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Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in Russia: Arrangements by Alexander N. Serov and the Stasov Brothers' circle

Larisa V. Kirillina[1,2]
[1]Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory,
Moscow, Russian Federation
[2]State Institute for Art Studies,
Moscow, Russian Federation,
✉*larissa_kir@mail.ru*,
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5225-5641



Abstract. The world premiere of Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in *D major* took place in St. Petersburg on March 26 (April 7), 1824, with the participation of the Philharmonic Society's orchestra and singers from the German Court Opera Company. The second public performance of this masterpiece in St. Petersburg succeeded on December 27, 1870, and was given exclusively by Russian musicians. Between these key dates, Beethoven's *opus magnum*

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was not entirely forgotten in Russia. Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* attracted the attention of leading performers, music critics, and art enthusiasts. It circulated, in particular, in arrangements by Alexander N. Serov (1820–1871), made in Simferopol in the summer of 1845 and performed in private circles in St. Petersburg. The arrangements are designed for eight-hand performance on two pianos. There was also an arrangement of *Credo* for four-hand piano and string quartet (the string parts are lost). The author of the article describes and analyzes the arrangements preserved in the Serov archive in the Department of Manuscripts of The National Library of Russia in St. Petersburg. It has also been suggested that the unfinished manuscript of an arrangement of *Gloria* for two pianos in eight hands, prepared by Vladimir V. Stasov and preserved in the archive of his niece Varvara D. Komarova, may have been a copy of a lost arrangement by Serov. In the musical circle of the brothers Vladimir and Dmitry Stasov in the 1850s, the performance of eight-hand arrangements was a common practice, and Serov occasionally participated in them. Existing unpublished musical materials, as well as memoirs and epistolary evidence, suggest that the most prominent Russian musicians were well acquainted with the *Missa Solemnis* long before its return to the concert repertoire in 1870.

Keywords: Ludwig van Beethoven, *Missa Solemnis*, Alexander N. Serov, Vladimir V. Stasov, Dmitry V. Stasov, musical arrangements, piano four hand, Russian musical culture of the nineteenth century

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Современные проблемы музыкознания /
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Музыкальный театр

Научная статья

Торжественная месса Бетховена в России: аранжировки А. Н. Серова и кружок братьев Стасовых

Лариса Валентиновна Кириллина[1,2]
[1]Московская государственная консерватория
имени П. И. Чайковского,
Москва, Российская Федерация
[2]Государственный институт искусствознания,
Москва, Российская Федерация,
✉larissa_kir@mail.ru,
https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5225-5641

Аннотация. Мировая премьера Торжественной мессы *D-dur* Бетховена состоялась в Санкт-Петербурге 26 марта (7 апреля) 1824 года с участием оркестра Филармонического общества и певцов немецкой придворной оперной труппы. Второе публичное исполнение шедевра в столице произошло 27 декабря 1870 года силами исключительно русских музыкантов. Между этими ключевыми датами бетховенский *opus magnum* вовсе не был забыт в России. Торжественная месса привлекала внимание ведущих артистов, музыкальных критиков и любителей искусства. Она, в частности, существовала в аранжировках Александра Николаевича Серова (1820–1871), выполненных летом 1845 года в Симферополе и бытовавших в частных кружках в Петербурге. Аранжировки рассчитаны на исполнение в четыре руки на двух роялях. Существовало также переложение *Credo*

для фортепиано в четыре руки и струнного квартета (партии струнных инструментов утеряны). В статье описываются и анализируются переложения, хранящиеся в архиве Серова в Отделе рукописей Российской национальной библиотеки в Петербурге. Высказано также предположение, что незавершенная рукопись переложения *Gloria* для двух фортепиано в восемь рук, выполненная Владимиром Васильевичем Стасовым и хранящаяся в архиве его племянницы В. Д. Комаровой, могла быть копией утраченного переложения авторства Серова. В музыкальном кружке братьев Владимира и Дмитрия Стасовых в 1850-х годах практиковалось исполнение восьмиручных переложений, и Серов иногда принимал в них участие. Существующие неопубликованные нотные материалы, а также мемуарные и эпистолярные свидетельства позволяют говорить о том, что самые видные русские музыканты хорошо знали Торжественную мессу задолго до ее возвращения в концертный репертуар в 1870 году.

Ключевые слова: Людвиг ван Бетховен, *Missa Solemnis*, Александр Николаевич Серов, Владимир Васильевич Стасов, Дмитрий Васильевич Стасов, аранжировки для фортепиано в четыре руки, русская музыкальная культура XIX века

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Introduction

Although the Ninth Symphony is widely considered the crown of Ludwig van Beethoven's creative output, the composer himself regarded his *Missa Solemnis* in *D major*, Op. 123,[1] as his "greatest" and "most successful" work. Completed in the spring of 1823, this masterpiece had a difficult history: publishers were hesitant to acquire a score that promised certain financial losses, only ten subscribers across Europe were willing to order manuscript copies, and public performance remained problematic for a long time. Beethoven repeatedly expressed his wish for the Mass to be treated as an oratorio and performed at benefit concerts, with its text translated into German, as had already been done in Protestant countries with his first Mass in *C major*.[2] However, in Catholic Austria, censorship strictly prohibited the performance of works with liturgical texts outside the church, whereas the *Missa Solemnis* could not be accommodated within an ordinary service, even a festive one. The genre of *Missa Solemnis*, however, implied the highest degree of solemnity, and in such instances, the duration of the work was not restricted [1, p. 2]. Yet in Vienna after 1823, no events of exceptional public significance took place that would warrant such a grandiose service. Furthermore, Emperor Francis I's attitude toward Beethoven had always been antagonistic, and in early 1823, the great musician's petition for appointment as court composer of sacred music was rejected on the grounds that the position had been abolished.[3]

No such formal restrictions existed in Russia. Consequently, as is well known, the only complete performance of the *Missa Solemnis* during Beethoven's lifetime took place on March 26 (April 7), 1824, in St. Petersburg, at a benefit concert organized by the Philharmonic Society, with the participation of singers from the German Court Opera Company. The ensemble of soloists comprised experienced singers from the German Theatre: soprano Anna Schlösser, mezzo-soprano Ekaterina Zeibig, tenors August Cyliax and Benedikt Leberecht Zeibig, and bass Adolf Stein [2, p. 222].

[1] Beethoven, L. van. (1996). *Briefwechsel. Gesamtausgabe*: *Vol. 5: 1823–1824* (S. Brandenburg, Ed.). G. Henle Verlag, pp. 5, 27..
[2] Beethoven, L. van. (1996), p. 39.
[3] Beethoven, L. van. (1996), p. 55.

Even in this case, however, the posters and newspaper advertisements designated the work not as a "mass" but as a "new grand oratorio", which was fully in line with the composer's intentions. Regrettably, the name of the conductor who directed this important premiere remains unknown. There are grounds to assume that it might have been one of the experienced musicians who had previously conducted performances in St. Petersburg of Beethoven's oratorio *Christus am Ölberge* (which had been performed here repeatedly since 1813) or his opera *Fidelio* (the German troupe staged three performances of it in 1818 and 1819). The oratorio had been conducted at the time by Alexander Paris, and the *Fidelio* performances by Paris and Daniel Mess, as evidenced by a newspaper review from 1818.[4]

The Viennese premiere of three movements of the *Missa Solemnis*, titled "Hymns in the Church Style" to avoid censorship restrictions, took place alongside the Ninth Symphony at a single concert on May 7, 1824.

In subsequent years, both during Beethoven's lifetime and shortly after his death, separate movements of the *Missa Solemnis*, according to certain records, were performed in Viennese churches and at sacred music concerts.[5] As Takashi Namaguchi observed, its first complete performances took place only in the 1830s, with most occurring even later, becoming relatively regular in Germany only after 1844. In Leipzig, the *Missa Solemnis* was performed in its entirety in 1845, and in other cities at the turn of the 1850s and 1860s [3, pp. 29, 110, 394]. Intriguingly, the establishment of Beethoven's work and Johann Sebastian Bach's Mass in *B minor* in the German concert repertoire proceeded almost in parallel: from isolated and fragmentary performances to complete ones during the very same period [1, pp. 12–13]. This coincidence was not accidental, as the initiators and conductors of such concerts were prominent German musicians—Carl Friedrich Zelter, Karl Riedel, and others.

Prince Nikolai Borisovich Golitsyn, who facilitated the Russian Imperial Court's subscription to an authorized copy of the score of the *Missa Solemnis* [4, pp. 355–356] and organized the premiere St. Petersburg, intended to perform the work once more in 1825 to benefit the victims of the catastrophic flood that struck St. Petersburg on November 7 (November 19), 1824 [5, p. 368]. However, personal circumstances

[4] *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*. (1818, October 29), No. 259, p. 1036.

[5] Dorfmüller, K., Gertsch, N., & Ronge, J. (Eds.). (2014). *Ludwig van Beethoven: Thematisch-bibliographisches Werkverzeichnis* (Vol. 1). G. Henle Verlag, pp. 793–794.

prevented the prince from fulfilling this intention, which would have placed a considerable financial burden on him. No archival records regarding the preparation of that concert have been identified.

If we consider the territory of the nineteenth-century Russian Empire as a whole, including the Baltic lands, it is worth mentioning Wilhelm von Lenz's account of the first performance of the *Missa Solemnis* in Riga. The performance took place in 1839 at a private musical gathering, with piano accompaniment.[6] Since the German population constituted a significant portion of the inhabitants in this region, Beethoven's music became part of local concert, theatrical, and domestic musical life earlier than it did in Moscow, St. Petersburg, and other Russian cities.

The next public performance of the *Missa Solemnis* in St. Petersburg occurred only on December 27, 1870, this time given by the Russian Musical Society and performed entirely by musicians from Russia. The event was timed to coincide with the centennial of Beethoven's birth, celebrated worldwide, including in Russia. Eduard Franzevich Nápravník conducted the performance. Leading opera singers participated in the concert: Yulia Fyodorovna Platonova, Elizaveta Andreyevna Lavrovskaya, Dmitry Alexandrovich Orlov, and Osip Osipovich Paleček. The violin solo was performed by Leopold Auer, a professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. The Mass was preceded by the Overture Op. 124, *Die Weihe des Hauses*, dedicated to Prince Nikolai B. Golitsyn first performed in Vienna on May 7, 1824.

Between these two landmark dates — 1824 and 1870 — the *Missa Solemnis* was by no means forgotten in Russia. It circulated in the form of sheet music editions and arrangements, which were created and performed by the most prominent composers, critics, and admirers of Beethoven's oeuvre. It is this less visible history of the *Missa Solemnis's* reception and gradual establishment in Russian musical life that will be examined below.

Professional musicians and music lovers gained the opportunity to study the *Missa Solemnis* through the full score published in 1827 by *B. Schott's Söhne* in Mainz. Beethoven himself managed to review the exceptionally complex proofs, add metronome markings, and draft the text for the title page with a dedication to Archduke Rudolph, who had been elevated to the rank of cardinal and Archbishop in 1820. The score was distributed primarily among subscribers who had paid for their copy in advance. Lists of these subscribers were printed after the title page; showing that several printed copies of the score were ordered by recipients

[6] Lenz, W. (1855). *Beethoven: Eine Kunststudie* (Vol. 2). Balde, p. 263.

living in Moscow and St. Petersburg, as well as in Riga, Vilna (Vilnius), Warsaw, and Mitau (now Jelgava, Latvia). None of these names is familiar today, with the notable exception of the prominent Moscow music publisher and dealer Karl Ludwig Lehnhold (1771–1837).

Other copies of the score evidently reached Russia somewhat later, since the names of their owners do not appear among the subscribers. In particular, the Rare Books and Manuscripts Department of the Moscow Conservatory Library holds a first edition of the *Missa Solemnis* score bearing the ownership inscription *Alabief*.[7] This score apparently belonged to Alexander A. Alyabyev, though it remains unknown when and how it came into his possession.

Arrangements by Alexander Nikolayevich Serov

Enlightened amateurs, from whose ranks professional musicians and critics frequently emerged, played a vital role in disseminating Beethoven's works, including the *Missa Solemnis*, across Russia.

In 1845, Alexander N. Serov (1820–1871), a young graduate of the Imperial School of Jurisprudence in St. Petersburg, was appointed to a post in Simferopol within the Ministry of Justice. He worked in this provincial town until 1848, after which he was transferred to Pskov. Only in 1853 was he able to return to St. Petersburg and engage in the capital's musical life as a critic and composer. He also revisited Crimea periodically in the early 1850s, but the period of his continuous residence in Simferopol, however, is of particular interest here.

His official duties as a low-ranking civil servant took up relatively little of his time. This allowed him to devote himself intensively to his true passion: music (for details, see [6, pp. 116–131; 7, pp. 119–121]). He composed, played the organ at the local Lutheran church, and produced numerous arrangements of works by various composers. Orchestral and vocal works were arranged for piano solo and piano four hands, while piano and chamber works were orchestrated for symphony orchestra. Many such arrangements are preserved in the Serov Archive of the Department of Manuscripts at The National Library of Russia (NLR).

[7] Brezhneva, I. V., & Kirillina, L. V. (Eds). (2008). *Lyudvig van Betkhoven: rukopisnye i rannie pechatnye istochniki v khranilishchakh Moskvy i Sankt-Peterburga* [Ludwig van Beethoven: Manuscript and early printed sources in the repositories of Moscow and St. Petersburg]: *A catalogue*. S. I. Taneyev Scientific Music Library; Research and Publishing Center "Moscow Conservatory", p. 116. (In Russ.).

Judging by Serov's letters to his family and friends, he produced many more such arrangements, although not all of them have survived.

Serov very frequently turned to Beethoven's music. He arranged symphonies and string quartets for piano and orchestrated piano works.[8] For a self-taught composer, producing his own arrangements of works by the great masters served as a fundamental source of knowledge about orchestration, harmony, and voice leading.

In a letter to Dmitry V. Stasov dated March 31, 1853, Serov remarked: "Beethoven's orchestra is such that the longer one studies it, the more it reveals!"[9] Discussing the advantages of arranging orchestral works for two pianos rather than the standard format of a single piano four hands, as was customary, he explained his preference in terms of the musical characteristics of the material:

> ...it has always seemed to me that in *certain cases* this is incomparably better than the usual arrangements for four hands. Sometimes it is necessary to preserve *complete freedom* in the use of all the registers of the piano *for each* of the two performers. With a single piano, this is impossible. And the Ninth [Symphony], in particular, can never be rendered at all adequately for four hands.[10]

Nevertheless, Serov also had to take practical considerations into account. Not every home in which private musical gatherings were held had two grand pianos; hence, four-hand arrangements remained the priority.

In addition to Beethoven's symphonies and chamber works, Serov also turned his attention to the *Missa Solemnis*. How the score came to Simferopol, and from where, remains unknown (it could only have been the *Schott* edition). Most likely, the music was sent from St. Petersburg. The Stasov brothers might have assisted, though no explicit evidence of this has been identified in their correspondence.

Serov became eager not only to study this monumental work in every detail but also, to the best of his ability, to make it accessible to other musicians by arranging all movements of the Mass for piano four hands (without voices),

[8] For details on Serov's arrangements, see [5, pp. 297–299]. The arrangement of the Sonata Op. 106, revised by Liszt 1858, has not survived [8, pp. 88–89].

[9] *The National Library of Russia* (NLR), Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 125, Fol. 2v.

[10] Letter to D. V. Stasov dated August 13, 1853. *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 125, Fol. 2v.

as well as creating an ensemble version of the *Credo* (for piano four hands, two violins, viola, and cello; only the piano part survives).

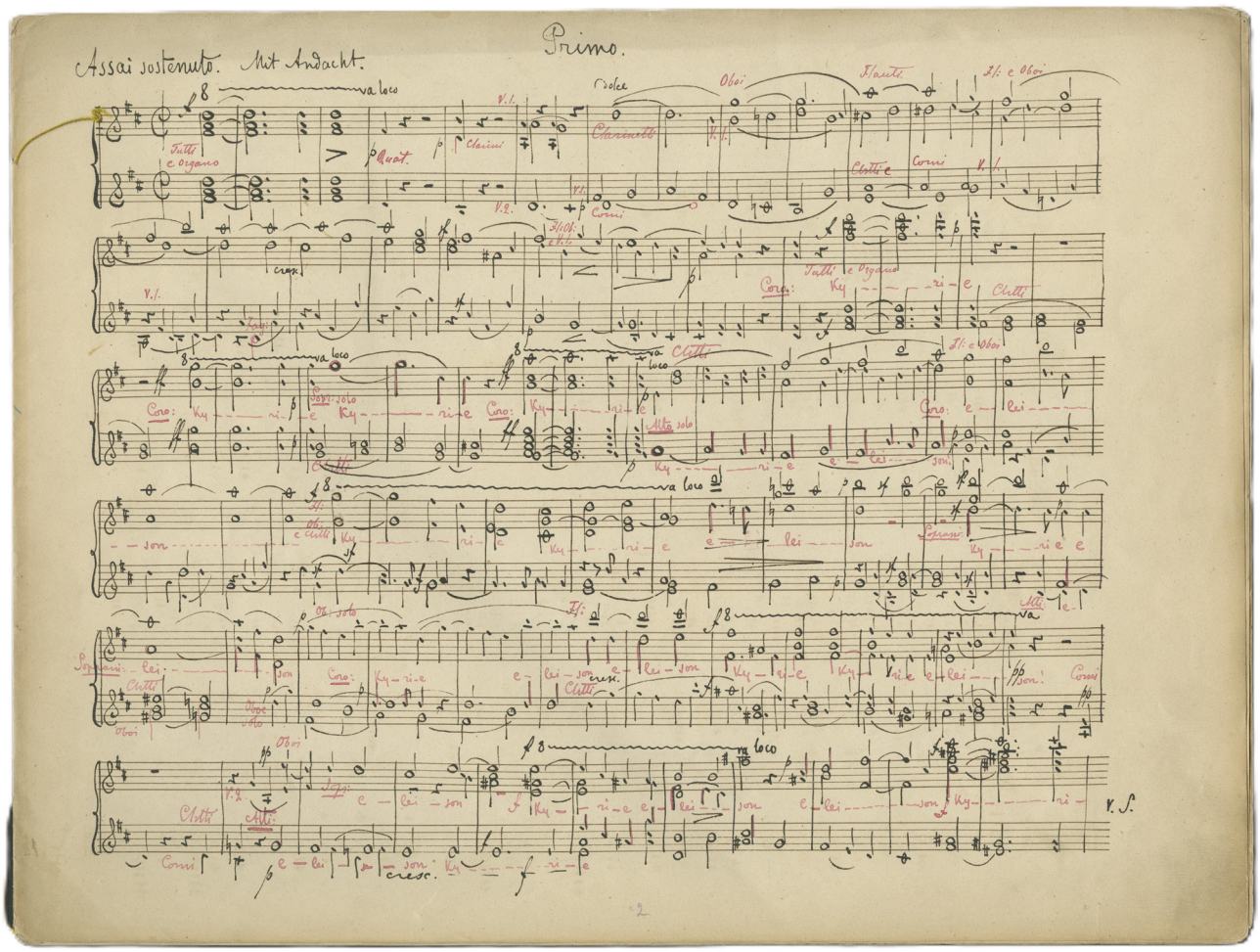
The manuscripts preserved in the Department of Manuscripts at the NLR are dated quite precisely by their author. All of them belong to the summer of 1845, although work on the arrangements did not proceed in the order of the movements. The arrangements of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* (contained in a single notebook) are inscribed: "Finished August 15, 1845."[11] The ensemble version of the *Credo*—from which, as noted, only the piano part for four hands survives—is undated, but most likely belongs to the same period.[12] The separate four-hand arrangement of the *Credo* remains incomplete, breaking off at the fugue *Et vitam venturi*.[13] The *Sanctus* and *Benedictus* sections were completed earlier than the *Kyrie* and are marked "1845, June."[14] The final movement, *Agnus Dei / Dona nobis pacem*, bears the more specific inscription: "Finished: August 6, 1845."[15]

All the autographs are fair copies, although some were prepared with particular care and meticulous attention, regardless of the chronology of their creation.

The *Kyrie*, completed later than the other movements, was clearly intended to serve as the "face" of the entire cycle. The opening sections—*Kyrie eleison* and *Christe eleison*—appear remarkably beautiful in Serov's manuscript and contain details designed to compensate visually for the absence of the full score in a purely piano performance. Throughout these sections, Serov meticulously indicates the original instrumentation and writes out the Latin text in calligraphic script, using red ink for visual clarity (*Illustrations 1a, 1b*).[16]

In the reprise of the *Kyrie*, such details are no longer present, since both the text and musical material are repeated (although Beethoven's repetitions are not strictly literal). However, Serov evidently decided that given the close similarity of the musical texture, there was no need to write out the Latin text again, and it disappears in the reprise.

[11] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 22, Fol. 30.
[12] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 13.
[13] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 24.
[14] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 25, Fol. 1.
[15] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 26, Fol. 10.
[16] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 22, Fols. 1–2.

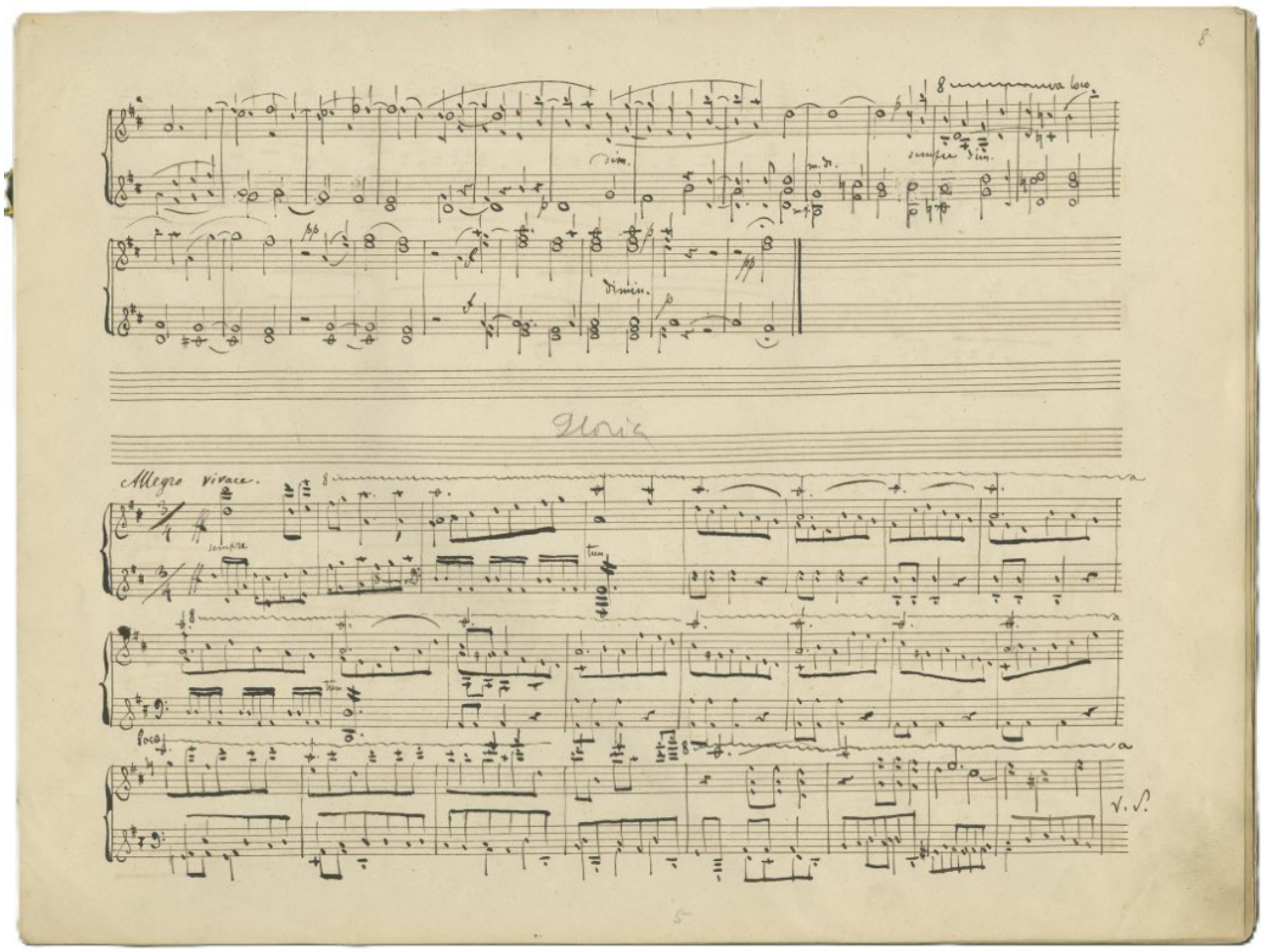

Primo.
Assai sostenuto. Mit Andacht.
va loco
Tutti e organo
Quart.
Clarinetti
Oboi
Flauti
Fl. e Oboi
Corni
Cello
Coro:
Ky — ri — e
Alto solo
Soprani
Fl.
Ob.
Clarin.
cresc.
f
p
V. S.



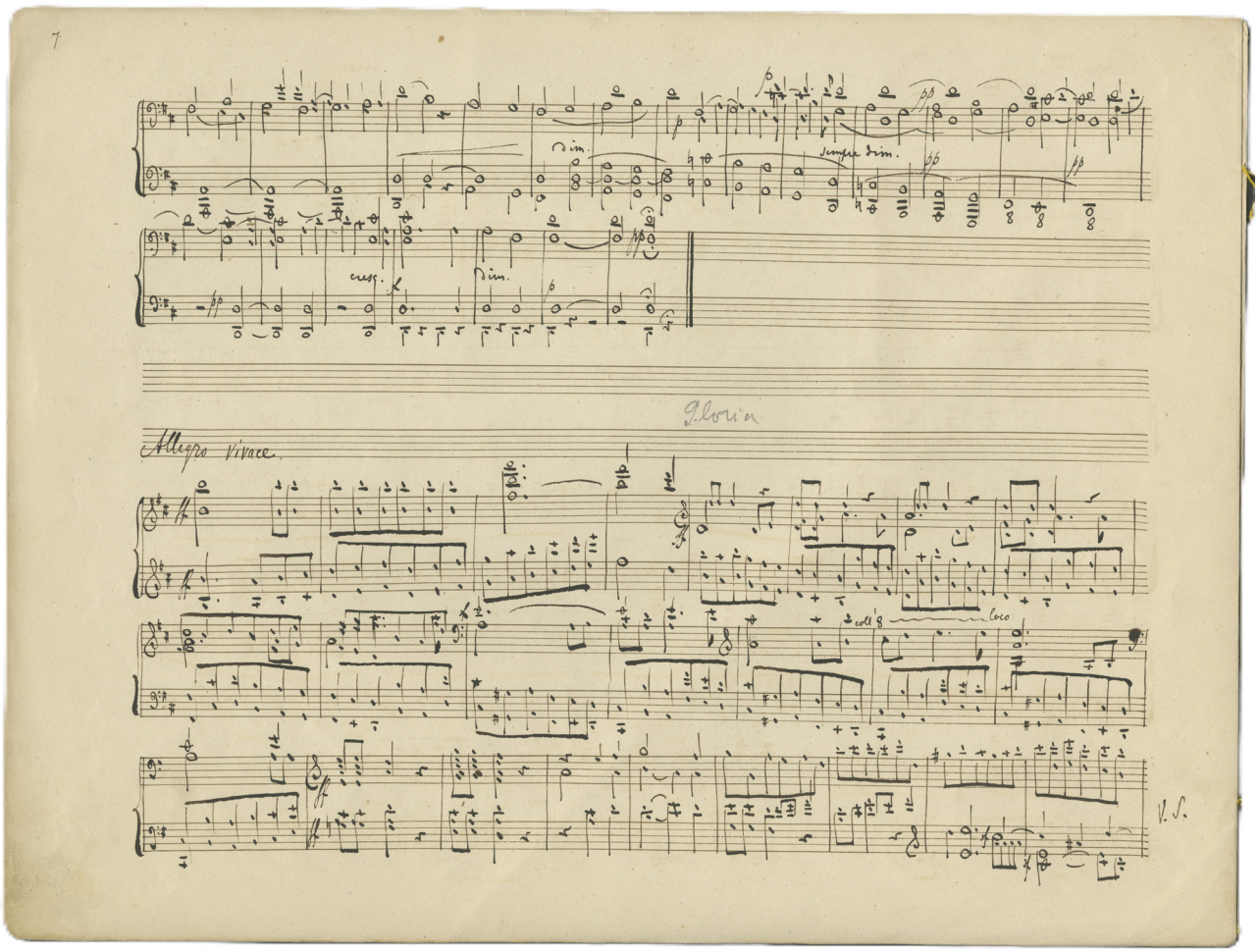
Illustrations 1a, 1b. Alexander N. Serov. Arrangement of the *Kyrie* from L. van Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* for piano four hands. Autograph manuscript. [1845]

In the *Gloria*, which follows the *Kyrie* immediately in the manuscript and continues on the same folio, there are no longer any indications of instrumentation or verbal text. The music rushes in a turbulent stream, as if the words no longer mattered at all (*Illustrations 2a, 2b*).[17]

Perhaps the rapid pace of the *Gloria* made it impossible for the performers to mentally "sing through" the text, compelling them instead to focus on ensemble cohesion and the precision of the dynamic contrasts that abound in this movement. Yet the expressive meaning of these contrasts cannot be understood without taking the verbal text into account, and it seems strange that Serov neglected it.



[17] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 22, Fols. 7–8.



Illustrations 2a, 2b. Alexander N. Serov. Arrangement of the *Kyrie* and *Gloria* movements from L. van Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* for piano four hands. Autograph manuscript. [1845]

The ensemble version of the *Credo* opens with a title page in Italian, with the inscriptions written in red ink, as if imitating the solemn cinnabar lettering of old manuscripts. The text is taken from the *Schott* edition of the score, though presented in a heavily abbreviated form — omitting the grandiloquent dedication to Archduke Rudolph with all his titles. In the original, it reads as follows:

MISSA / composita, et / SERENISSIMO AC EMINENTISSIMO / DOMINO DOMINO / RUDOLPHO JOANNI / Caesareo Principi et Archiduci Austriae S. R. E. Tit. s. Petri in monte / aureo Cardinali et Archiepiscopo Olomucensi / profundissima cum veneratione / dedicata a / LUDOVICO VAN BEETHOVEN. / OPUS 123/.

Serov evidently attached great importance to this undertaking—both in musical and spiritual terms (*Illustration 3*).[18]

However, the musical material in this version of the *Credo* is written in a more rapid hand than in the *Kyrie*; indications of instrumentation are not provided throughout: some are entered in red ink, while others are pencilled in. The same applies to the Latin text, which is written alternately in red ink and pencil. Serov likely decided to enter the verbal text only where he considered it essential for the proper understanding and performance of the music ("*Et incarnatus est*", "*judicare vivos et mortuos*", "*credo in unam sanctam catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam*"). The *Et vitam venturi fugue*, although carried through to the end in the ensemble version, contains no text at all—at least in the surviving piano part. It is unlikely that the text was written into the missing string parts, as they most probably contained a considerable number of rests (*Illustrations 4a, 4b*).[19]

The four-hand piano version of the *Credo*[20] appears to be a fair copy; however, all the musical notation is written in black ink, the Latin text is entirely absent, and there are no instrumentation markings—only tempo indications, dynamic markings, and expressive directions remain. Furthermore, the *Et vitam venturi* fugue breaks off abruptly (fol. 11), followed by several blank pages (there are 14 folios in total in the notebook). In all likelihood, Serov intended to return to this movement, or else that what has survived is not a final but a preliminary version of the arrangement.

This raises the question: what was the intended purpose of these arrangements, and could they have been performed in Simferopol—a decidedly provincial town with no rich musical milieu? Music lovers certainly existed there, including among civil servants and society ladies, with whom Serov interacted. As he himself wrote, "there are countless music lovers here", yet "we have almost *no* true *connoisseurs*" (as cited in [6, p. 329]). It is unlikely that the musical interests of his Simferopol acquaintances extended to works as demanding as the *Missa Solemnis*, which bore little resemblance

[18] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 22, Title page.
[19] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 22, Fols. 11–12.
[20] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693, Inventory 1, File 24.

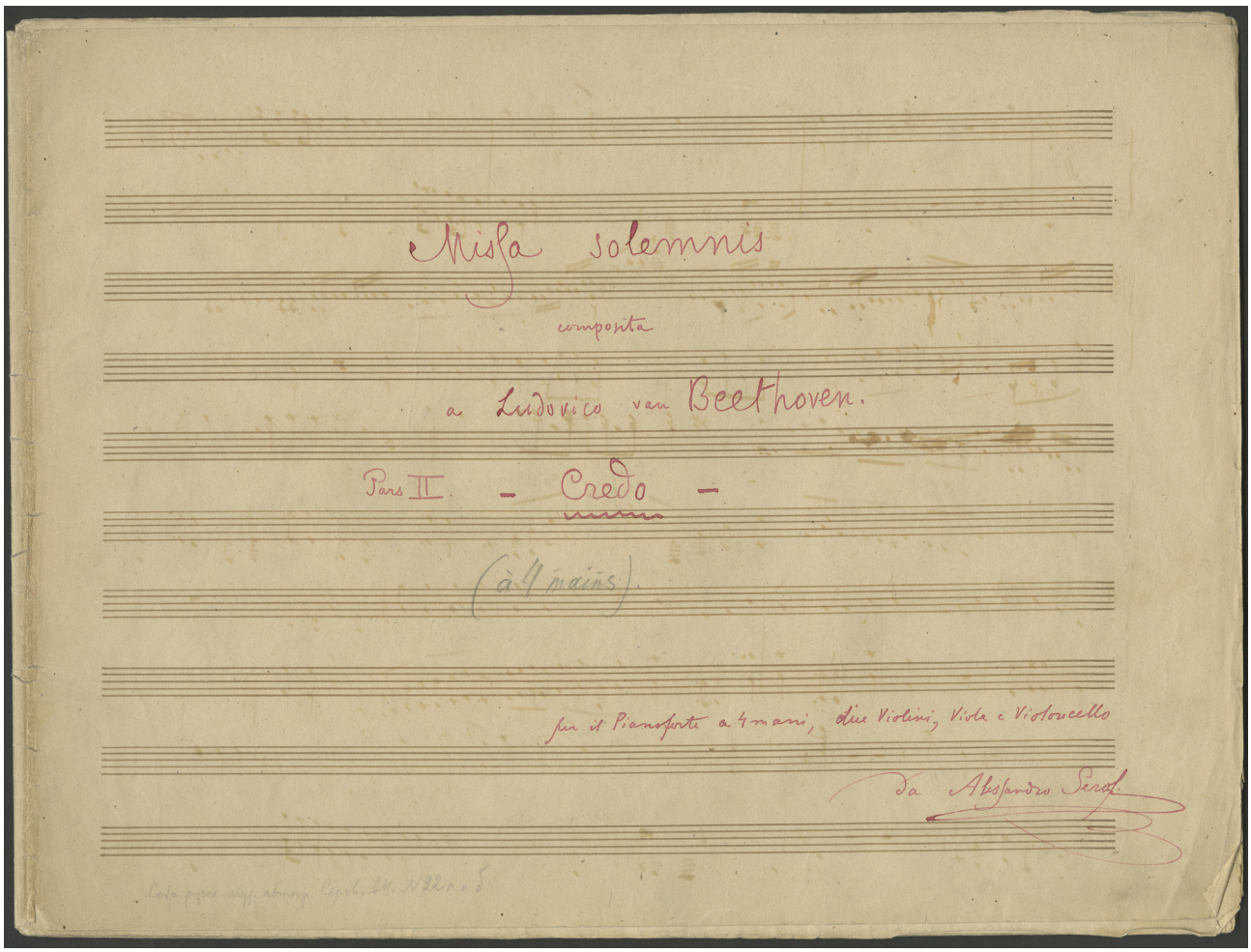
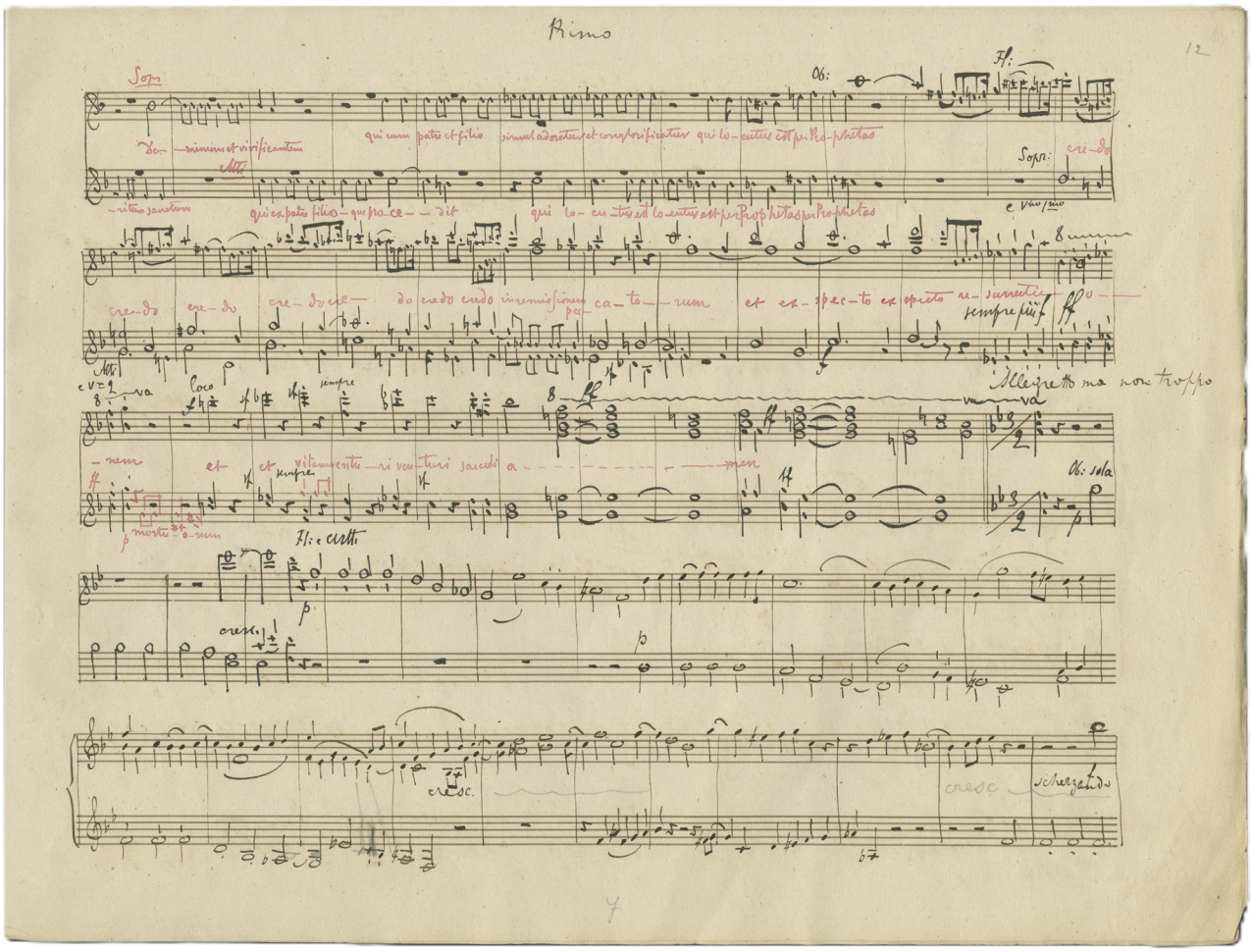
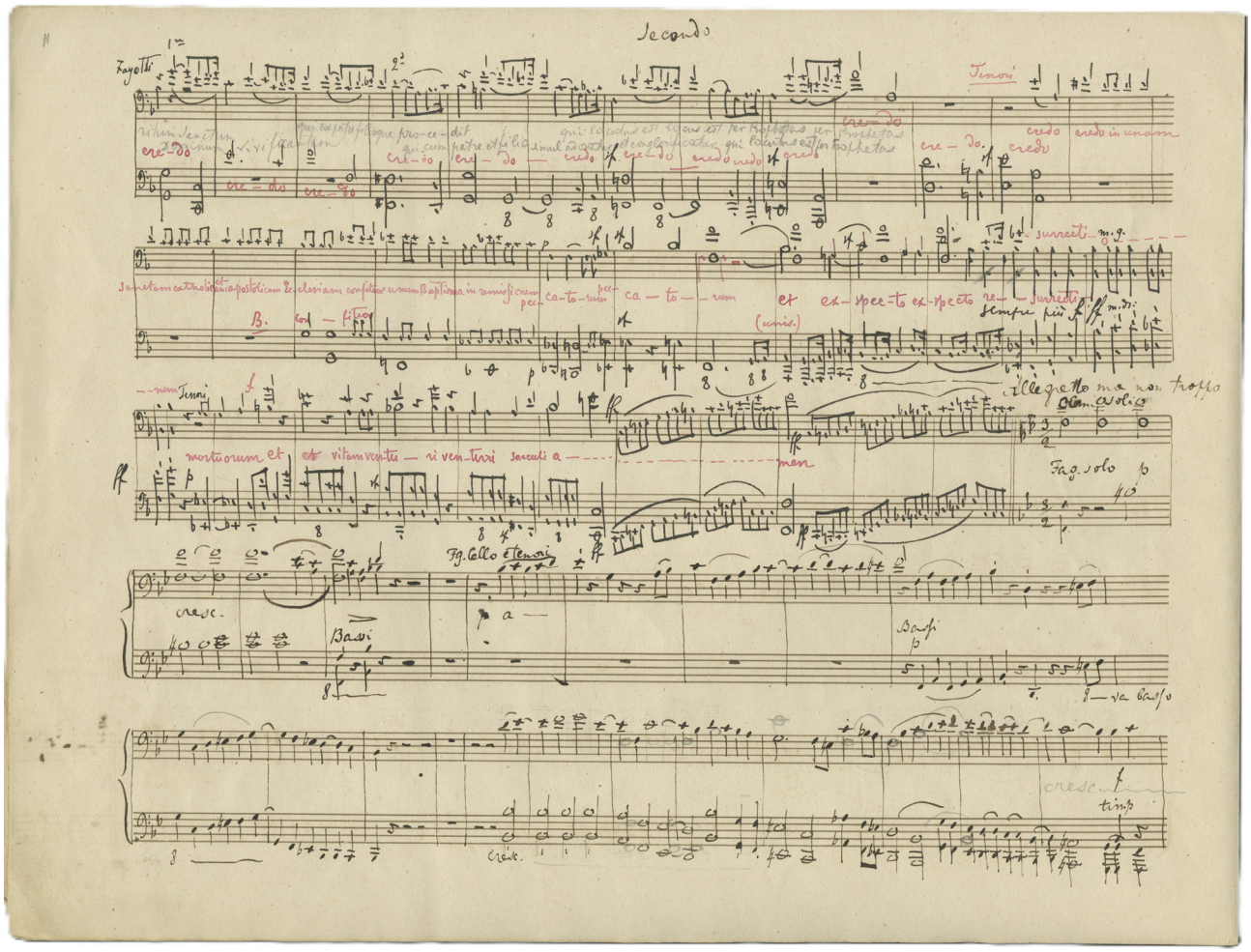


Illustration 3. Title page of the ensemble version of the *Credo* from L. van Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* in the arrangement by Alexander N. Serov (Italian text written in red ink). Autograph manuscript. [1845]


Primo
Sopr.
Ob:
Fl:
Sopr:
cre-do
qui cum patre et filio simul adoratur et conglorificatur qui lo-cutus est per Pro-phetas
qui ex patre filio-que pro-ce-dit
cre-do cre-do cre-do cre-do credo credo in unum Dom-inum Jesum Chris-tum et ex-spec-to ex-pecto re-surrectionem
Allegretto ma non troppo
Ob: sola
Fl: e cl:ti
cresc.
scherzando



Illustrations 4a, 4b. Fragment of the autograph manuscript of the four-hand version of the *Credo*, showing the abrupt termination of the score during the *Et vitam venturi* fugue

to the Italian opera music popular at the time, or even to Beethoven's earlier works, which had already entered the repertoire of Russian amateur musicians.

Evidently, these arrangements by Serov were intended for connoisseurs in the capital, and in St. Petersburg they attracted the interest of the most prominent musicians and intellectuals.

St. Petersburg Musical Circles and the 'Gloria' from Vladimir V. Stasov's Archive

It is well known that between 1851 and 1856, when Mikhail Glinka visited St. Petersburg, musical evenings were held for a small circle of his relatives and friends. At these gatherings, arrangements by Serov for piano four hands and for eight-hand performance on two pianos were performed. In this format, excerpts from both of Glinka's operas, his incidental music to the tragedy *Prince Kholmsky*, numbers from Mozart's operas *Don Giovanni* and *Die Zauberflöte*, as well as Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and *Missa Solemnis* were heard.[21]

Serov's arrangement of the Missa Solemnis was also well known to Mily Alexeyevich Balakirev. In a letter dated July 19, 1858, Vladimir V. Stasov wrote to Balakirev, who was then in Nizhny Novgorod:

> Tell me, please, did you take our Second Mass by Beethoven, arranged by Serov for four hands, with you, as well as our *Papillons* by Schumann? If they are here, we will try to look for them in your apartment. We would like to play them.[22]

The brothers Vladimir and Dmitry Stasov, whom Serov had known since his student years, formed a small musical circle that included people associated with the leadership of the Imperial Public Library, where Vladimir V. Stasov entered service on December 6, 1856. He later recalled:

> At that time, several of us who loved music gathered together fairly often to perform good music in eight hands on two pianos. Our *partie fixe* [regular group.—*L. K.*] usually consisted of the following people: Natalya Ivanovna Sobolshchikova, my brother Dmitry ..., Vas[ily] Pavl[ovich] Engelhardt, one of our former comrades from the School of Jurisprudence, Alex[ander] Nikol[ayevich] Serov ..., and finally, myself.[23]

[21] Karenin, V. (Ed.). (1935). *Perepiska M. A. Balakireva s V. V. Stasovym* [Correspondence between M. A. Balakirev and V. V. Stasov]. Muzgiz. p. 38. (In Russ.)

[22] Karenin, 1935, p. 24.

[23] Stasov, V. V. (1894). *Sobranie sochinenii* [Collected works]: *1847–1886* (Vol. 3). Tipografiya I. N. Skorokhodova. p. 1522. (In Russ.)

These gatherings took place in various homes, sometimes at one participant's and sometimes at another's. Occasionally, the Director of the Library, Baron Modest A. Korf—a historian, future statesman, and legislator—came to listen to the music. Interestingly, Vasily P. Engelhardt, like the Stasov brothers and Serov, was trained as a jurist but later gained renown as an astronomer. He devoted himself to astronomy after retiring from public service in 1853. Yet, as is easy to see, he was also a capable pianist.

The only woman mentioned by Stasov, Natalya I. Sobolshchikova (née Gornostayeva), was the wife of the prominent bibliographer and architect of the Imperial Public Library, Vasily I. Sobolshchikov. During the reorganization carried out at the time, Natalya Sobolshchikova took part in the monumental task of compiling catalogues; according to her husband, he entrusted her with the section on Russian history because of a shortage of staff:

> She became so accustomed to library work that when the Baron assigned me an assistant in the "Rossica" section, she wrote the entire alphabetical catalogue for the arts section. Having finished that catalogue, she set about sorting a vast mass of sheet music, arranging it by genre (operas, symphonies, sonatas, etc.) and compiling an alphabetical catalogue for it.[24]

Although Serov's arrangements of movements from the *Missa Solemnis* were intended for four-hand performance, they were evidently performed at the evenings organized by the Stasov brothers, in which Serov himself also took part. Apparently, one part of the Stasov circle's repertoire consisted of works for four hands, and another part of works for eight hands.

In the archive of Vladimir Stasov's niece, Varvara D. Komarova, there is an unfinished manuscript of an arrangement of the *Gloria* from the *Missa Solemnis* for two pianos and eight hands, written in Vladimir's hand.[25]

The title page is in French: *Gloria de la Messe solenelle en Re./ (Allegro vivace, ¾, D-dur)*. The manuscript, containing 19 folios (of which folios 16–19 are blank), bears no authorial date; it is assigned an approximate date of the "1850s," probably given by Andrei N. Rimsky-Korsakov, who served as keeper of the Department of Manuscripts from 1918 to 1940.

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[24] Sobolshchikov, V. I. (1889). Vospominaniya starogo bibliotekarya [Reminiscences of an old librarian]. *Istoricheskii vestnik* [Historical Herald], 38, 303. (In Russ.).

[25] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 362, Inventory 2, File 39.

The autograph of the *Gloria* is written in Stasov's hand; however, the question arises as to whether he was the author of this arrangement or merely copied it, and not in its entirety, from a lost original.

No other comparable arrangements unquestionably belonging to Vladimir Vasilyevich Stasov's pen have been discovered. To be sure, his brother Dmitry possessed compositional talent and certain professional skills, yet nothing is known of his having made arrangements for such piano ensembles. By contrast, Serov's diligent work on arrangements of Beethoven's compositions and his personal participation in "eight-hand" musical evenings at Glinka's apartment and in the Stasov brothers' circle give reason to suggest that this version, too, may have been arranged by him.

Unlike Serov's four-hand "Simferopol" arrangements, this manuscript contains no indications of instrumentation and completely lacks the Latin text. The bravura character of the *Gloria*, however, is strongly emphasized and must have sounded exceptionally brilliant when performed by four pianists (*Illustrations 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d*).[26]

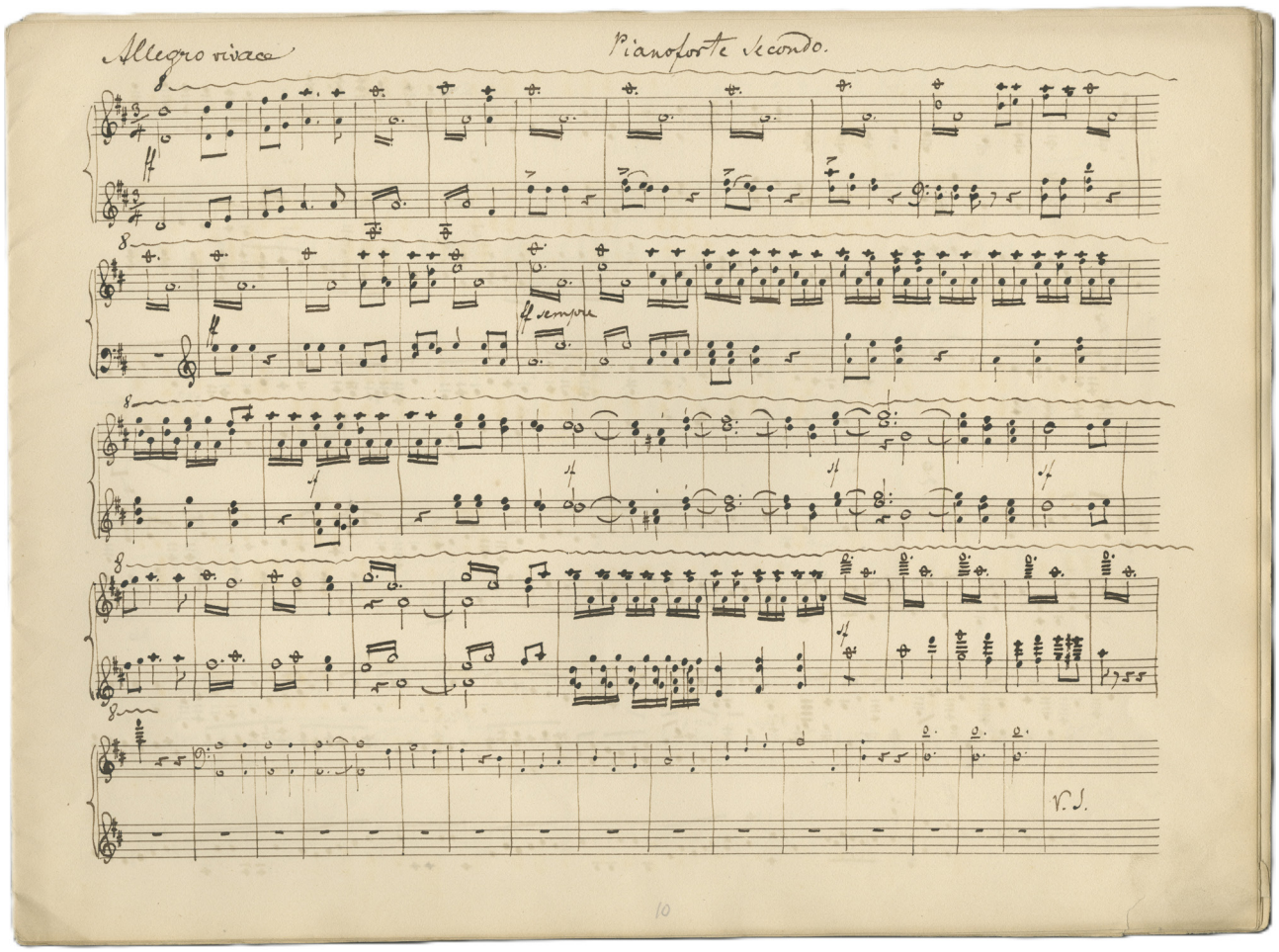
That this manuscript may represent an incomplete fair copy is further suggested by the abrupt termination of the musical text in the middle of the *Quoniam* section, with the notation in the *Primo* and *Secondo* parts ending in different places (in the *Secondo*, 37 bars after the *Allegro maestoso* tempo marking; in the *Primo*, even earlier). Although folios 2v and 3 contain corrections and erasures, the manuscript as a whole appears to be a fair copy, giving no impression that the author faced sudden compositional obstacles and was at a loss as to how to complete his work. Perhaps distributing the polyphonic texture between two or four performers demanded particularly nuanced attention to voice-leading. Neither Serov nor the Stasov brothers nor Balakirev had received formal instruction in fugal composition, and Beethoven's fugues, moreover, are constructed according to their own distinct principles, not described in textbooks on counterpoint.

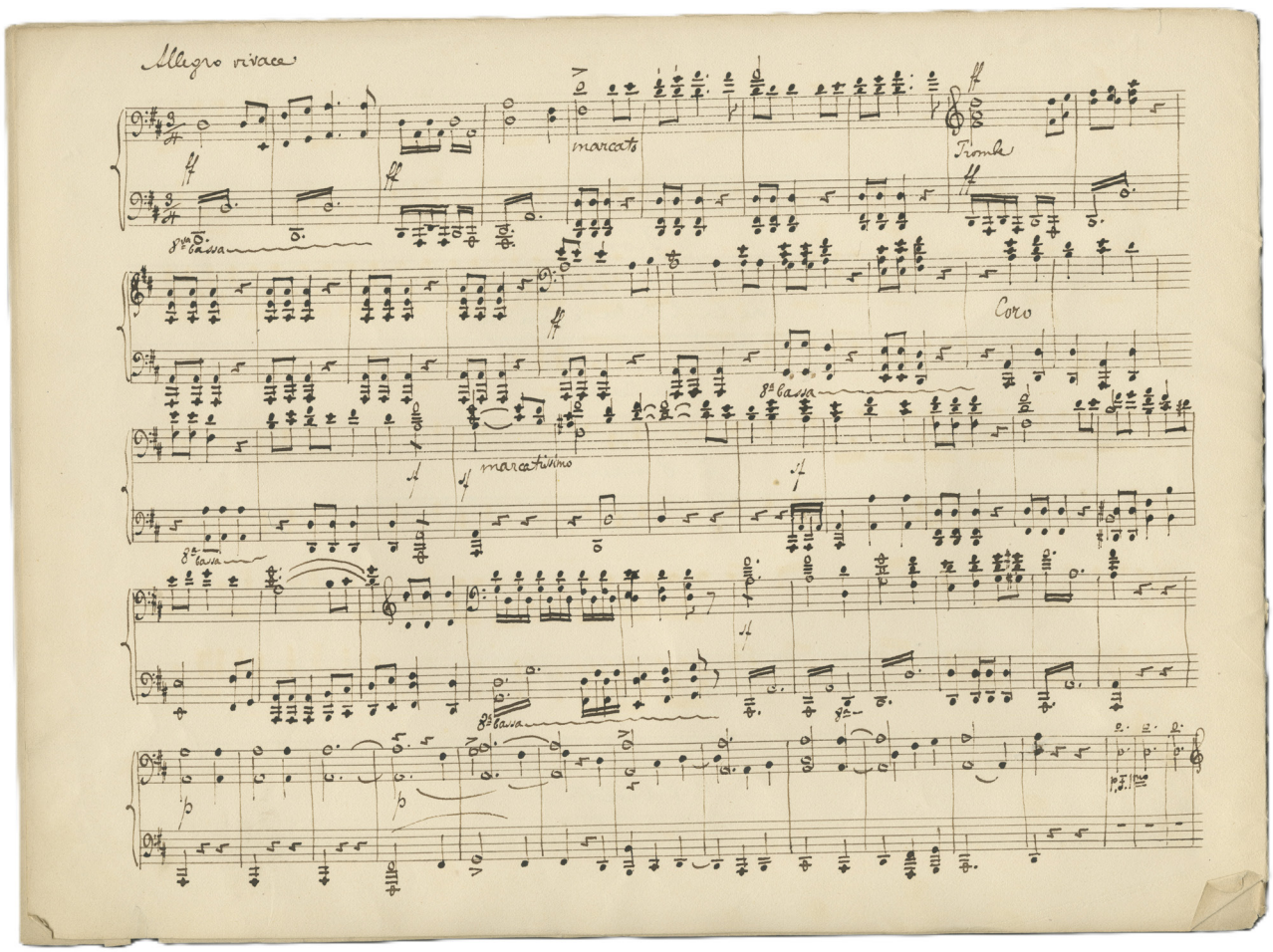
The fact that the score breaks off so abruptly, however, might have been caused by purely external circumstances rather than by the nature of the material itself. If the presumed original did exist, was completed, and was performed at the musical gatherings of the Stasov brothers, then the copy (assuming the manuscript is indeed secondary) might simply have been left unfinished.

[26] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 362, Inventory 2, File 39, Fols.1, 1v, 2, 2v.


Allegro vivace


Allegro vivace
ff
sf marcatissimo
sf marcatissimo


Allegro vivace
Pianoforte secondo.
a tempo
V. S.
10



Illustrations 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d. Manuscript of the arrangement of the *Gloria* from L. van Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* for two pianos, eight hands, written in the hand of Vladimir V. Stasov

Serov's arrangements of the *Missa Solemnis* were never published—whether due to the composer's preoccupation with his own operatic works and extensive activities as a music critic, or as a consequence of his sharp rift with both the Stasov brothers and Balakirev; by 1869, he numbered them among his personal enemies [9, p. 179].

Serov was absent from the second public performance of the *Missa Solemnis* in St. Petersburg on December 27, 1870. He had been dispatched to Vienna by the Russian Musical Society (RMS) for the Beethoven centennial celebrations, which took place during those same December days. To his own immense regret, Serov fell gravely ill there and was unable to attend the concerts and theatrical performances for which he had traveled so far. Moreover, as he lamented in a letter to an unidentified recipient, he had been met in Vienna with prejudice and a lack of hospitality.[27] Shortly after returning to St. Petersburg, Serov passed away on January 20 (February 1), 1871. One can only regret that he did not live to write either a monograph on Beethoven or a dedicated analytical essay on the *Missa Solemnis*.

In any event, existing archival, written, and memoir sources permit the conclusion that the *Missa Solemnis* in Russia was by no means forgotten following its historical premiere in 1824. It attracted the attention of Russian musicians and for some time circulated in strictly chamber settings, performed without voices in the form of piano arrangements within St. Petersburg musical circles. Although their participants were few in number and the activities of these gatherings were not documented in the nineteenth-century periodical press, they exerted a profound influence on shaping the tastes and interests of the capital's musical professionals and art lovers. The Mass was known, one way or another, to Alyabyev (from the full score), Glinka (in Serov's arrangements), the Stasov brothers, Balakirev, and presumably the composers of the *Moguchaya kuchka* (Mighty Handful). Undeniably, Serov played the key role in popularizing such a complex masterpiece. His arrangements were performed in St. Petersburg and made it possible to become acquainted with this music not merely through the study of the score, but through a direct encounter with it in live performance.

The perception of Beethoven primarily as an instrumental composer, and of the *Missa Solemnis* as a kind of symphony with religious content, found expression in the specific characteristics of Serov's arrangements and in the manuscript

[27] *NLR*, Department of Manuscripts, Collection 693. Inventory 1. File 126. Fols. 1–2.

of the *Gloria* from the Stasov archive. The partial or complete absence of the Latin text in certain sections of the Mass encouraged its perception as a kind of "absolute music," detached from the specific words of the Catholic liturgy (which in the original is, of course, by no means the case). The removal of text from both large fugues—in the *Gloria* and the *Credo*—brought these compositions closer to certain Baroque fugues, in which polyphonic intricacies or play with rhetorical figures were valued more highly than the clear communication of verbal meaning. Musicians and critics educated at classical gymnasiums or the School of Jurisprudence (such as Serov and the Stasov brothers) understood Latin well, yet they hardly possessed a detailed grasp of every nuance of the Catholic liturgy. But for many other Russian performers who had not studied in classical gymnasiums or universities, Latin remained an alien "dead" language, and the text of the *Missa Solemnis* hindered rather than helped sight-reading.

Consequently, the *Missa Solemnis*, with its inherently dual character as a liturgical work that its composer also intended for concert performance as an oratorio, acquired yet another form in Russia: that of a kind of symphony with an implied but unvoiced text. Beethoven's towering reputation as an unsurpassed symphonist contributed to the perception of the *Missa Solemnis* as "pure" music as well. On the other hand, beginning with the critical pamphlet by Alexander D. Oulibicheff, the nineteenth-century Russian press repeatedly advanced the view that Beethoven's style was fundamentally unsuited to vocal music and that he treated the human voice in an unnatural and forced manner.[28] The critic Osip Levenson, commenting on an unsatisfactory performance of the *Benedictus* in Moscow in 1879, wrote that, first, the *Missa Solemnis*, when performed in a concert setting, necessarily ceased to be church music and, second, that Beethoven "treated voices as instruments. … It is hardly surprising, therefore, that at times he demands the positively impossible from the voice."[29]

Beethoven's much-discussed "symphonism" provided a rationale for this particular feature. Purely instrumental versions of the *Missa Solemnis* brought it closer

[28] Oulibicheff, A. (1857). *Beethoven, ses critiques et ses glossateurs. F. A. Brockhaus; Jules Gavelot, p. 80.*

[29] Levenson, O. Ya. (1880). *V kontsertnoi zale (muzykal'nye fel'etony). 1878–1880* [In the Concert Hall (Musical Feuilletons). 1878–1880]. N. S. Skvortsov Printing House, pp. 79–80. (In Russ.).

to another masterpiece, the Ninth Symphony, whose own path to the hearts of Russian listeners likewise proved far from easy — though that is entirely another story.

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Information about the author:

Larisa V. Kirillina — Dr. Sci. (Art Studies), Professor, Western Music History Department, Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory; Leading Researcher, Western Classical Art Department, State Institute for Art Studies.

Сведения об авторе:
Кириллина Л. В. — доктор искусствоведения, профессор, кафедра истории зарубежной музыки, Московская государственная консерватория имени П. И. Чайковского; ведущий научный сотрудник, сектор классического искусства Запада, Государственный институт искусствонания.

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