego ne nádo u meniá vsió est'* and *I iméiu osnovánie schitát' sebiá sýtym* respectively. Repetitions are more prominent, however, with the short form of the adjective *syt* and its long form *sytyi*, and the first person pronouns with oblique forms, dominating. *Sytyi* first appears at the end of line four of the first verse, and it also opens the following line. *Syt* ends the final line of each verse and the first half of the interlude, while the final line of the interlude replaces it with *Da!* (*Yeah!*) repeated four times, omitting the rhyming word *syt*, which anyhow opens the following line. *Syt* occurs twice in each line of each chorus. *Ia/moi* and oblique forms appear frequently in the opening verse along with verbs in the first person. They are also repeated in the first and two final lines of the second verse, and in the second half of the third verse.

The end rhymes are partly 'masculine', partly 'feminine'. 'Feminine' rhymes are found in the four middle lines of the first verse and the six first lines of the second verse. The third verse is inverted when compared to the second, beginning with two 'feminine' and ending with six 'masculine' rhymes. The many stressed final syllables, along with the stricter rhymes, add to the effect of the emphasised concluding remarks, as the speaker drives his final points home. This might also suggest that his arguments become rather more forced towards the end, as if the speaker needs to convince himself, something that the increasingly apparent 'sickness' in the singer's voice underlines. In the chorus, the last 'lai' and 'la' are stressed, while the interlude's A-rhymes are 'feminine', the B-rhymes 'masculine'.

The metre in *Syt* is free. The rap-like manner of singing recognised by informants does not depend upon a strict, repetitive rhythmic structure. Generally, *Syt* has a relatively high number of unstressed syllables, which occasionally create a staccato effect. There is a slight tendency towards units of four syllables with stress on the second or third, but this may be related to the general rhythm of Russian speech as much as to a deliberate effect. However, the singer opens and finishes the song by stressing each syllable: *dób-ró-é útro* in the opening and *sýt pó gór-ló* in the final line. The same applies to the imperative opening the third verse: *smó-trí pód nógi* and in the fourth line of the interlude: *Dá, iá sýt*. In the chorus, the two first units of each line are characterised by two successive stressed syllables, both significantly on the word *syt*. Two successive stresses also occur in verse two, line two, *...i ne ést' ésli ne...* and in verse three, line two: *...golovói rádi...*, in both cases emphasising important rules in the protagonist's creed.

8.5.16. Language, expressions and metaphors

If *Syt's* lyric may resemble a manifesto in form, this is not supported by the proximity of its language to everyday speech. The speaker's way with words reflects the basic qualities of his creed, and the discrepancy between form and language contributes to the ironic atmosphere of the song. At various points his speech becomes stilted, most notably in the fourth and final lines of the opening verse respectively: *I iméiu osnovániia schitát' sebiá sýtym* and *Ia chúvstvuiu uvérennost' v tom chto ia syt*. On both occasions a comic effect is produced by his talking about everyday issues in the language of official bureaucracy.

The comic effect created by this combination of official and everyday language is used to great effect in most societies as a means of ridiculing the emptiness that frequently lies behind the eloquence of political, bureaucratic, clerical or academic elites. In Russian literature, Mikhail Zoshchenko (1895-1958) was a master at utilising for humorous effect the discrepancies between stilted official bureaucratic phraseology and everyday speech. His satire from the NEP era of the 1920s often targets people who conform to the current societal trends for their own benefit, e.g. the character of the *Aristokratka*.[186] There is no condemnation in Zoshchenko's ridicule, however. The Brezhnev era provided rich opportunities for its use, making it a popular ingredient of anecdotes of the 1960s and 1970s, until the neologism-infected official jargon of perestroika renewed the genre. *Syt* appears to be following this satiric tradition.

Ozhegov (1989: 784) interprets the adjective *sýtyi/syt* as having fully satisfied one's hunger, and lists the expression *syt po górlo* (*full to the neck/throat*) immediately after the word's principal reference. The pejorative expression may also refer to abstract qualities that reach or transcend a person's level of satiety, as in *syt po górlo obeshchániami* (*full to the throat of promises*, *fed up with promises*). Among related expressions the proverb *I syt i pián i nos v tabaké* (lit. *both full and drunk and nose in tobacco*) might be mentioned, which denotes being fully satisfied with everything; and *Sýtyi golódnogo ne razuméet* (*the full cannot fathom the hungry*). Secondary significations include expressions of satisfaction, as in *sýtaia ulýbka* (lit. *sated smile*); to be oblivious of need, live in abundance: *sýtoe meshchánstvo* (*sated petty bourgeoisie*). *Syt* is also used in relation to livestock, synonymously with *otkórmlennyi* (*fatted, well-fed*). The song plays on the entire spectrum of meanings listed here.

The speaker starts by greeting his audience with 'good morning' in a manner as clearly emphasised as the main points of his creed, showing that he takes formalities seriously. He then declares he is here again, which implies that he has been away for some time, but that he and the ideas he represents have now returned in force. This utterance follows immediately after the radio-jingle intro, with its origin in the official Soviet media and the anthem from the height of the Stalinist repressions of the late 1930s, thus linking the character of the speaker to one of the darkest chapters in the history of the Soviet Union.

In the second and fourth line a dichotomy is established between *nothing/everything* and *hungry/full*, as the protagonist describes his life of plenty. The verb *guliát'* (*walk, stroll*) is used somewhat unusually to describe his movement around the kitchen. Normally the verb *guliat'* is applied to outdoor walks or signifies relaxation, having time off, enjoying the nightlife, dating somebody, or simply having fun. The word implies that the kitchen is vast, unlike the average Russian kitchens in which even to *shagát'* (*pace*) might constitute a problem, and emphasises its importance and status in the protagonist's mind. In *Syt,* unlike in *Geroi*, the kitchen does not appear to refer to a social sphere. Here, the kitchen as a place for food-storage, cooking and eating is the most significant. The main character's *górdyi vid* (*proud expression*) reflects both the size and importance of the kitchen and his being full.

186. See also the Aristokrat analysis 8.2.15, page 130 ff.

Next, the main character opens the refrigerator (*kholodíl'nik*) and literally *under the sausage's gaze* (*vo vzglyáde kolbasý*) he again feels reassured that he is full. Both the *kholodíl'nik* and the *kolbasá* had certain symbolic value in the days of the Soviet economy of shortage. The contents of the house 'fridge' reflected the extent of the owners' network of contacts and unofficial supplies, making it a measure of status. In times of shortage, meat and sausages in particular represented much-desired luxury objects, hence the protagonist's pride and high self-esteem.

The chorus is the first element to suggest a negative side to the main character's situation, the expression *syt po górlo* bringing in a touch of negativity and ambivalence that contrasts with the self-sufficient bragging of the first verse. Without seemingly affecting the protagonist's self-confidence, the ambivalence becomes even more apparent in the following verse. He starts by declaring that somebody has fattened (*kormíli* [past plural], implicitly *oni* [*they*]) him *po sistéme na ubói* (*systematically for slaughter*). *Ubói* (*slaughter*) occurs in the expressions *kormít' na ubói* (*feed for slaughter*) and *kormít' kak na ubói* (*feed as if for slaughter*), the latter of which applies ironically to an exaggerated level of hospitality. The notion of being fed for slaughter does not seem to disturb the protagonist at all. Instead he underlines that, after all, eating is not mandatory and that thinking about the future is irrelevant. When you can have all you ask for, being weak is something for which you can only blame yourself. If so, you simply have not eaten enough porridge (*el málo káshi*). Observe also that the expression *málo káshi el* (*ate little porridge*) refers not only to physical weakness, but also to youthful lack of experience (Ozhegov 1989: 272).

The expression *smotrét' (sebé) pod nógi* (*watch one's step*) opens the third verse as a piece of advice in the imperative mode. The trick is to use one's head *rádi zhelúdka* (lit. *for the sake of the stomach*), as the second piece of advice declares, implying that basic material needs should take precedence over intellectual values. In the light of this, any sense in looking ahead is already dismissed, short-sightedness becomes a virtue rather than a danger. Then, in the third line, the protagonist turns to the actual act of eating. Surprisingly it is not food that is taken and swallowed, but *liubúiu tému* (any *subject* or *topic*). Similarly it is not foodstuffs, but information that is being transformed into *zhelúdochnyi sok* (*gastric juice*). It is not information of any kind, however, that is being gulped down by the protagonist. He is being fed by someone. For slaughter, even. Still he desires nothing other than what he is being fed. He repeatedly insists that he has all he may wish for and can ask no more.

One the one hand, *Syt's* protagonist is being stuffed with subject matter, with information, with ideology, something he, according to himself, values. On the other hand he digests the information, breaks everything down into gastric juice, makes everything the same. His following line *Ia unichtózhil stól'ko dobrá* (*I've done away with so much good*) becomes ambivalent. It is uncertain whether he says this with regret or whether he presents it as another benefit. *Unichtózhit'* has many nuances from *exterminate* or *annihilate* to *destroy*, *abolish*, *do away with* or *crush*. Even if the process of digestion suggests a less violent process, the word's most dramatic meanings make it stand out, echoing the intro's historical references. Adding further to the line's ambivalence is the noun *dobró*, another ambiguous word. In addition to *good*, it is used neutrally to signify *property*.[187] The refrigerator now reappears as the protagonist's friend (*mói drug kholodíl'nik*) and witness, which questions whether he has any human friends and relations. Then, finally, the main character has to openly admit that the existence he idealises has one drawback, that he is sometimes unwell (*byváet plókho*). This is repeated more concretely with the verb *toshnít'* (*to be sick* or

187. Although such use seems unlikely here, it is interesting to note that *dobró* may be used ironically to denote something useless, as in the expression *takógo dobrá mne i dárom ne núzhno* (*I wouldn't take such junk as a gift*) (Smirinitskii 2002: 153).

feel sick). Having admitted this much, however, the protagonist immediately feels obliged to soften the remark by relating it to the blessing of being full. In the interlude this is followed up by the addition of four lines which repeat and confirm the advantages, the absence of pretentions, offences and doubts. In the world of the protagonist, having no desires means hurting no-one and having no problems

8.5.17. Words, manner of singing and instrumental accentuations

As several IOCM informants have underlined, Borzykin sings in a theatrical manner, acting out the lyric with frequent changes in his mode of expression. In addition the male choir and synth brass stabs contribute to underlining key words and phrases. The changeability in the singer's mood in *Syt* contrasts with the relative stability of the vocal personae in the songs previously analysed, which is why I have chosen to deal with this in a separate paragraph here. I shall first briefly compare Philip's detailed account of the different vocal expressions with the song lyric, then account for the choir's contribution, as well as instrumental accentuations of words.

Philip characterises the vocal persona in the first verse as mannered, determined-sounding and with a distinct ironic tone. This fits well with the introductory part of the lyric. In the first part of the second verse Philip notes a STORYTELLING MODE, MILDLY TEACHING and not unlike a PARENTAL NARRATIVE. It sounds almost LIKE THE MORAL PART OF A FAIRY STORY, he adds. This fits well with the protagonist's narrative of being fattened, his assurance that eating is not mandatory and his accounting for one principal advantage. Then, Philip continues, the voice becomes DRAMATIC again as it stresses that it makes no sense to think of the future; then IRONICALLY DECLAMATORY (*if you're weak...*); then SELF-SUFFICIENT, ALMOST GLOATING, as it comes to the final two lines, where the protagonist stresses he has no claims to make and emphasises his conviction of being full. The voice becomes INCREASINGLY INTIMATE as it APPEARS TO BE GIVING ADVICE, Philip notes, his impressions quite consistent with the lyrics. Then he hears the voice change modes from anger (*transforming information to digestive juice*) to increasing worry (beginning at *I've done away with...,* peaking at *But sometimes I'm not feeling well...*). If the anger is not so explicit in the lyric, the worry certainly is.

The male choir sings along from the second word of the first line in each chorus: *syt po górlo lái-lái-lái lu-lái* and *ty el málo káshi* in the sixth line of verse two. A blurting, siren-like synth noise rings out directly before the opening *dóbroe útro* of the first verse. Similarly, the first occurrence of the word *sytyi* in line five of the opening verse is immediately followed by a brass stab, and the same effect is used to emphasise certain words throughout the song. Accompanied by louder or weaker brass stabs are: *ugódno* (verse 1, line 6); *khóchesh'* (verse 2, line 2); *nógi* (verse 3, line 1); *sok* (verse 3, line 4); each occurrence of *syt* in the choruses; the final *la* of the second chorus; *obíd*, *syt* and each of the four final *da!* in the interlude. In each of the two final chorus repeats an additional stab is added to *górlo* as well. The brass stabs, then, occur more frequently throughout the song and generally become weaker the more they are repeated. The shock effect thus becomes less threatening as the listener grows accustomed to the situation described.

8.5.18. Rock impersonations of evil, vileness and conforming power

Syt does not correspond to such an obvious tradition of rock songs as *Aristokrat*, *Drian'* or *Geroi*, yet ironic impersonations of something harmful or undesirable do have their own small branch in the rock tradition. One of the most well-known examples is Mick Jagger's impersonation of the devil:

Please allow me to introduce myself, I'm a man of wealth and taste
I've been around for long, long years, stolen many a man's soul and faith
And I was 'round when Jesus Christ had his moment of doubt and pain
I made damn sure that Pilate washed his hands and sealed his fate

Pleased to meet you, hope you guess my name
But what's puzzling you is the nature of my game

I stuck around St Petersburg when I saw it was a time for change
I killed the Czar and his ministers, Anastasia screamed in vain
I rode a tank, held a general's rank
When the Blitzkrieg raged, and the bodies stank

Just as every cop is a criminal and all the sinners saints
As heads is tails just call me Lucifer, 'cause I'm in need of some restraint
So if you meet me, have some courtesy, have some sympathy, and some taste
Use all your well-learned politesse, or I'll lay your soul to waste

Rolling Stones: *Sympathy for the Devil*, 1968 [S-94] (verse 1, chorus, verses 2 and 4)

Sympathy for the Devil was followed up throughout the 1970s and 1980s by a series of more or less subtle portrayals of the Beast, especially in hard rock and heavy rock. But Televizor's song is not explicitly occupied with the religious or mythic aspects of evil. Neither is it as obviously hatefully voiced, or as specifically related to the political, as punk impersonations of this kind tend to be, e.g. in *California Über Alles* or *I am the Owl* [S-95] by the Dead Kennedys:

I am the owl
I seek out the foul
Wipe 'em away - keep America free
For clean-livin' folks like me

Dead Kennedys: *I Am the Owl*, 1982 [S-95] (chorus)

A slightly less obvious sarcasm can be observed in Iggy Pop's impersonation of a conservative [S-96]. Here the singer's voice holds something reminiscent of Televizor's 'stuffed'-sounding lead vocal, combined with more than a touch of upper-class arrogance, as the protagonist praises his more or less negative or immoral qualities and describes a life of over-abundance. Clearly he too has nothing left to wish for:

Hey look me over and lend me an ear, I'm a conservative
I like the small, black marks on my hand, I'm a conservative
I like the crazy girls that I screw
Hey, hey! I know them all well
And when I run out of bread I laugh
All the way to the bank
Sometimes I pause for a drink
Conservatism ain't no easy job
I smile in the mornings, I live without a care
Nothing is denied me and nothing ever hurts

I can afford, so I'm making my millions
When you're conservative you get a better break
You're always on the right side when you're a conservative
You walk with pride - Pride is on your side!
Pride, pride, pride is on our side!
Oh, boy, pride is on our side!

I like my beer, I like my bread
I love my girl, I love my head
I'm in the clear, man, I'm in the clear
'Cause I'm a conservative
I'm a conservative
I really am, oh yes I am

And it would mean so much to me
If you would only be like me
Yes it could mean so much to me
Hey look me over and lend me an ear
I'm a conservative

Iggy Pop: *I'm a Conservative*, 1980 [S-96] (intro excluded).

Iggy Pop's song also has an element of preaching, similar to *Syt*. Both protagonists would like the listener to become like them, not so much for the listener's own good, it seems, as to make the protagonist's existence even more smooth and devoid of conflict. But there is another aspect of *Syt* that *I'm a Conservative* does not cover: the role played by information. Not unexpectedly, and as two informants have implicitly suggested, such an approach to the subject is found among Frank Zappa's many and various songs of impersonation:

I am gross and perverted, I'm obsessed and deranged
I have existed for years, but very little has changed
I'm the tool of the Government and Industry too
For I am destined to rule and regulate you

I may be vile and pernicious but you can't look away
I make you think I'm delicious with the stuff that I say
I'm the best you can get, have you guessed me yet?
I'm the slime oozin' out from your TV set

You will obey me while I lead you and eat the garbage that I feed you
Until the day that we don't need you, don't go for help, no-one will heed you
Your mind is totally controlled, it has been stuffed into my mould
And you will do as you are told until the rights to you are sold

Frank Zappa: *I'm the Slime*, 1973 [S-97] (verses 1-3).

Here Zappa portrays a western equivalent to the forces or people that feed Syt's protagonist for slaughter. He presents himself at once as *the best you can get* and as *the slime*. The eating metaphor is employed as a part of the obedience he expects. The 'you' in the lyrics is being stuffed into the slime's mould, controlled and forced to conform. But unlike Zappa's slime, Borzykin's protagonist is both a target and an agent in the conforming

process. He is being fed, but simultaneously he is breaking everything down into the same matter. There would appear to be something Russian in this way of describing the character as ambivalent, as both a part of evil and its victim. Andrei Tropillo, talking about the specific Russian aspects of Russian rock, says:

> The thing is that Russian rock is not melodramatic. That is why all those American movies are bad. It's the melodrama. There the good are always good and fighting the bad, who are bad, and in the end the good-good bury the bad-bad and happy ending, right? But the Russian idea is entirely different: All people are half good, half bad and each is fighting within himself [...] Here he has given his last shirt to a child and then he chops up this granny with an axe, right? Russians. Therefore we can never agree on anything (Tropillo in Steinholt 2002c: 25-26).

Taking as his prime example Raskol'nikov from Dostoevsky's novel *Crime and Punishment*, Tropillo touches on a central motif stretching far beyond the golden age of Russian literature: The internal struggle in the human soul between good and evil, the relative nature of good and evil, truth and lie. This is a problem Socialist Realism tried to overcome by introducing the ideologically and morally complete Soviet Man. Soviet ideology tried in various ways to fight this deep notion of the great paradox of human nature. In schools, only the first part of *Crime and Punishment* was mandatory reading. It was read and explained in order to comply with Soviet morals, thereby making Raskolnikov's initial theory of murdering the old woman to serve a higher goal the novel's principal message. For this reason many Russians, including my own friends, contacts and informants, have a negative attitude to *Crime and Punishment* even today.

The motif of the human soul as a battleground between good and evil has prevailed, however, Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita* being one of the most prominent and influential examples. In the novel, the Christ character is surprisingly uncharismatic, elusive and powerless, the direct opposite of Margarita, the Devil and his assistants. For Bulgakov, the most negative characters are the members of the Union of Writers, who have conformed to the ideas of official ideology, denied the power of magic and all become identical. Conformism is not a passive move; it involves being used by the conforming power, and it helps increase the pressure on those next in line. Thus, the main character in Syt is not only being fed, not only letting himself be convinced that his way of life represents the superior alternative, but is also acting as a vehicle for the forces that feed him, helping them transform information according to their liking, in order to reduce everything to the same matter. On this point, Syt's lyrics come close to a song by another LRC band, Alisa:

Suddenly I see
Someone approaching me
But I can't figure out what he is
He resembles a tractor, a nuclear reactor
And somehow a pressed lemon.
White as a hospital, birds flee from him,
He's solid like a fireproof safe.
Slippery as jellyfish, obsolete like a burden,
He's moving among flowers and grass.

Who are you, what kind are you?
Who are you, eh?
Who are you, what kind are you?
And he answers me:
'I'm your juice-squeezer'

I don't know what to do - flee or stay put?
I thought a bit and remained standing.
He's coming closer I can't see him any more,
Only feel he has started to squeeze.
Now I'm squeezed like a wood-louse, birds flee from me,
And now he suddenly resembles me.
And now I'm like a tractor, like a nuclear reactor
And I can't find out - who of us is me?

Alisa: *Sokovyzhimatel'*, 1985 [S-98] (verses 1, 2, and refrain)

Alisa's *Juice Squeezer* may be regarded as another example of Zoshchenkian satire directed towards the collaborator. The individual joins the machinery of bureaucratic power as an act of self-preservation, but this ironically results in a loss of self. The external agents in *Syt* and *Sokovyzhimatel'* appear to represent the same collective force. This force destroys the individual, presses everybody into its mould. Instead of treating the evil or negative forces impersonated as entities separate from the individual, as in the songs of the western LCM, these LRC songs include the individual as part of the problem. Both songs offer the implicit alternative of either walking away from the Juice-Squeezer or staying hungry. By drawing their gloomy and threatening portraits of the stuffed and the squeezed, the songs invite their listeners to choose the narrow path, think for themselves, hold on to their dreams and desires, to remain individuals at all costs.

8.5.19. Staying hungry

The critique in *Syt* is harsh, yet more subtle and therefore probably more effective than a direct political pamphlet would have been. It does not come up with a concrete alternative, it does not preach. It targets an elusive and many-sided adversary by mirroring his very same qualities. One has the impression that nobody walks entirely free from its critique, that everybody has - in however small a part - let themselves be fed, chosen the path of least resistance. The sickness experienced by the main character seems to reflect a feeling most people experience at some time, and not only Soviet citizens at that: the feeling of being misrepresented, of being used. The idea of the significance of struggle, the notion that only dead fish float downstream, is also reflected in the LCM mentioned above.

Syt has many targets. In one sense its critique is addressed to the higher echelons of Soviet ideologists and cultural authorities, on another it can be read as an attack on the reactionary forces within the LRC, but its main target remains the individual, the individual as part of society. It is a warning about the dangers of letting others think for you. The attitude of the main character in *Syt* has its parallels also in western literature, calling to mind for example the society of fat, docile rabbits in Richard Adams' novel *Watership Down*, who choose to sacrifice some of their own in return for feeding off the farmer's bait of surplus carrots. It also reflects the citizens' attitude in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, who have been made to prefer 'the feelies' and 'soma' to creative intellectual activity. It can of course be tempting to make *Syt* an example of an explicitly anti-Soviet song, but as in the two novels the conflict between the individual and society is thematised on a more universal level. Limiting it to an attack on Soviet totalitarianism (or authoritarianism) would imply an ignorance of the nature of its message. While the written lyric could be presented as a critique of capitalist societies, and such arguments were often used to ensure that songs were sanctioned, the song relies on the musical intro to expand its message and relate it to a Soviet context.[188]

As the slightly re-written 1994 version of *Syt po gorlo* [S-99] shows, changing the masters does not necessary remove the problem. The post-Soviet version of the song has no radio-jingle intro. It is played slightly slower than in the 1987 recording and features an angrier, more desperate voice. It is backed by a powerful accompaniment led by an electric guitar. Its message does not only approach that of Zappa's *I'm the Slime*, but also, especially in the new interlude, an angrier, more sarcastic and direct attitude as heard in many songs of the Anglo-American LCM. Still, the principal message remains the same and the main character's role remains split between the victim and the vehicle of oppression:

Full to the Throat
Good morning, I'm back again
Don't need anything – I've got all that I need.
I take a walk around the kitchen with a proud expression
And meet all demands to call myself full
Yes full is back in fashion,
The better the man the fatter his snout.
Don't think of anything but sausage
If you want to be one of those, who are
Full, full to the throat!

Hey, banderlogi,[189] closer, closer...
You're my broker, I'm your bourse
Boeing or leasing, marketing completed,
Turn on your television - I'm with you!
Swallow the spit of freedom,
Dream about the land of holy sandwiches,
About the new shampoo for old brains,
It's all so easy - wash and go!
You're full, full to the throat!

Watch your step! That's the art –
Work with your head to service your guts.
You take any subject, and make a quick gulp,
Transforming information to digestive juice.
I've done away with so much good–
My friend the fridge won't let me lie.
But sometimes I'm not feeling well, I guess I feel sick,
But I'm just too stuffed, that is why.

188. In order to have his song *Moe pokolenie* (*My Generation*) sanctioned in 1985, Alisa singer Konstantin Kinchev demonstrated a more cynical approach, adding a pro-forma dedication: 'For the victims of the events in Philadelphia 13th of May' (On the 13th May 1985, the FBI dropped a C4 bomb on the MOVE organisation's Osage Avenue home in West Philadelphia, killing 11). Kinchev's dedication never appeared on record covers or in lyric compilations of Alisa songs. In the foreword to her biography of Kinchev (Baranovskaia 1993), LRC censor Nina Baranovskaia confirms that the inclusion of the dedication was purely tactical.

189. *Banderlogi*: refers to the native tribe in Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*.

Well but I'm no woodpecker - my head really hurts.
From the winds of democracy I've caught SNGitis![190]
Well and my teeth are itching - it's already SNG(ross)
I go SNGated into the deep s...
I'll be full, full to the throat!

Televizor: *Syt po gorlo*, 1994 [S-99]

190. SNG: *Soedinénie Nezavísimykh Gosudárstv* (*The Commonwealth of Independent States*).

Chapter 9 Conclusions

9.1. General summary

The Leningrad Rock Club (LRC) was a product of the combined initiatives of the rock community, fronted by concert organisers; the local cultural authorities; and the KGB. Thus, the LRC became a sort of cultural reservation, ruled by the mechanisms of a client-patron relationship. The insiders were forced to keep order within their own lines, something which eventually made the club self-censoring. As outside pressure on the LRC began to lift, internal control routines clashed with the less compromising approches of younger bands. The relationship between the rock environment and the various incarnations of official Soviet authorities was complex. This is further demonstrated by internal conflicts within the LRC between concert organisers and musicians, and later between the older and younger generations of members.

With its focus from below, *Rock in the Reservation* challenges common notions made by earlier sociological approaches which take their points of departure in macropolitics. Such works have a tendency to describe alternative cultural practices as united for a common cause, which they frequently associate with an agenda of dissent. *Rock in the Reservation* argues that the rock environment played a double role. On the one hand it helped authorities bring itself under control. Its own representatives regularly excluded or refused to include bands that went beyond the invisible borders of the acceptable. On the other hand it used the LRC as a platform for winning rock recognition within the official culture. However, the LRC itself soon developed protective and reactionary tendencies and became reluctant to accept initiatives other than those of its own establishment.

It is easier to explain these conflicts of roles if the traditional countercultural perspective applied by earlier studies is replaced by one of parallel culture. The concept of parallel culture acknowledges that alternative cultural practices in the Soviet era did not necessarily protest openly against official ideological discourse. They also employed various strategies of evasion from it. Soviet ideology regarded rock music as one among many symptoms of the cultural decadence of the capitalist West. Rather than attacking the very foundation of this argument, Leningrad rockers simply defined their music, and the rock styles they were influenced by, as an exception. In this way they were not obliged to fight windmills, to challenge an order of society that the vast majority of citizens, rockers included, regarded as virtually everlasting. It is in the light of this that the unyielding stance of rock environment insiders - that rock was beyond politics - must be understood.

The study's qualitative musical analysis involves first-time listenings of four songs by LRC bands conducted by a panel of informants. It focuses primarily on descriptions of the mood and stylistic references of the songs. One of the intentions with this qualitative survey was that responses would help generate ideas and arguments to challenge an insider view of 'russianness'. According to this consistently expressed view, the Russian elements of Leningrad rock at the time were restricted to its lyrics, while the music was taken from the western rock tradition.

The survey came up with little material to contest this dominant view in the Leningrad rock community. However, it provided rich insight into the musical intertextuality of rock, examples of musical and stylistical influences relevant to Leningrad bands, aesthetic preferences, and the popular practices of stylistic loans. In turn, these observations made

it possible to point out certain local preferences and experiments in the combination of styles. Furthermore, they showed varieties in codal competence of the various musicians involved in recordings. At times, musicians who assisted during recording sessions were unfamiliar with the style the band wanted to play. Such lack of shared codal competence could at times contribute to a sound and an aesthetics, which western listener informants found unusual. Also, the survey enabled a comparison of the Russian songs to songs they were influenced by. Thus, the study finds that the marginal position of rhytmic music in the Soviet Union is reflected in a tendency towards a less prominent position for drums and percussion in the songs analysed, compared to that of bands that inspired them.

The responses of the non-Russian-speaking informant group also proved their significance in preparing the ground for the analyses of the song lyrics. Especially relevant here were descriptions of the mood and atmosphere of the songs as a whole, as well as the parts played by individual instruments. Among these, descriptions of the singing voices proved especially valuable. The lyric analyses found that the four songs could be related, each to their own thematic tradition in rock. This testifies to an awareness of rock stylistics and aesthetics in Leningrad bands, which matches that of their contemporary colleagues in the west. In mapping the corresponding thematic traditions in western rock lyrics, the study came up with examples of a lyrical, but also musical, expressivity recognisable in the songs of the Leningrad bands.

Furthermore, the lyric analyses revealed connections between the rock songs and the Russian literary tradition, on the levels of language, motifs, characters and topics. In particular this concerns the main characters in the songs. When compared to western rock songs about similar themes, the Leningrad songs showed a higher level of ambivalence and preparedness for self-criticism on the part of their main characters. The connections between Leningrad rock and the Russian literary tradition are reflected in the poetic strategies employed by rock songwriters, especially before perestroika. These strategies sought to earn rock music acceptance as a viable cultural form by infesting it with the prestige of literature.

9.2. The song analyses

9.2.1. Sounds Russian? Considering musical 'Russianness'

Relatively few of the IOCM panel's musical associations directly involve Russian or east-European musical traits. Myke notices a vague element of eastern Bloc pop in *Aristokrat*. Thomas finds the chorus of *Syt*, with its *lai-lai* phrases, reminiscent of Russian folk songs. Philip identifies the proletarian hymn / radio jingle quoted in *Syt's* intro. I have also noted that *Syt's lai-lai-lai* phrases echo estrada hits of the 1960s and 1970s, where they featured as a Soviet equivalent to the anglophone *yeah-yeah-yeah's*; and that Tsui's tendency to sing on sibilants and the rolled 'r' in *Geroi* echoes a common practice in bard song. Apart from these observations, an 'old-fashioned' sound, compared to western bands, and a number of sound features related to technical limitations are the main informant responses.

The relative dryness and shallowness of the sound in the three earlier recordings may be related to the technical limitations of the AnTrop studio. In the cases of *Aristokrat* and *Drian*', side effects of bouncing technique are apparent in the sound deterioration of the instruments recorded first. The three AnTrop songs also share a lack of drive. In Akvarium's song this lack of attack appears to be motivated by reggae stylistics. In *Geroi* the relative stasis corresponds, along with a relative emptiness in the mid-tonal register, to the 'no-way-outness' of the protagonist's situation. To a lesser extent, the lack of drive and attack in *Drian'* may be related to the main character's ambivalence between insult

and aggression on the one hand, and remnants of love on the other. Thus, the lyrics in *Geroi* and *Drian'* seem to have a restricting effect on the rhythm. However, these features may also be related to recording techniques, which demanded an even rhythm and tempo, combined with the limited experience of the musicians of playing in a studio.

The features most often described by informants as strange, unusual or different relate to the rhythm sections. While the IOCM panel does not quite agree on whether the 'casual' percussion in *Aristokrat* is a feature borrowed from Jamaican reggae or not, most find the bass weak, thin-sounding and stylistically untypical. In *Drian'* similar observations of hesitant drumming and a lack of bass attack are repeated, along with notions of 'unprocessed' qualities in the sound of the respective instruments. Although played or programmed electronically, what informants term the 'cheap' and 'primitive' rhythm sounds, and the 'old-fashioned' analogue synth bass, stand out in their responses to *Geroi*. Some informants find the synth sounds in *Syt* somewhat dated as well. If the sound picture of *Syt* is regarded by most respondents as more advanced and contemporary than those of the AnTrop songs, then one informant argues that a high level of treble reduces the song's reverb effects, making it sound 'cheaper' than in similar western recordings. Although Televizor's drums are played to sound electronic, informants generally find them in line with the western trends of the time. While the rhythm and bass of *Syt* is relatively dance-friendly, the three AnTrop songs, with the possible exception of *Aristokrat*, give the impression of being performed with lyric-focused listening rather than dancing in mind.

Another factor which might indicate a musical 'russianness' in the song examples is related to the interpretation and combination of various western styles. In *Aristokrat* this becomes apparent when some of the musicians resort to mainstream rock elements as soon as they transcend their knowledge of Jamaican reggae. The bass breaks with the reggae paradigm and although BG does a two-tone reggae chant, the timbre of his voice remains in a European ballad mode. Perhaps more obviously and deliberately, the combination of blues-based rock-and-roll riffs and a punk manner of playing in *Drian'* produces a characteristic blend. Zoopark's somewhat unusual combination of styles might perhaps not qualify as exclusively Russian, but it is decidedly un-western.

Poslednii geroi seems to be performed with a secure general knowledge of the British and European new-pop styles, but with a tendency towards ad-hoc loans from the rock mainstream, similar to, but less prominent than those in *Aristokrat*. This is possibly a consequence of the fact that older musicians from the Akvarium circle were actively involved in the song's recording. Although *Syt po gorlo* plays on a wide range of musical styles, the end result appears more consistently European-sounding, with the possible exception of the *lai-lai* phrases in the choruses. On the other hand its quotation of *Pesnia o rodine* and the Radio Moscow jingle directly refer to a Russian context. By quoting the melody of a proletarian hymn from the late 1930s, used subsequently as a jingle, the musical intro situates the song in a particular context without using words that might be affected by censorship.

9.2.2. Lyrics 1: Translated motifs and formal characteristics

Each of the four songs give their renditions of recurring topics in western rock songs. When compared to their respective LCM and IOCM, it is possible to argue that they hold a relatively high literary or 'poetic' level. However, it would make little sense to pass qualitative judgements, at least not on such a limited basis. In this context it has been more interesting to investigate how and to what extent the lyrics relate to the Russian literary tradition. All four songs are character songs in the sense that the singer acts out, or involves himself in, the song's main character. This focus on the ego is a typical rock

trait, unlike the bard song's preference for narratives. The lyrics can also be characterised as 'focused' according to Lindberg's definition.[191] The non-directionality in *Geroi* and the ambivalence in *Drian'* appear to determine the musical and rhythmic features to varying degrees, while the play with Jamaican slang words and echo effects in *Aristokrat* show a tendency towards 'words musified.' The theatrical performance of the lyrics in *Syt* exploits the sound quality and musicality of the words, but emphasises simultaneously the role of the lyrics. Instruments, vocal techniques and the choir are widely used to make certain words and phrases stand out.

Aristokrat and *Drian'* demonstrate a Russian translation and appropriation of reggae and rock-and-roll motifs respectively. BG uses a normative everyday language, laden with slang expressions from Jamaican reggae. A somewhat formal tone in some of the lines contrasts with the foreign slang terms, producing a mildly humorous effect. Maik's language with its colourful imagery represents, it seems, a more conscious attempt to construct a local rock jargon, based on the everyday speech of young Leningradians. In *Drian'* he imbues a standard rock-and-roll motif with punk aggressiveness and abuse, and clothes it in a rich and imaginative vernacular close to that of anecdotes and urban narratives. Viktor Tsui uses a less colourful, more ascetic phraseology, based on a normative everyday speech with a youthful touch, rather than on slang or youth jargon. Like BG's reggae, Tsui's lyrics to *Geroi* are governed by the conventions of western genres, which the IOCM relates in this case to British new pop and post-punk. By singing in Russian, Tsui contextualises a western rock motif in a Russian setting in a more general manner.

The lyrics of the first three songs show a certain orientation towards written poetry. BG's language retains certain bookish aspects, as does Tsui's matter-of-fact style, while Maik's oral language aesthetics are combined with a relatively strict form and regular rhyme patterns. Borzykin's lyrics to *Syt*, on the other hand, rely not on everyday speech, but on a particular literary style. Involving more than merely translating a western rock motif into a Russian context, *Syt* draws on the Russian literary tradition for a parodic language. In this way he exploits the comic effects of stilted bureaucratic phraseology combined with basic everyday jargon. Whereas Maik's language draws on oral narratives, Borzykin's merges satiric prose with rap aesthetics.

The rhyme patterns of the songs vary from a relatively strict one in *Drian'*, through the more repetition-dependent structures of *Aristokrat* and *Geroi*, to *Syt's* relatively free, rapped lyrics. The repetitions and parallelisms in *Aristokrat* and *Geroi* have elements in common with folkloric Russian poetry, but these techniques are frequently used in reggae and rock as well. All four songs make occasional use of approximate rhymes. In *Geroi* alliterations and assonances play a more significant role than end-rhymes, while *Drian'* uses such effects to a slightly lesser extent. None of the four songs have a consistent metre. Their formal rhyme and rhythm structures are quite typical of song lyrics in this respect.

9.2.3. Lyrics 2: The main characters and the Russian context

In the songs' play with shifters, the wide use of the self-inclusive 'you' in *Geroi* and *Syt* attracts attention. Unlike the proud 'I', most common among the main characters of rock songs, the self-inclusive 'you' entails a certain distance between the speaker and his generalised self. In *Geroi* this distance opens up for a certain level of self-critique. In *Syt* it also serves to increase irony at the protagonist's expense. In both cases, however, the role of the speaking subject is problematised in a way untypical of the vast majority of rock

191. For Lindberg's definition of focused lyrics, see 7.1.2, page 97 ff.

songs. It prevents *Geroi* from being reduced to a litany of self-pity, and allows for a finely tuned irony. These assets also protect the song against accusations of 'negativism'. In addition to an ironic effect, the self-inclusive 'you' in *Syt* helps emphasise the main character's double role as both victim and agent of oppression. This pragmatic stance reflects a recurring subject in Russian literature, of the intrinsic complexity of the human soul and of the ever-constant battle within each individual between creative and destructive forces.

In western rock, dualistic conflicts 'I' versus 'you', as in *Drian'*, or 'I'/'us' versus 'them', as in *Aristokrat*, are the most common. More thorough investigation would be necessary to determine whether the self-inclusive 'you' played a more prominent role in Russian than in western rock songs of this period. However, the ambivalence on the part of the main character may also be observed in *Drian*', and might suggest the influence of Russian literary tradition on the approach to songwriting. Another possible reason for the ambivalent main characters is censorship. When the role of the impersonated character is questioned, his pose becomes less threatening. The happy, playful atmosphere of *Aristokrat* makes it possible to present the song as a parody. The moral implications of *Drian*', as shown in the analysis, demanded more thorough changes, despite the notable irony at the protagonist's expense.

The main characters of the four songs are of great significance in at least two respects. First, they are the central figures, through which the songs are contextualised in a Soviet setting. Second, each of the main characters reflects a familiar Russian type or combination of types, some of which are recognisable from Russian literature. As illustrated by the songs' LCM and IOCM, these characters also reflect similar types in western rock songs. Nonetheless, to convince the listener, the characters must be more than archetypes copied from a foreign tradition. They are brought alive in the Russian language and Russian context.

On one level, although his preferred recreational drug is marijuana rather than vodka, BG's 'Aristokrat' is a positive answer to the much-ridiculed 'spiritual drunkard' of the Brezhnev era.[192] He is also an idealised, reflecting *bezdel'nik* (*idler*). Maik's deceived lover might be a more universal character, but his language relates him to characters in local anecdotes and urban folklore. If he is much less stoic and mannered than his brother-in-fate in Pushkin's *Ia vas liubil*, the similarities demonstrate that the song's motif is by no means limited to rock. Tsui's idler demonstrates the dark and empty sides of outsider existence. In this he appears as a modern version of the redundant man (*lishnii chelovek*) a frequently recurring character in Russian 19th century literature. Named the 'last hero', Tsui's song character prompts associations to Lermontov's 'hero of our time'. Borzykin's over-fed main character in *Syt po gorlo* continues the tradition of a satirical archetype: the selfish collaborator who is prepared to sacrifice his soul for material well-being. This figure is common in Soviet-era anecdotes and is found in short stories such as Zoshchenko's *Aristokratka*.

192. Andrei Kagadeev, spokesman of the band N.O.M., shows that this concept is still alive when he characterises some of his fellow rock musicians as 'those who drank themselves to Russian Orthodox Christianity' (Kagadeev in Steinholt 2001d: 2).

9.2.4. Lyrics 3: The Russian role of rock lyrics

The discussion in Chapter 7 concludes that in general, Popular Music Studies assign a less decisive position to lyrics in the creation of a song's meaning than do insiders of the Leningrad rock environment. The special role of lyrics in Leningrad rock may be traced, from one perspective, to practical conditions of music making. These include an initial lack of electric instruments and reliable amplification, as well as acoustic apartment concerts, which became a common medium for amateur rock performances during the 1970s. Aware of the technical limitations of their music making, many rock songwriters saw their potential contribution to the development of rock as a literary one. There is also a class dimension to the literary qualities of Leningrad rock. As confirmed in Chapter 5, several of the most influential songwriters came from intelligentsia homes, with parents who actively encouraged an interest in literature. A number of songwriters also went to elite schools. This has probably contributed to a certain 'academic' approach to rock songwriting. According to the dominant aesthetic ideology of the Leningrad rock environment, rock differs from estrada and entertainment music by stimulating thought and reflection rather than by merely offering recreation. Rock, it is generally held, should be occupied with existential questions. Some regarded it as no less than a vehicle for a spiritual awakening. This appears to be reflected in the choice of topics for songs, and their treatment.

On the one hand, the traditional division in official Soviet cultural organisation between concert- and dance music is reflected in the aesthetic ideals of the rock environment. On the other hand, the ban on concert dancing represented a frustrating limitation for at least some rock performances. Lyrics have apparently served to compensate for two important deficits in pre-perestroika rock culture: the media silence and absence of relevant information channels, and the restricted possibilities of giving physical response to the music at concerts. The rock environment was engaged in a struggle to earn official recognition for rock as a worthy art form. In this struggle the lyrics played a decisive role. The VIA music had failed to erode persistent ideas in official discourse concerning the primitivism and aesthetic inferiority of rhythmic music. Thus, support for the legitimation of rock was sought in the hegemony of the word in Russian and Soviet culture, and in the traditional tendency to regard musical meaning as subordinate to lyrical or poetic meaning. This is also reflected in song censorship, which was primarily a question of sanctioning lyrics, as well as in the presence of rock apologists within the ranks of the Union of Writers.

9.2.5. Notes on provocation and critique

In all the four songs analysed in this study elements can be observed which consciously break with the official ideals of life in Soviet society. Traditionally, western academic works have used such discrepancies to describe rock as anti-Soviet minded. However, such approaches tend to ignore the fact that in late Soviet society, during the 1960s 70s and 80s, official ideology grew increasingly unable to relate to the lives and realities of individual citizens. Citizens responded to this by means of a strategy of non-involvement in official symbols. When Anatolii Gunitskii claims that '[e]verything normal was anti-Soviet to a certain extent' (in Steinholt 2001b: 5), the implication that every 'normal' person was a dissident is not the only one possible. He also suggests that official discourse was incapable of relating to what citizens experienced as normality.

As a consequence it becomes rather meaningless to interpret these songs as though they were direct responses to official discourse. Instead of openly attacking official ideology, the rock songwriters insist on occupying themselves with 'normality,' on depicting life as they experience it, in all its shades and with all its contradictions and complexities. This preoccupation with de-ideologised existential questions did provoke the cultural authorities, but rather than confront the criticism, the defensive strategies of songwriters are predominantly evasive. When BG in *Aristokrat* boldly idealises the idler type, he is prepared to evade criticism by explaining the song as a parody. The same tactics would apply, should the censors recognise the Jamaican slang terms for marijuana. In the shadow of such formal provocations, however, BG gets away with a message that encourages his listeners to think and act as individuals. When Maik's song of abuse oversteps the limits of the morally acceptable, he allows his protagonist to become 'married' and removes the '502nd abortion,' leaving obvious inconsistencies in the overall motif and rhyme-pattern respectively. On one level these inconsistencies signal that the songwriter has given in to the pressure of censorship, on another level they serve to ridicule the censoring authority.

A similar evasiveness may be related, as mentioned above, to the ambiguity of and inherent self-critique in the main characters of *Drian'*, *Geroi*, and *Syt*. Ambiguity and complexity, especially where the main characters are concerned, appear to ensure a wide range of response options to an anticipated, but highly unpredictable critique from the cultural establishment. The four songs do entail elements of societal critique, but on an individual rather than a political level. *Aristokrat* questions those who blindly follow the rules, while *Geroi* considers the consequences of withdrawing from society. By focusing on the cost of collaboration, *Syt* also investigates the relationship between the individual and society. The critique of *Drian'* lies in its thematising a subject commonly regarded as unfit for public performance. However, instead of identifying a problem and attacking its source, the criticism inherent in the songs is multi-layered and multi-directional. The key to solve any problem, they seem to be saying, is to start with oneself.

9.3. Postlude: Five stages of Leningrad rock

In the development of Leningrad rock from the mid-1960s to the present day, five main stages can be identified. The first stage may be described as a learning phase, when beat and rock bands became familiar with the styles and genres through imitation. The second was characterised by various strategies that aimed to achieve an official recognition of rock. The organisation of a rock club became the first step in this direction. Once the LRC had been established, the main challenge was to convince the cultural authorities of rock's aesthetic potential while avoiding the musical compromises forced upon VIAs. A common move was to direct attention towards rock's literary qualities. For this, some songwriters turned to complexity and encrypted messages inspired by the bard tradition, others transferred motifs from well-respected western songwriters into the Russian context.[193] The interest in rock steadily spread as the children of the bard generation felt that rock songs gave voice to *their* feelings. Towards the mid-1980s a new generation of bands emerged, who felt they were ignored by the LRC establishment. A generation conflict was building up.

193. There were a number of other approaches to literature as well. Many song lyrics of the ska band Strannye igry were translations of French avantgarde poetry. The bard tradition is discussed in 7.2.4, page 103 ff.

The beginning of the rock boom coincided with the beginning of perestroika. Younger bands, determined to test the new limits, began openly protesting against the restrictive policies of the LRC. This resulted in a short period of rock politicisation, which lasted until the ensuing official pressure began to cease in 1986-1987. By then, the rock environment was already expanding beyond the confines of the LRC. Bands were increasingly turning away from social protest, and many returned to searching for their roots in the Russian cultural tradition. Neither before nor after has Leningrad rock been so popular and influential as it was during the second half of the 1980s. While publishing houses and theatres were overwhelmed by releasing or staging previously banned books and plays, little or no room was left for contemporary voices. Thus, rock became the only operative channel for thoughts and concerns about present everyday life.

Several factors contributed to rock's fall from the centre of public attention. One was the inability of the rock environment's infrastructure to handle the demand for larger concerts, festivals and record releases. This was combined with severe coordination problems and conflicts of interest between the rock community and both old and new forces in the culture and media sectors. When the demands of public interest could not be sustained, people turned their attention elsewhere. Second, the majority of LRC bands were unprepared or unable to make a living from their music, and only the most famous and devoted managed to survive the commercialisation of the cultural sphere. Third, the fall of the Soviet Union had a devastating effect for the Houses and Palaces of Culture and their cultural workers. Thus, Leningrad rock saw its major network of rehearsal space and concert venues crumble. Fourth, a new commercial pop music scene emerged before Leningrad rock had had the time to reorganise itself. On top of all this came the untimely deaths of key personalities such as Aleksandr Bashlachev, Viktor Tsui and Maik Naumenko. Whilst the established rock scene was drowning in an introvert nostalgia for the past in the shadow of a few surviving 'dinosaur' bands, a new, commercially oriented guitar-pop took over. It was fronted by young boys and girls who sang in English, determined to succeed in an international market which, it would soon transpire, turned a deaf ear.

Since the mid-1990s, an alternative local music scene has been re-establishing and consolidating itself in St Petersburg. Veterans and newcomers have combined their efforts to construct new networks of concert venues, rehearsal spaces, and recording studios. The scene today is both stylistically diverse and very much alive. It is characterised by a new spirit of idealism and cooperation. This provides a relatively good infrastructure for new and upcoming bands. However, only a marginal number of bands manage to reach out to an audience large enough to secure them a professional career. Many established bands have become trapped in a frustrating loop of repeatedly touring the same local clubs, struggling to save up for a recording session or the occasional tour abroad. Since their audience generally has little money to buy records, many bands tend to use their albums for concert promotion, selling them for no profit. Thus, while there is evidently no lack of talent, creativity or originality in the present St Petersburg rock scene, it appears that the Russian market for rock is too small. Sadly, but not surprisingly, this also implies that the major Russian recording companies lack the financial courage to promote interesting and well-performed local rock.

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Appendix 1: The RiR CD

Trac k no.	Band: *Song* (recording year) (composer[s] where other)	similar features
A01	**AKVARIUM: *ARISTOKRAT* (1982)**	
A02	Dillinger: *Marijuana in my Brain* (1979)	Two-tone chant. Song in general.
A03	Bob Marley: *Rastaman Chant* (1973)	Rhythm and percussion.
A04	Bob Marley: *Easy Skanking* (1978)	Lyrics. Rhythm. Guitar.
A05	Bob Marley: *Kaya* (1978)	Lyrics
A06	Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up* (1973) (Marley / Tosh)	Tempo. Percussion. Rhythm guitar. Expression 'issim-skissim.'
A07	Bob Marley / Lee Perry: *Keep on Moving pt. III* (1971)	Deep echo on voice and saxophone
A08	Bob Marley: *Redemption Song* (1980)	Chord progression
A09	Jimmy Cliff: *The Harder They Come* (1972)	(general resemblance, but faster)
A10	Chuck Berry: *Havana Moon* (1956)	Guitar: gentle wafting gestures. Voice: imitation of caribbean accent.
A11	Curtis Mayfield: *Eddie You Should Know Better* (1972)	Soul guitar.
A12	Bob Marley: *Easy Skanking* (1978)	Sax solo
A13	The Clash: *Police and Thieves* (1977) (Murvin / Perry)	'White' ('cold') UK reggae
A14	The Ruts: *Jah War* (1979)	'White' ('cold') UK reggae
A15	The Police: *Bring on the Night* (1979)	'White' ('cold') UK reggae
A16	The Police: *Every Step You Take* (1983)	Sound aesthetics
A17	Bob Marley: *Get Up Stand Up* [Live] (1976)	Shouts: 'oi'
A18	The Drifters: *Up on the Roof* (1961) (Goffin / King)	LCM
A19	Hopeton Lewis: *Cool, Cool Collie* (1966)	LCM
A20	The Beatles: *Tomorrow Never Knows* (1966)	LCM
A21	Peter Tosh: *Legalize it* (1976)	LCM
A22	Black Uhuru: *Sinsemilla* (1980)	LCM
A23	Magazine: *This Poison* (1981)	LCM. Post-punk ska/reggae influences.

D24	**ZOOPARK: *DRIAN'* (1983)**	
D25	Lynyrd Skynyrd: *The Needle and the Spoon* (1974)	Guitar riff and chord progression
D26	Cream: *Sunshine of Your Love* (1967)	Guitar riff and sound
D27	Howling Wolf: *Smokestack Lightning* (1956)	Guitar riff and chord progression
D28	J.J. Cale: *Cocaine* (1976)	Guitar riff and sound
D29	The Doors: *Hello, I Love You* (1968)	Melodic progression (vocal line / guitar)
D30	Sex Pistols: *Submission* (1977)	Guitar riff
D31	The Tubes: *Turn Me On* (1979)	Introducing synth sound
D32	Deep Purple: *Smoke on the Water* (1972)	Intro and guitar distortion
D33	The Kinks: *All Day and All of the Night* (1964) and *You Really Got Me* (1964)	Guitar riffs and distortion
D34	The Rolling Stones: *Live with Me* (1969)	Vocal sneers and glissandos.
D35	The Stooges: *I Wanna Be Your Dog* (1969)	Vocals and general sound
D36	Bauhaus: *Small Talk Stinks* (1980)	Cold and arrogant voice
D37	Gang of Four: *At Home He's a Tourist* (1979)	Cold and arrogant voice
D38	B-52s: Dance This Mess Around (1979)	'Loose' rhythm guitar
D39	Chuck Berry: *Maybellene* (1955)	LCM
D40	Bob Dylan: *Don't Think Twice, It's All Right* (1963)	LCM
D41	The Beatles: *Run For Your Life* (1965)	LCM
D42	The Monks: *I Hate You!* (1966)	LCM
D43	Buzzcocks: *Oh Shit!* (1977)	LCM
D44	The Stranglers: *Sometimes* (1977)	LCM
D45	Lords of the New Church: *Eat Your Heart Out* (1982)	LCM

G46	**KINO: POSLEDNII GEROI (fragment) (1984)**	
G47	Trio: *Da Da Da* (1981)	Synth rhythm
G48	Kraftwerk: *Metropolis* (1978)	Lacklustre vocals, analogue synth bass
G49	OMD: *Enola Gay* (1980)	'Half-strangled' vocals, synth rhythm
G50	OMD: *Electricity* (1980)	(as above)
G51	Madonna: *Over and Over* (1984)	Synth rhythm
G52	Simple Minds: *Celebrate* (1980)	Verse riff bass line, rhythmic monotony

G53	Ultravox: *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1977)	'Half-strangled' vocals
G54	Ultravox: *Man Who Dies Everyday* (1977)	'Half-strangled' vocals
G55	Depeche Mode: *Shame* (1983)	Pauses, vocals, 'fatter' sound
G56	Duran Duran: *The Chauffeur* (1982)	'Half-strangled' vocals, 'fatter' sound
G57	Wall of Voodoo: *Me and My Dad* (1981)	Ticking noise
G58	Fleetwood Mac: *The Chain* (1977)	'Full stop'
G59	BBC Radiophonic Orchestra: *Theme from Dr. Who* (1963)	Emptiness in mid tonal register, synth sound
G60	Wizards and Warriors (game tune)	Pauses, synth sound
G61	Weather Report: *Birdland* (1977)	Synth bass
G62	Ry Cooder: *One Meat Ball* (1970)	Riff melody, harmony in instrumental parts
G63	Bonzo Dog Doo Dah Band: *I'm the Urban Spaceman* (1969)	Non-directional qualities, relative stasis, tired-sounding vocals.
G64	Alisa: *Kompromiss* (1986)	LCM
G65	Kommunizm: *Rasskazhi mne pro pokupku* (1990)	LCM
G66	The Velvet Underground: *I'm Waiting for My Man* (1967)	LCM
G67	The Rolling Stones: *Satisfaction* (1964)	LCM
G68	The Stooges: *No Fun* (1969)	LCM
G69	Iggy Pop: *I'm Bored* (1979)	LCM
G70	Buzzcocks: *Boredom* (1976)	LCM
G71	Joy Division: *Decades* (1980)	LCM
G72	Matt Johnson: *Icing Up* (1981)	LCM
G73	The Cure: *Another Day* (1979)	LCM
G74	Kino: *Bezdel'nik* (1982)	LCM
G75	Kino: *Elektrichka* (1982)	LCM

S76	**TELEVIZOR: SYT PO GORLO (1987)**	
S77	Radio Moscow jingle	Intro melody line
S78	*Pesnia o rodine* (1936) (Dunaevskii / Lebedev-Kumach)	Intro melody line and tempo.
S79	Ray Anthony Orchestra: *Theme from Dragnet* (1953)	Chorus tritone.
S80	Billy May Orchestra: *Theme from Man with the Golden Arm* (1956)	Bass tritones in interlude.

S81	Falco: *Der Kommissar* (1982)	General similarity. Instrumentation and sound. Vocals and manner of singing. Chord sequences.
S82	Falco: *Rock Me Amadeus* (1986)	Vocals. Manner of singing. Sound. Synth bass.
S83	Thomas Dolby: *She Blinded Me With Science* (1982)	General similarity. Funk elements. Sound.
S84	Yes: *Owner of a Lonely Heart* (1983)	Brass stabs
S85	Frank Zappa: *Don't Eat The Yellow Snow* (1974)	Choir arrangements. Theatrical manner of singing
S86	Talking Heads: *Cities* (1979)	Theatrical manner of singing
S87	Magazine: *Come Alive* (1981)	Interlude
S88	Men At Work: *Down Under* (1982)	Remote ska influence
S89	Das Kabinette: *The Cabinet* (1983)	Vocals
S90	Klinisch Sauber: *Krieg* (1982)	Vocals
S91	Kjøtt: *Kloning* (1980)	Singing style, remote ska influences
S92	Thompson Twins: *Tokyo* (1985)	Vocals, general sound.
S93	The Gadgets: *Lay Me Down* (1986)	Drums played to sound electronic
S94	The Rolling Stones: *Sympathy for the Devil* (1968)	LCM
S95	Dead Kennedys: *I Am The Owl* (1982)	LCM
S96	Iggy Pop: *I'm A Conservative* (1980)	LCM
S97	Frank Zappa: *I'm The Slime* (1973)	LCM
S98	Alisa: *Sokovyzhimatel'* (1985)	LCM
S99	Televizor: *Syt po gorlo* (1994)	LCM

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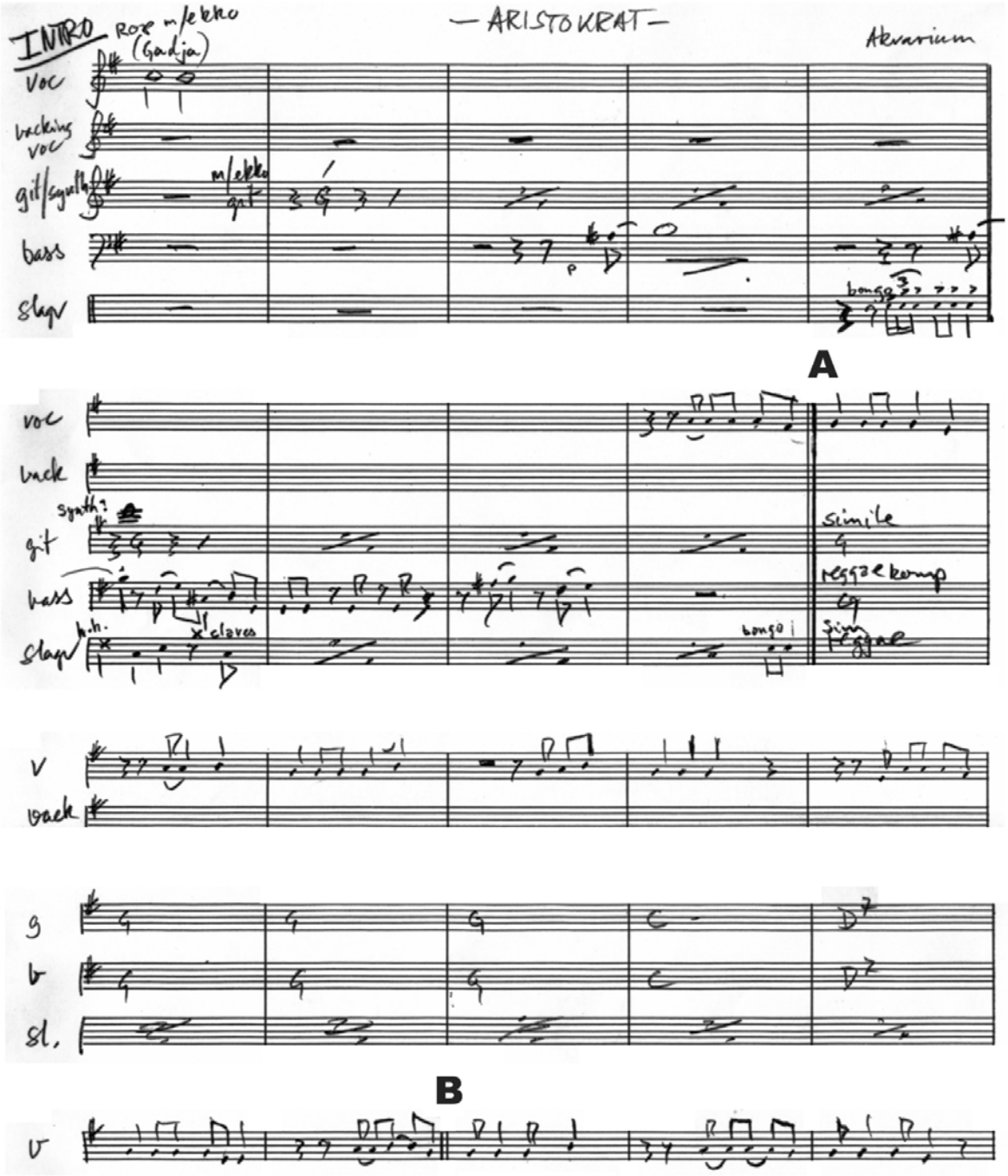
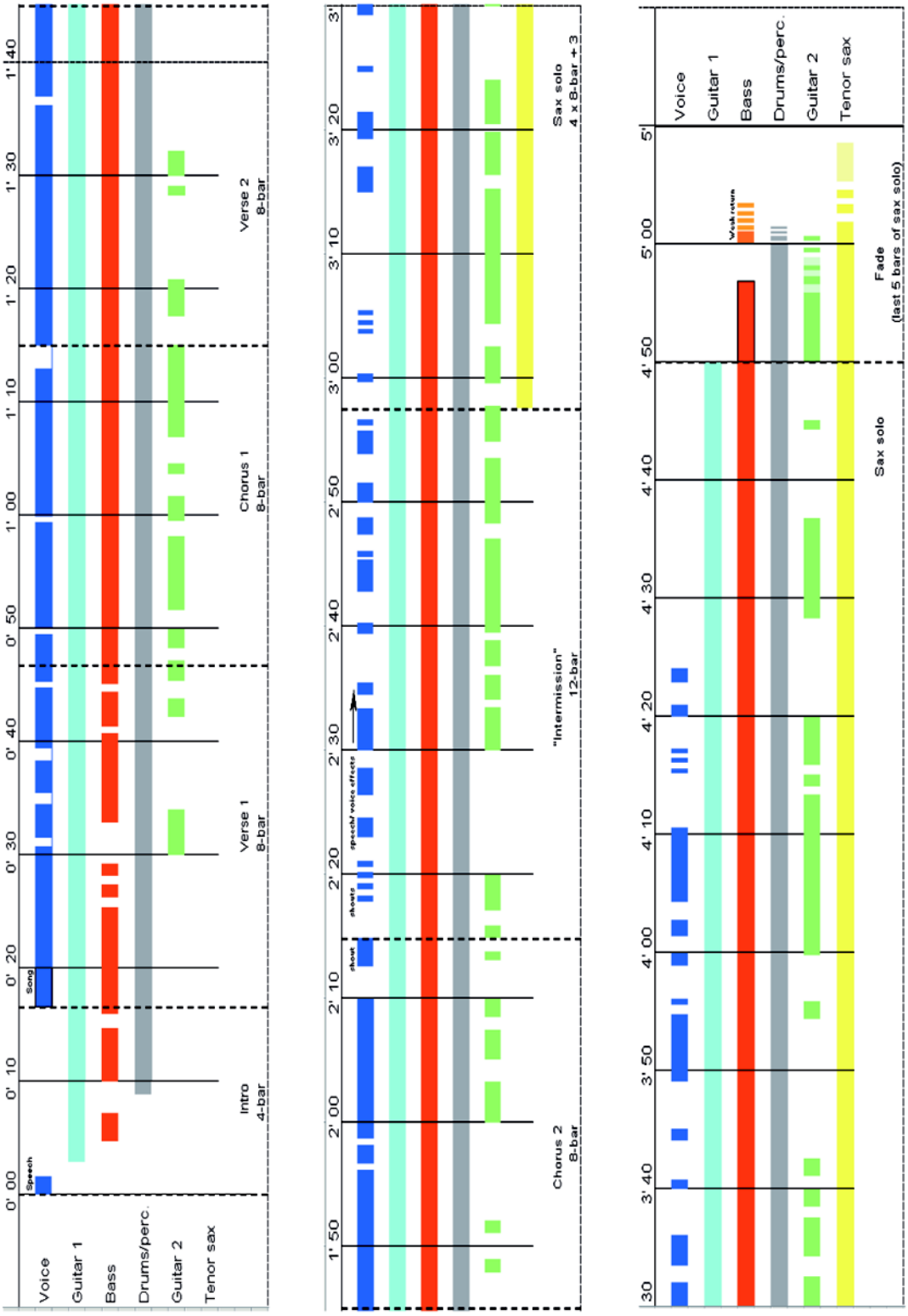
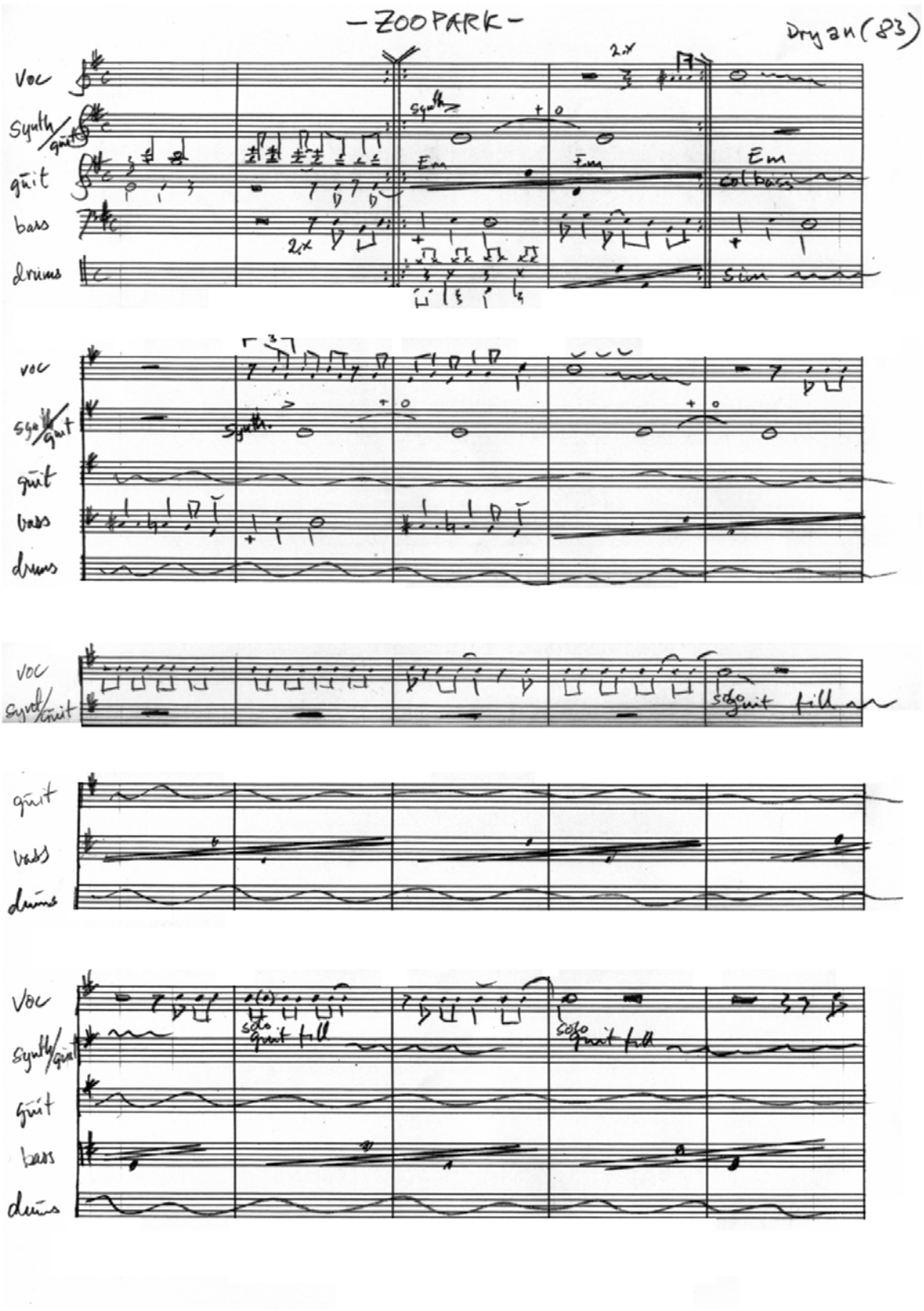
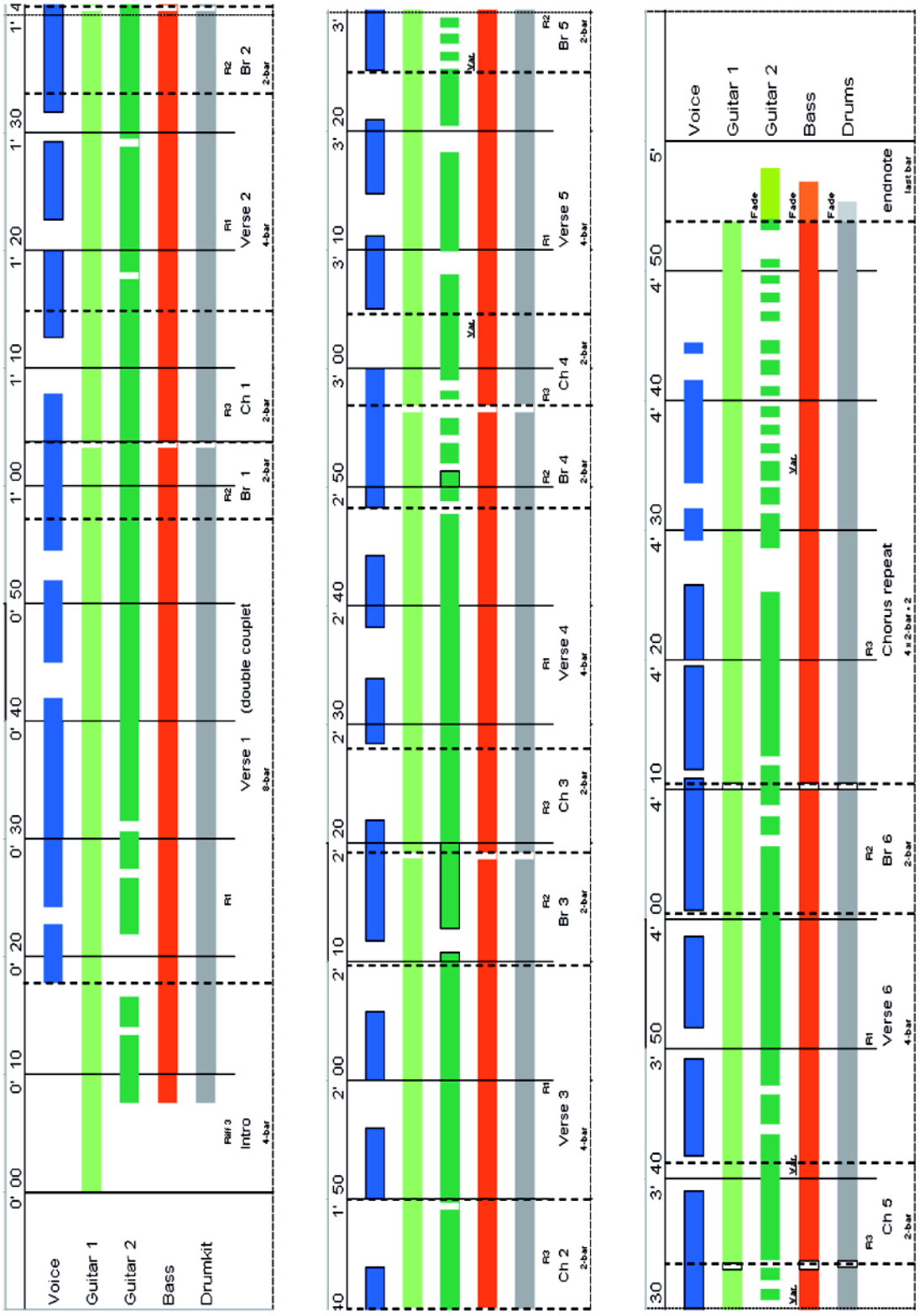
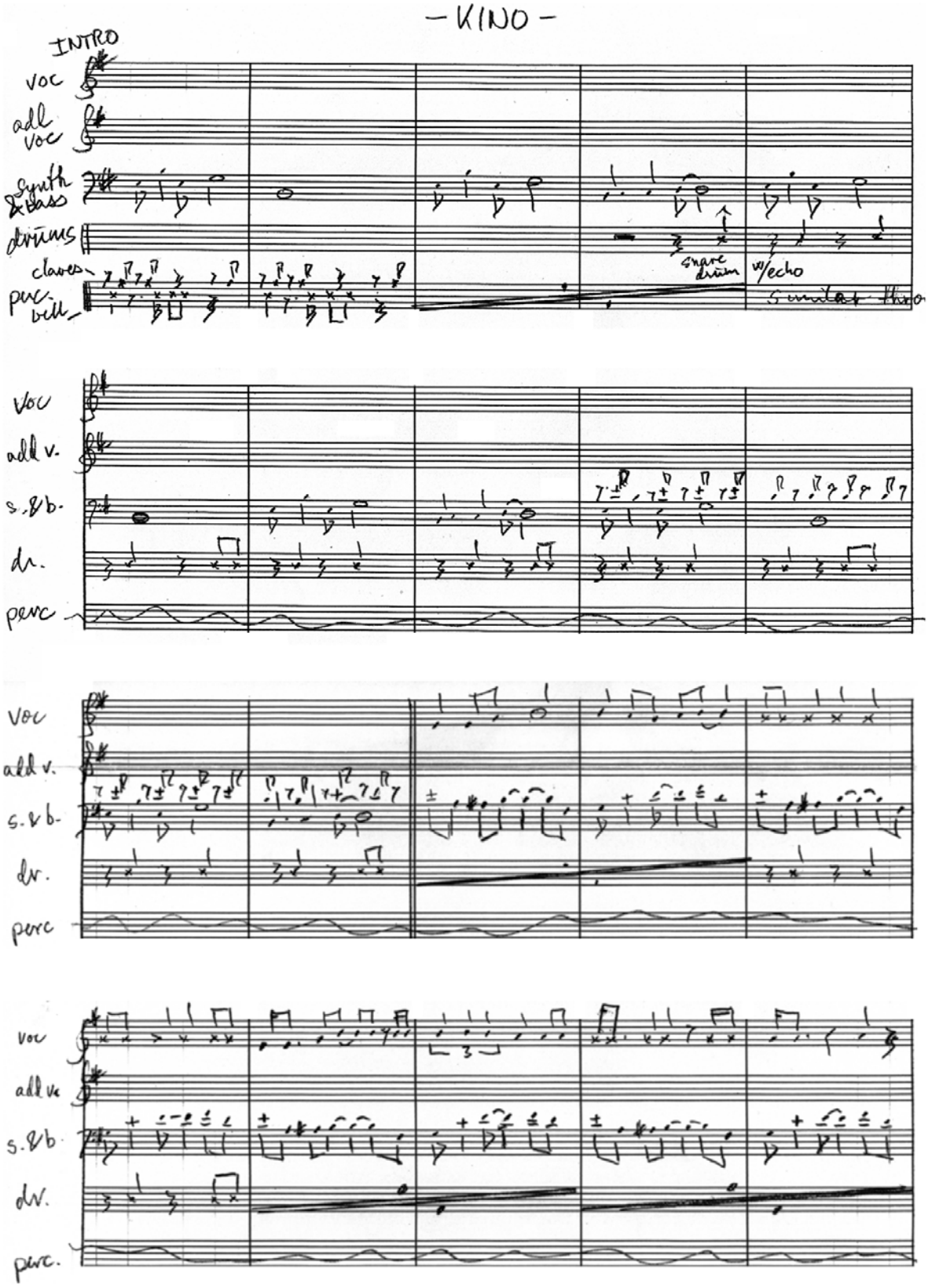
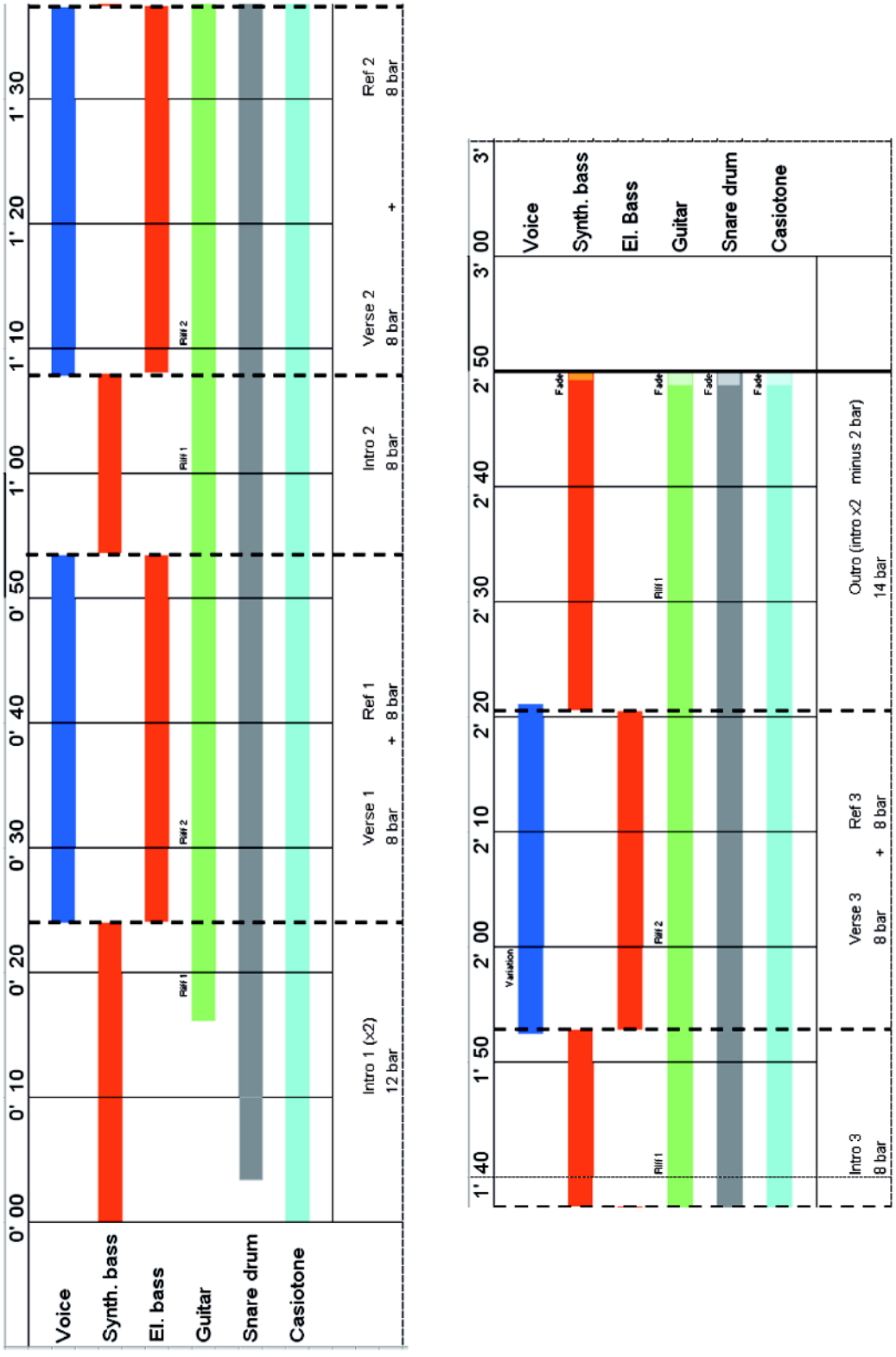
Drian' © Music Publishing: D. Maiko, M. Dmitriev
Poslednii geroi (fragment) © M. Tsui
Syt po gorlo © M. Borzykin / Moroz Records

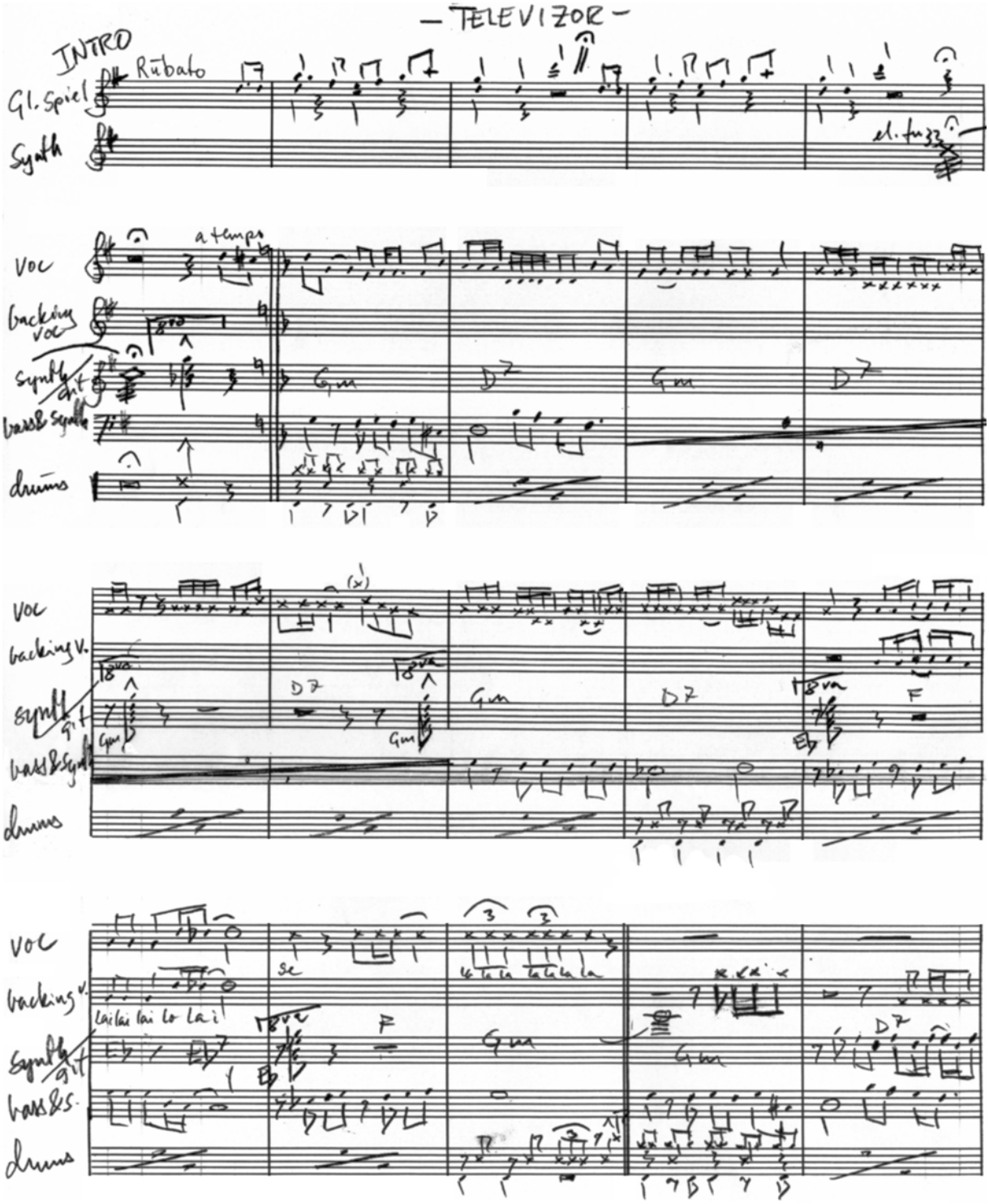
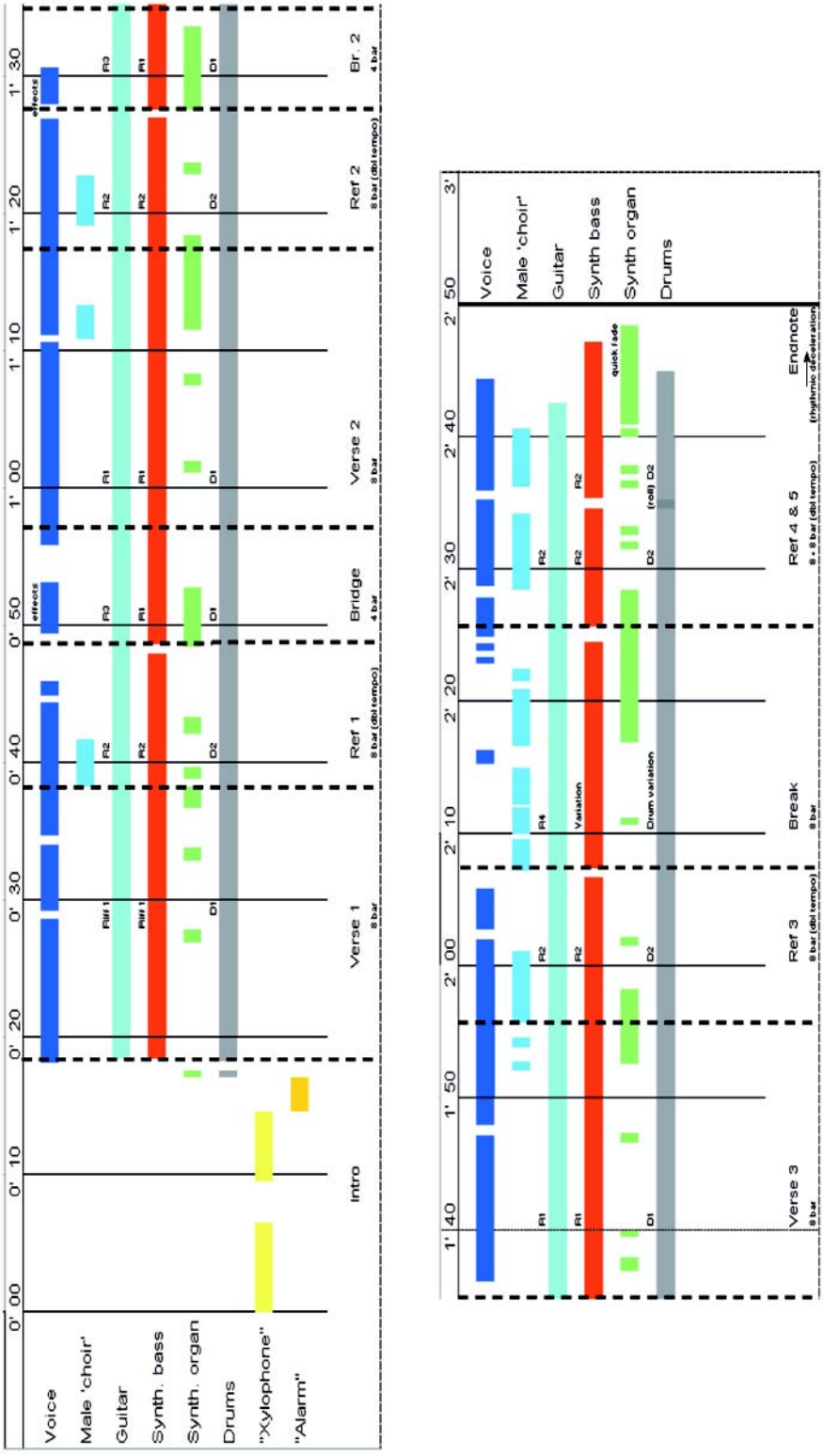
IOCM and LCM fragments have been limited to a maximum of 10 seconds.

Appendix 2: Notation and tables of 'musical events in time'

Song 1: Akvarium - *Aristokrat* (1982)


Voice
Guitar 1
Bass
Drums/perc.
Guitar 2
Tenor sax
0' 00
0' 10
0' 20
0' 30
0' 40
0' 50
1' 00
1' 10
1' 20
1' 30
1' 40
Speech
Song
Intro
4-bar
Verse 1
8-bar
Chorus 1
8-bar
Verse 2
8-bar
1' 50
2' 00
2' 10
2' 20
2' 30
2' 40
2' 50
3' 00
3' 10
3' 20
3'
chant
chants
speech/ voice effects
Chorus 2
8-bar
"Intermission"
12-bar
Sax solo
4 x 8-bar + 3
3' 40
3' 50
4' 00
4' 10
4' 20
4' 30
4' 40
4' 50
5' 00
5'
Sax solo
Fade
(last 5 bars of sax solo)

Song 2: Zoopark - *Drian'* (1983)


Voice
Guitar 1
Guitar 2
Bass
Drumkit
Intro
Verse 1 (double couplet
Verse 2
Ch 1
Br 1
Br 2
Verse 3
Ch 2
Br 3
Verse 4
Ch 3
Br 4
Verse 5
Ch 4
Br 5
Verse 6
Ch 5
Br 6
Chorus repeat
endnote
Var.
Fade

Song 3: Kino - *Poslednii geroi* (1984)


0' 00
0' 10
0' 20
0' 30
0' 40
0' 50
1' 00
1' 10
1' 20
1' 30
Voice
Synth. bass
El. bass
Guitar
Snare drum
Casiotone
Riff 1
Riff 2
Intro 1 (x2)
12 bar
Verse 1
8 bar
Ref 1
+ 8 bar
Intro 2
8 bar
Verse 2
8 bar
Ref 2
8 bar
1' 40
1' 50
2' 00
2' 10
2' 20
2' 30
2' 40
2' 50
3' 00
3'
Variation
Fade
Intro 3
8 bar
Verse 3
8 bar
Ref 3
+ 8 bar
Outro (intro x2 minus 2 bar)
14 bar

Song 4: Televizor - *Syt po gorlo* (1987)


Voice
Male 'choir'
Guitar
Synth. bass
Synth. organ
Drums
"Xylophone"
"Alarm"
Intro
Verse 1
Ref 1
Bridge
Verse 2
Ref 2
Br. 2
Verse 3
Ref 3
Break
Ref 4 & 5
Endnote
Drum variation
quick fade

Appendix 3: Original and transliterated song lyrics

The Russian language versions are based on published versions of the lyrics, but have been adjusted to correspond to the recorded versions where differences have been found. See the respective translated lyrics for details.

Аристократ

О, они идут на зеленый свет;
О, они идут на зеленый свет;
Они не скажут им «нет»,
Когда они идут на зеленый свет.
Я мог бы дать им совет,
Дать им досужий совет,
Но они знают, где масло, где хлеб,
Когда они идут на зеленый свет.

А я сижу на крыше и я очень рад
Я сижу на крыше и я очень рад
Потребляю сенсимилью, как аристократ;
Я сижу на крыше...

Я не вижу смысла скандалить со мной,
Я не вижу смысла ругаться со мной,
Я не вижу смысла даже ссориться со мной,
Ты можешь ругаться со своей женой;

Ты можешь ругаться со своей женой,
Ты можешь скандалить со своей женой,
А у меня есть свой собственный хой,
Я не вижу смысла скандалить со мной.

Я сижу на крыше и я очень рад
Я сижу на крыше и я искренно рад
Потребляю сенсимилью, как аристократ;
Я сижу на крыше...

Aristokrat

O, oni idut na zelenyi svet;
O, oni idut na zelenyi svet;
Oni ne skazhut im net,
Kogda oni idut na zelenyi svet.
Ia mog by dat' im sovet,
Dat' im dosuzhii sovet,
No oni znaiut, gde maslo, gde khleb,
Kogda oni idut na zelenyi svet

A ia sizhu na kryshe i ia ochen' rad
Ia sizhu na kryshe i ia ochen' rad
Potrebliaiu sensimil'iu, kak aristokrat;
Ia sizhu na kryshe...

Ia ne vizhu smysla skandalit' so mnoi,
Ia ne vizhu smysla rugat'sia so mnoi,
Ia ne vizhu smysla dazhe ssorit'sia so mnoi,
Ty mozhesh' rugat'sia so svoei zhenoi;

Ty mozhesh' rugat'sia so svoei zhenoi
Ty mozhesh' skandalit' so svoei zhenoi,
A u menia est' svoi sobstvennyi khoi,
Ia ne vizhu smysla skandalit' so mnoi.

Ia sizhu na kryshe i ia ochen' rad
Ia sizhu na kryshe i ia iskrenno rad
Potrebliaiu sensimil'iu, kak aristokrat;
Ia sizhu na kryshe...

Дрянь

Ты - дрянь.
Лишь это слово способно обидеть,
Ты - дрянь.
Я не хочу тебя любить и не могу ненавидеть,
Ты не тот человек, с которым я способен жить.
Когда ты лжешь мне в лицо, я готов тебя убить.
Ты строишь всем глазки у меня за спиной,
Ты бьешь мои тарелки одну за другой.
Ты - дрянь.

Ты спишь с моим басистом и играешь в бридж с моей (его) женой.
Я все прошу ему, но скажи, что мне делать с тобой?
Тебя снимают все подряд, и тебе это лестно,
Но скоро другая дрянь займет твое место.
Ты - дрянь.

Ты продала мою гитару и купила себе пальто.
Тебе опять звонят весь день, прости, но я не знаю - кто.
Но мне до этого давно нет дела,
Вперед, детка, бодро и смело!
Ты - дрянь.

Ты клянчишь деньги на булавки, ты их тратишь на своих друзьей.
Слава Богу, у таких как ты, не бывает детей.
Ты хочешь, чтоб все было по первому сорту,
Прости, дорогая - ты бьешь все рекорды.
(Но готова ли ты к пьятсот второму аборту?)
Ты - дрянь.

Ты вновь рыдаешь у меня на плече, но я не верю слезам,
Твое красивое лицо катится ко всем чертям.
Но скоро, очень скоро ты постареешь,
Торопись, и тогда, может быть, ты успеешь.
Ты - дрянь.

Нет, ты не тот человек, с которым я способен жить.
Когда ты лжешь мне в лицо, я готов тебя убить.
Наверное, мы сделаны из разного теста,
И скоро другая дрянь займет твое место.
Ты - дрянь.

Drian'

Ty - drian'.
Lish' eto slovo sposobno obidet',
Ty - drian'.
Ia ne khochu tebia liubit' i ne mogu nenavidet',
Ty ne tot chelovek, s kotorym ia sposoben zhit'.
Kogda ty lzhesh' mne v litso, ia gotov tebia ubit'.
Ty stroish' vsem glazki u menia za spinoi,
Ty b'esh' moi tarelki odnu za drugoi.
Ty - drian'.

Ty spish' s moim basistom i igraesh' v bridzh s moei (ego) zhenoi.
Ia vse proshu emu, no skazhi, chto mne delat' s toboi?
Tebia snimaiut vse podriad, i tebe eto lestno,
No skoro drugaia drian' zaimet tvoe mesto.
Ty - drian'.

Ty prodala moiu gitaru i kupila sebe pal'to.
Tebe opiat' zvoniat ves' den', prosti, no ia ne znaiu - kto.
No mne do etogo davno net dela,
Vpered, detka, bodro i smelo!
Ty - drian'.

Ty klianchish' den'gi na bulavki, ty ikh tratish' na svoikh druz'ei.
Slava Bogu, u takikh, kak ty, ne byvaet detei.
Ty khochesh', chtob vse bylo po pervomu sortu,
Prosti, dorogaia - ty b'esh' vse rekordy. (No gotova li ty k p'iatsot vtoromu abortu)
Ty - drian'.

Ty vnov' rydaesh' u menia na pleche no ia ne veriu slezam,
Tvoe krasivoe litso katitsia ko vsem chertiam.
No skoro, ochen' skoro ty postareesh',
Toropis', i togda, mozhet byt' ty uspeesh'.
Ty - drian'.

Net, ty ne tot chelovek, s kotorym ia sposoben zhit'.
Kogda ty lzhesh' mne v litso, ia gotov tebia ubit'.
Navernoe, my sdelany iz raznogo testa,
I skoro drugaia drian' zaimet tvoe mesto.
Ty - drian'.

Последний герой

Ночь коротка цель далека
Ночью так часто хочется пить
Ты выходишь на кухню но вода здесь горька
Ты не можешь здесь спать
Ты не можешь здесь жить
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Доброе утро тебе и таким как ты!
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Здравствуй, последний герой!

Ты хотел быть один это быстро прошло
Ты хотел быть один но не смог быть один
Твоя ноша легка но немеет рука
И ты встречаешь рассвет за игрой в дурака
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Доброе утро тебе и таким как ты!
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Здравствуй, последний герой!

Утром ты стремишься скорее уйти
Телефонный звонок как команда - вперед!
Ты уходишь туда куда не хочешь идти
Ты уходишь туда но тебя там никто не ждет
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Доброе утро тебе и таким как ты!
Доброе утро, последний герой!
Здравствуй, последний герой!

Poslednii geroi

Noch' korotka tsel' daleka
Noch'iu tak chasto khochetsia pit'
Ty vykhodish' na kukhniu no voda zdes' gor'ka
Ty ne mozhesh' zdes' spat'
Ty ne mozhesh' zdes' zhit'
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Dobroe utro tebe i takim kak ty!
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Zdravstvui, poslednii geroi!

Ty khotel byt' odin eto bystro proshlo
Ty khotel byt' odin no ne smog byt' odin
Tvoia nosha legka no nemeet ruka
I ty vstrechaesh' rassvet za igroi v duraka
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Dobroe utro tebe i takim kak ty!
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Zdravstvui, poslednii geroi!

Utrom ty stremishsia skoree uiti
Telefonnyi zvonok kak komanda - vpered!
Ty ukhodish' tuda kuda ne khochesh' idti
Ty ukhodish' tuda no tebia tam nikto ne zhdet
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Dobroe utro tebe i takim kak ty!
Dobroe utro, poslednii geroi!
Zdravstvui, poslednii geroi!

Сыт по горло

Доброе утро, я снова здесь,
Мне ничего не надо - у меня все есть.
Я гуляю по кухне с гордым видом
И имею основания считать себя сытым.
Да, сытый - это не голодный.
Чего у меня нет - да все, что угодно!
Открываю холодильник и во взгляде колбасы
Я чувствую уверенность в том, что я сыт.
Я сыт, сыт по горло!

Меня кормили по системе на убой, а впрочем,
Ты можешь и не есть, если ты не хочешь.
В том и заключается одно из преимуществ:
Сколько ни проси - другого не получишь.
И не стоит думать о том, что дальше;
Если ты слаб - ты ел мало каши.
Мне нечего желать и нечего просить,
Я твердо убежден в том, что я сыт.
Я сыт, сыт по горло!

Смотри под ноги! Вот наука -
Работай головой ради желудка.
Берешь любою тему, производишь глоток
И превращаешь информацию в желудочный сок.
Я уничтожил столько добра -
Мой друг холодильник не даст соврать.
Но иногда бывает плохо, наверное, тошнит,
Но это оттого, что я слишком сыт.
Я сыт, сыт по горло!

И никаких претензий,
И никаких обид,
И никаких сомнений -
Да, я сыт.
Я сыт, сыт по горло!

Syt po gorlo

Dobroe utro, ia snova zdes',
Mne nichego ne nado - u menia vse est'.
Ia guliaiu po kukhne s gordym vidom
I imeiu osnovaniia schitat' sebia sytym.
Da, sytyi - eto ne golodnyi.
Chego u menia net - da vse, chto ugodno!
Otkryvaiu kholodil'nik i vo vzgliade kolbasy
Ia chuvstvuiu uverennost' v tom, chto ia syt.
Ia syt, syt po gorlo!

Menia kormili po sisteme na uboi, a vprochem,
Ty mozhesh' i ne est', esli ty ne khochesh'.
V tom i zakliuchaetsia odno iz preimushchestv:
Skol'ko ni prosi - drugogo ne poluchish'.
I ne stoit dumat' o tom, chto dal'she;
Esli ty slab - ty el malo kashi.
Mne nechego zhelat' i nechego prosit',
Ia tverdo ubezhden v tom, chto ia syt.
Ia syt, syt po gorlo!

Smotri pod nogi! Vot nauka -
Rabotai golovoi radi zheludka.
Beresh' liubuiu temu, proizvodish' glotok
I prevrashchaesh' informatsiiu v zheludochnyi sok.
Ia unichtozhil stol'ko dobra -
Moi drug kholodil'nik ne dast sovrat'.
No inogda byvaet plokho, navernoe, toshnit,
No eto ottogo, chto ia slyshkom syt.
Ia syt, syt po gorlo!

I nikakikh pretenzii,
I nikakikh obid,
I nikakikh somnenii -
Da, ia syt.
Ia syt, syt po gorlo!