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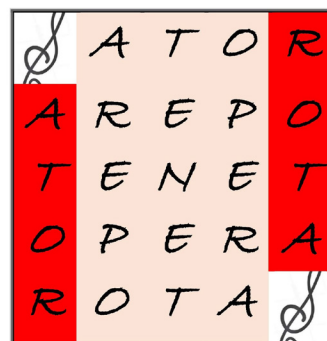


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Gnesin Russian Academy of Music

Contemporary Musicology

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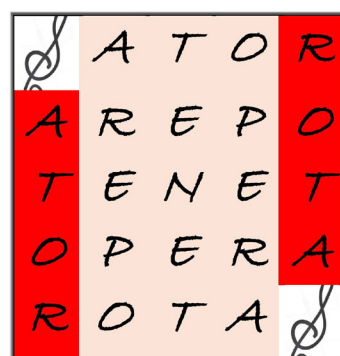


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Российской Федерации

Российская академия музыки
имени Гнесиных

Современные проблемы музыкознания

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The Journal publishes research studies in the field of music history and theory, music performance, as well as the methodology of music studies in interdisciplinary contexts. The Journal's scope corresponds to the subject categorie of 5.10.3. *Types of Art (Musical Art) (Art History)*.

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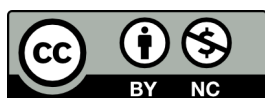


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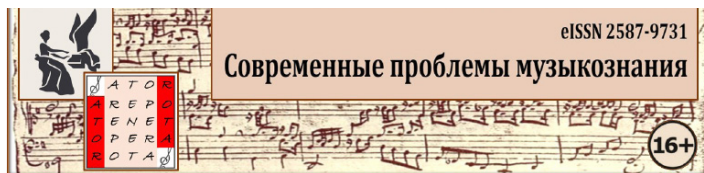
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Dear friends!

The journal *Contemporary Musicology* launches a series of articles dedicated to the personality and work of Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich. 2025 marks the 50th anniversary of his death, and 2026 marks the 120th anniversary of his birth. The journal's publications will bridge these two anniversaries, presenting readers with the proceedings of the *Sixth International Conference Technique of Musical Composition: Theory and Practice. Shostakovich in Memoriam*, which was held at the Gnesin Russian Academy of Music from April 14–18, 2025. Papers presented at the conference focused on Shostakovich's personality and work, as well as the historical and theoretical context of his music. The scholarly forum had a significant impact.



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ТЕОРИЯ И ПРАКТИКА»
Шостакович in memoriam**

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“I was struck by the scope of the conference. I’m glad that it’s dedicated to my beloved Shostakovich, but at the same time touches on a wide range of themes relevant not only to Shostakovich but to music scholarship in general,” said Iosif Genrikhovich Raiskin, a leading Russian musicologist and music critic, reflecting the overall impression of the level of scholarly discussion.

Ivana Petković Lozo, PhD, Visiting Scholar at the University of California, Riverside, USA, noted: “The conference provided me with the opportunity to test and refine my ideas in dialogue with peers, mentors, and future colleagues. Furthermore, presenting at the conference is a recognition of my topic’s resonance. I’m taking away from Moscow a lively response, echoes of which will appear in my future work.”

Fumiko Hitotsuyanagi, PhD, Senior Lecturer at the Showa University of Music (Kawasaki, Japan), also praised the conference’s level: “It was a wonderful experience. I feel that Russian musicologists’ approach to Shostakovich’s works differs from that of Japanese musicologists, and this greatly helps me gain new information. I really want Russian music to be studied in Japan at the same high level as in Russia, and I would like to announce this to the world.”

The conference included nine “golden lectures” given by leading musicologists. Tatyana Ivanovna Naumenko’s article based on one of these lectures marks the beginning of a collective *hommage* by musicologists to the great composer.

Irina Susidko

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===== *Shostakovich in memoriam* =====

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Shostakovich and Khrapchenko: On the Problem of “The Artist and Power”

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Abstract. The article is devoted to the history of the relationship between Dmitry Shostakovich and Mikhail Khrapchenko, Chairman of the All-Union Committee for Arts Affairs (VKDI) under the Council of People’s Commissars of the Soviet Union (1939–1948). This department was created in 1936 under the leadership of Platon Kerzhentsev. For Shostakovich, the initial period of interaction with VKDI turned out to be quite dramatic. The first major action of the VKDI was the publication of the article *Muddle Instead of Music* (*Pravda*, 28 January 1936),

directed against Shostakovich's opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk*; this was shortly followed by another entitled *Ballet Falsehood* (*Pravda*, 6 February 1936) that made accusations against the ballet *The Limpid Stream*. However, the appointment of Khrapchenko to the post of chairman of the VKDI in 1939 radically changed the position of Shostakovich, whose support by the new head of the department would benefit him greatly in the years to come. The article reconstructs the entire period of communication between Shostakovich and Khrapchenko based on archival documents, memoirs, letters and periodical press materials. The composer repeatedly turned to Khrapchenko for help and invariably received it in both creative and everyday matters. In 1948, Khrapchenko, like many other artists, became a victim of the anti-formalist campaign. On Stalin's orders, an audit was conducted of the financial costs of preparing the opera *The Great Friendship* by Vano Muradeli. Having been designated as responsible for the failure of the opera, Khrapchenko subsequently spent several years paying a large fine to the state. At the conference of Soviet music figures, which took place at the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) from 11–13 January 1948 under the chairmanship of Andrei Zhdanov, many of those whom Khrapchenko had supported during his many years of work at the VKDI spoke out against him. The only one who spoke out in defence of Khrapchenko was Shostakovich. Until the end of his life, the composer maintained communication with Khrapchenko, who again held high positions in the 1960s and always responded to the composer's requests when he could.

Keywords: Dmitry Shostakovich, Michail Khrapchenko, Joseph Stalin, Alexey Zhdanov, All-Union Committee for Arts Affairs, the composer and power, Soviet music, symphony, anti-formalist campaign of 1948

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== Памяти Д. Д. Шостаковича ==

Научная статья

**Шостакович и Храпченко:
к проблеме «Художник и власть»**

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена истории взаимоотношений Д. Д. Шостаковича и М. Б. Храпченко, председателя Всесоюзного комитета по делам искусств (ВКДИ) при Совете народных комиссаров СССР (1939–1948). Это ведомство было создано в 1936 году под руководством П. М. Керженцева. Начальный период взаимодействия с ВКДИ оказался для Шостаковича весьма драматичным. Первой крупной акцией ВКДИ была публикация статьи «Сумбур вместо музыки» («Правда», 28 января 1936 года), направленная против оперы Шостаковича «Леди Макбет Мценского уезда»; за ней последовала еще одна — «Балетная фальшь» («Правда», 6 февраля 1936 года) с обвинениями против балета «Светлый ручей». Назначение в 1939 году Храпченко на должность председателя ВКДИ кардинально изменило положение Шостаковича, который на протяжении долгого времени в полной мере ощущал поддержку нового главы ведомства.

В статье на основе архивных документов, мемуаров, писем и материалов периодической печати реконструирован весь период общения Шостаковича и Храпченко. Композитор неоднократно обращался за помощью к председателю ВКДИ и неизменно получал ее как в творческих, так и в бытовых вопросах. В 1948 году Храпченко, как и многие деятели искусства, стал жертвой антиформалистической кампании. По указанию Сталина была проведена проверка денежных затрат на подготовку оперы «Великая дружба» В. И. Мурадели. Главным ответственным за неудачу оперы был назначен Храпченко, который затем в течение ряда лет выплачивал государству крупный штраф. На Совещании деятелей советской музыки, которое проходило в ЦК ВКП(б) 11–13 января 1948 года под председательством А. А. Жданова, против Храпченко выступили многие из тех, кого он поддерживал на протяжении долгих лет своей работы в ВКДИ. Единственным, кто встал на его защиту, был Шостакович. До конца жизни композитор поддерживал общение с Храпченко, который в 1960-е годы занимал высокие посты и всегда, когда мог, откликался на просьбы композитора.

Ключевые слова: Д. Д. Шостакович, М. Б. Храпченко, И. В. Сталин, А. А. Жданов, Всесоюзный комитет по делам искусств, композитор и власть, советская музыка, симфония, антиформалистическая кампании 1948 года

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Introduction

The problem of “the artist and power” has been raised repeatedly in relation to Dmitry Dmitriyevich Shostakovich (1906–1975). The scope of analysis is broad and meaningful, ranging from an academically precise history of the composer’s relationship with the Soviet regime (as seen in the works of Levon Hakobian (Akopyan) [1; 2]) to descriptions of an almost personal confrontation between creator and tyrant, exemplified in the provocative phrase of Solomon Volkov: *Shostakovich i Stalin: khudozhnik i tsar’* [*Shostakovich and Stalin. The Artist and the Tsar*] [3].

The present work sets out provide some clarification to the very concept of “power” by examining Shostakovich’s relationship with a government official of much smaller stature than Stalin, but also one who was much closer to the needs of artists. He we refer to the chairman of the All-Union Committee for Arts Affairs under the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR, Mikhail Borisovich Khrapchenko (1904–1986), who was appointed to this position in April 1939 and removed in the wake of the anti-formalist campaign of 1948. Shostakovich, who maintained relations with him from 1938 onwards, always had the opportunity to turn to him for support as the head of a government department — effectively the People’s Commissar for the Arts (*Illustration 1*).

Khrapchenko: A Short Biography

In the scholarly and memoir sources, with a few exceptions, Khrapchenko’s activities are predominantly viewed in a negative light. It can even be said that since 1948, when the Chairman of the Committee was, as they say, dismissed from office with a bang, the assessment of his activities has scarcely been subject to revision. This is evidenced, for example, by such formulations found in contemporary literature as “hapless head of the government arts committee” or even “unprincipled shadow of power.” The author of the first definition (journalist Vyacheslav V. Ogryzko) belatedly gloats over the dismissal of Khrapchenko in the wake of the vilification of Muradeli’s opera *The Great Friendship*,¹ while the author of the second (the literary scholar Aleksander N. Arkhangelsky,

¹ Ogryzko, V. V. (2015, February 23) Forced defectors. *Literaturnaya Rossiya* [*Literary Russia*]: *Internet-portal*, (2012/11). (In Russ.). <https://litrossia.ru/item/5638-oldarchive/>



Illustration 1. Samuil A. Samosud, Dmitry D. Shostakovich, Mikhail B. Khrapchenko.
Photo from the family archive

who has been recognized as a foreign agent) finds fault with a critical statement about the “bad language” of Alexander Tvardovsky’s poem *Vasily Terkin* during its discussion for the Stalin Prize.² One gets the impression that the almost forgotten People’s Commissar must remain guilty for what is easily forgiven to many of his other comrades, who often made much harsher judgments and actions.

² Arkhangelsky, A. N. (2015) Pisatel’, Soyuz i Vojna [The Writer, the Union and War]. In T. M. Goryaeva, V. A. Antipina, Z. K. Vodopyanova, & T. V. Domracheva (Eds.), *“My predchuvstvovali polykhan’e...” Soyuz sovetskikh pisatelej SSSR v gody Velikoj Otechestvennoj vojny. Iyun’ 1941 — sentyabr’ 1945 g. Dokumenty i kommentarii* [“We had a premonition of the blaze...” Union of Soviet Writers of the USSR during the Great Patriotic War. June 1941 — September 1945 Documents and Comments]. (Vol. 2: In 2 books, Book 1, pp. 6–9). Publishing House “Politicheskaya Entsiklopediya” (ROSSPEN), pp. 7–8. (In Russ.).

The habit of negative evaluations is noticeable even in some more neutral contexts. Thus, in the publication of letters to Ivan Sollertinsky, the commentator (Liudmila Kovnatskaya) draws attention to the notes made by Shostakovich opposite the names of Valerian Pereverzev and Mikhail Khrapchenko. Here we refer to the six-volume edition of Gogol, which was published under the editorship of these literary scholars in 1937. The commentator suggests that with these notes Shostakovich was pointing out to his friend the striking dissimilarity of the fates of these literary scholars [4, p. 242].

This comment requires clarification, especially in the context of the preparation of the six-volume edition. Khrapchenko was the compiler and author of the introductory article, which is quite remarkable considering the difference in status between the venerable master Pereverzev and the novice scholar. Valerian Fyodorovich Pereverzev (1882–1968) was more than 20 years Khrapchenko’s senior; as such, his “level” was closer to that of Anatoly Lunacharsky, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Boris Eikhenbaum — that is, the founders of Soviet literary theory and aesthetics. Nevertheless, the 30-year-old Khrapchenko was entrusted with becoming the main “driving force” of the publication; perhaps this was a sign of Pereverzev’s foresight, who understood the meaning of the unfolding campaign against the old-guard intelligentsia. Just a year later (in 1938), Pereverzev was purged and sent into exile. The scholar was victimised precisely due to his status as a major figure, the founder of a scientific school. He was accused, according to the formulation of literary critic Mikhail Lifshitz, of “departing from Marxism towards Menshevism.”³ In the same year of 1938, Lifshitz also attacked Khrapchenko,⁴ which, fortunately for him and Shostakovich, went without consequences.

Shostakovich hardly perceived the Chairman of the Committee on Arts as a literary scholar. In the eyes of his musician colleagues, Khrapchenko was, first and foremost, a government official — a status that carried no less risk than literary studies.⁵ It is no coincidence that one of the family’s friends, recalling this period of Khrapchenko’s activity, wrote: “A huge responsibility, daily intense work, where, he knew, one could not make a mistake. Cultural giants were falling all around — in the Party and in life. Every day people disappeared, acquaintances withdrew from work” [6, pp. 295–296].

³ Cit ex.: Lifshitz, M. A. (2012). *Stydlivaya sotsiologiya* [Shamefaced Sociology]. In *Nadoelo. V zashchitu obyknovennogo marksizma* [Fed Up. Defence of Ordinary Marxism] (pp. 375–376). *Iskusstvo-XXI vek*. (In Russ.).

⁴ Ibid., p. 369.

⁵ For more on the activities of Khrapchenko as chairman of the All-Union Committee for Arts Affairs (VKDI), see [5].

Before Khrapchenko's appointment, Shostakovich's relations with the All-Union Committee for Arts Affairs were quite tumultuous. The first chairman of the VKDI was the "Old Bolshevik" Platon Kerzhentsev. His name is associated both with the commencement of work on a large project to create a classical Soviet opera [7; 8], and with the unkind attention paid to Shostakovich, whose opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk (Katerina Izmailova)* fell victim to new political winds. It is enough to remember that the department itself was created on 17 January 1936, just 11 days before the appearance of the famous article *Muddle Instead of Music*. Shortly afterwards, a new article followed *Ballet Falsehood*, which was directed against Shostakovich's ballet *The Limpid Stream*.

A week after the *Lady Macbeth* debacle, Shostakovich came to see Kerzhentsev on his own initiative. The conversation left him in no doubt that from now on his work as a composer would be subject to strict state control. Leonid Maksimenkov, who researched into the events of 1936–1938 (the "Stalinist cultural revolution"), identifies five points of such control by the Committee for Artistic Affairs, according to which the composer was instructed to: (1) free himself from the influence of certain obliging critics, such as Ivan Sollertinsky, who encouraged the worst aspects of Shostakovich's work; (2) travel through the villages of the Soviet Union and record folk songs from Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, and Georgia; (3) select and harmonise one hundred of the best songs from those collected; (4) before composing any opera or ballet, submit the libretto for review to the Committee for Artistic Affairs. Finally, (5) when already in the process of working on a new opera or ballet, to test individual written parts in front of workers' and collective farm audiences [9, pp. 111–112].

This was Shostakovich's initial acquaintance with the newly formed department, which did not promise anything good for the composer and was to have the most direct influence on his future creative biography. As is well known, Shostakovich did not fulfil a single one of the five recommended points, instead choosing to act in a much more radical manner: the composer forever abandoned the writing of operas and ballets, thereby making the coordination of librettos and the approval of what was written in front of workers and collective farmers irrelevant.

In January 1938, Kerzhentsev was removed from his post and Alexei Ivanovich Nazarov, who had previously been in charge of the press department of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), was appointed in his place.

A month later, 33-year-old Khrapchenko, who at that time was working as a senior research fellow at the Gorky Institute of World Literature, was approved as his deputy. It is unlikely that he came to the attention of the party leadership by accident. A planned change in policy in the field of culture was largely dictated by the authorities' desire to regain the trust of the artistic intelligentsia. The new Committee was formed of people who had just crossed the thirty-year mark. Many years later, Alexander Solodovnikov, one of Khrapchenko's deputies, wrote "We were young then," noting that the artists immediately felt the easing of the situation and accepted the new management team in a friendly and even fatherly manner [10].

By this time, Khrapchenko, despite his youth, already had a fairly solid track record. Among the most important milestones in his biography are teaching at the Department of Literature and Language at Voronezh University (1921–1931); then transferring to Moscow to the Institute of Literature and Art of the Communist Academy (1931–1933); heading a department at the Institute of Red Professors (IRP, 1936–1938) and serving as director of the Institute of Literature within the IRP.

Khrapchenko's greatest organisational achievement by 1938 was his participation in the development of the structure and programme of the newly created Literary Institute.⁶ In 1933, the main idea behind the initiative was to be embodied in two forms: scientific and educational. In the scientific mainstream, the Institute of World Literature of the USSR Academy of Sciences (IMLI) was established, and in the educational mainstream, the Evening Workers' Literary University was established, which three years later received its modern name the Gorky Institute of World Literature under which it would later become a renowned educational institution and a veritable forge of literary talent.

Among Khrapchenko's scientific achievements, it is worth mentioning, first of all, his curatorship (as deputy editor-in-chief) of the valuable academic series *Literary Heritage*, founded in 1934, as well as the preparation and publication in 1937 of the aforementioned 6-volume collected works of Nikolai Gogol.

⁶ Resolution of the Secretariat of the Organizing Committee of the Union of Writers of the USSR dated September 3, 1933 states: "Instruct the commission consisting of comrades Vs. Ivanov, Kirpotin, Yudin, Khrapchenko, Berezovsky, Zhuchkov to develop the issue of the structure and program of the Literary University." See Kurilov, A. S. (2015, February 23). Kak sozdavalsya Litinstitut [How the Literary Institute Was Created]. *Literaturnaya Rossiya* [Literary Russia]: Internet-portal, (2008/51). (In Russ.). <https://litrossia.ru/item/3212-oldarchive/>

It was about this edition that Shostakovich wrote to Ivan Sollertinsky from the Kuibyshev evacuation in November 1942: "...I kindly ask you to get the *Collected Works* in six volumes edited by N. S. Ashukin, V. F. Pereverzev (sic!) and M. B. Khrapchenko (sic!). Get Volume IV (State Publishing House 'Khudozhestvennaya Literatura.' Moscow, 1937). In this volume IV, look for page 343. It has the heading 'Excerpt from a Lost Drama.' I must honestly admit that I have never read from page 343 to page 348 inclusive. I have just read it and was completely amazed by the magnificence of these pages" [4, p. 242].

Let us pay attention to the importance of this statement. Shostakovich was one of the first to note what constituted the main content of Khrapchenko's activities as a scholarly editor and publisher of literary works. Thus, an important element of his professional principles was to ensure that collected works were published in their entirety, without any omissions. Many years later, already an academician, Khrapchenko would defend the publication of the original version of the book *Monuments of Medieval Latin Literature of the 10th–12th Centuries* (1970) with translations by Sergey S. Averintsev and Mikhail L. Gasparov, as well as the 17-volume *Complete Works* of Fyodor M. Dostoevsky (1972–1976) without cuts, having endured a long struggle with the ideological department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, fraught with unpredictable sanctions [11, p. 1129]. It is especially important to note Khrapchenko's pedantic attitude towards his own texts. This quality also gives reason to trust his diaries as valuable sources of almost lost information: the events described in them are presented, as a rule, in extreme detail, with many semantic nuances. Diary entries allow us to recreate a more accurate picture of some events that today seem established and even textbook. It is also worth mentioning that Khrapchenko, according to contemporaries, had an exceptional memory. Apparently, despite not recording requests and appeals, he never forgot anything, sometimes making entries in his diary with great accuracy even twenty days after the events described.

*Shostakovich and the New Chairman
of the Committee on Arts Affairs*

Nazarov's career in the Committee, which began in January 1938, turned out to be extremely short-lived. A few months following his appointment, he became seriously ill and even underwent a craniotomy during the summer.

This forced him to turn to the Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars, Vyacheslav Mikhailovich Molotov, with a request to "resolve the issue of his continued tenure as Chairman of the Committee." The request was granted, and on 1 April 1939, Khrapchenko was appointed acting chairman.

It was around this time that Khrapchenko and Shostakovich met in person. Judging by the subsequent correspondence, the circumstances of this acquaintance contributed to the establishment of rapid mutual understanding and trust. Thus, even during the period of Nazarov's illness, the Committee was approached by the Teatro dell'Opera di Roma with a request to provide the score of the opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* for production. In September, Khrapchenko, while still deputy chairman, received an order from the NKVD, which stated "the inexpediency of sending *Katerina Izmailova* to Italy as a work condemned for formalism" [12, p. 626]. Khrapchenko sent the letter to Moisei Abramovich Grinberg, head of the Main Music Department of the Committee. Shostakovich responded immediately: "On September 26, Comrade Greenberg informed me that in fascist Italy they wanted to stage my opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk*. I categorically object to the production of this work and ask that no materials be sent" [12, p. 626].⁷ This answer was not only politically impeccable, but also considerate towards the as-yet inexperienced chairman of the Committee, who, in the event of sending the score to Italy, would have to take on all the responsibility.

From that moment, creative contacts began, and a little later, correspondence developed which sheds light on certain events in Shostakovich's life after 1938. There is ample evidence attesting to Khrapchenko's special regard for Shostakovich, whom he undoubtedly considered the number one Soviet composer.

Perhaps the rapprochement and even ease of communication were also facilitated by Khrapchenko's special attitude towards Leningrad, the city where he later met his future wife Tamara Erastovna Tsytoich (*Illustration 2*). Tamara was the daughter of Erast Platonovich Tsytoich (1874–1942), an authoritative St. Petersburg scholar and teacher who, before the revolution, held the post of director of the Tsarskoye Selo Real College named after Emperor Nicholas II, where he taught physics and arithmetic (including to the Tsar's children).

⁷ Documentary evidence of this episode can be found in RGALI [Russian State Archive for Literature and Art] Fond 962. Inventory 10. Archival unit 30, p. 46.

The marriage turned out to be a happy one. The book of memoirs about Tamara Erastovna, published by the Moscow Conservatory Publishing House in 2020, illuminates some unknown pages of the life of this family, in which relationships with each other were permeated with constant mutual understanding and care. Everyday matters, significant experiences, and help with professional work were all shared between them. Throughout their lives, they supported other family members — parents, brothers, and sisters — loved their mutual friends, and assisted them in every way possible. One of Tsytovich's students, professor of the Moscow Conservatory Mikhail Aleksandrovich Saponov, recalls: "This wonderful couple was marked by divine happiness" [6, p. 283] (*Illustration 3*).



Illustration 2. M. B. Khrapchenko with his wife Tamara E. Tsytovich (1934).
Photo from the family archive

The only work of fiction written by Khrapchenko at the age of 28 sheds light on some personal circumstances of his life connected with Leningrad. The young writer chooses this city as the setting for his story, placing the Leningrad girl Zina at its centre; her image is present throughout the entire narrative. In fact, only two characters are depicted in detail: the protagonist and the girl to whom he speaks, with the whole story taking the form of an imagined conversation addressed to her from beginning to end.

After moving from Leningrad, Tamara Erastovna worked at the Museum of Musical Culture, and then at the Moscow Conservatory, where she subsequently headed the History of Foreign Music department for almost 30 years. Friends of the family noted with surprise that Mikhail Borisovich came to appreciate the music of Shostakovich more quickly than might have been expected — and, a little later, that of Prokofiev [11, p. 1124]. Undoubtedly, Tamara Erastovna,



Illustration 3. T. E. Tsytovich and M. B. Khrapchenko (1947).
Photo from the family archive

a musicologist of great erudition, played a decisive role in this. Later, in 1942, she collaborated with Shostakovich on the creation of the book *Soviet Music for 25 Years*. The composer headed the editorial board, while Tsytovich was the executive secretary and the author of one of the essays. In September, they sent Khrapchenko a letter with a detailed plan. The prospect for publication appeared to be solid, but for a number of reasons it did not take place.

Leningrad forever became an important part of the life of the People's Commissar. This would soon be revealed in the special attention paid to Leningrad musicians and to artists in general, as well as in Khrapchenko's personal presence during the evacuation of the State Hermitage collections in the first days of the war, and in sending parcels of vitamins to besieged Leningrad at every opportunity.

It was mainly thanks to his friend and reliable comrade Boris Ivanovich Zagursky, head of the Leningrad Department of Arts, who was in Leningrad throughout the blockade, that Khrapchenko understood the situation in the besieged city better than many. Thanks to his efforts and support from Nikolai Mikhailovich Shvernik, who headed the evacuation council under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, many artists, composers and actors were evacuated from Leningrad during the first weeks of the war and afterwards during the period of the blockade. With the support of the Committee, the first symphony concert was performed in Leningrad on 5 April 1942. Other significant events began to occur. The music school of the Petrogradsky district and the conservatory began their work. This was in conflict with the demands of the military leadership, which had ordered the removal of people not working for defence from the front-line city. Zagursky had to contact the Committee and Khrapchenko, who, in turn, contacted the Leningrad City Executive Committee and secured its consent [5, pp. 258–259]. Later, Zagursky wrote to Khrapchenko: "Thanks to the assistance of the Arts Committee, we were able to open classes at the conservatory. A music college began operating there, admitting one hundred students, as well as an advanced training group consisting of fifty people" [13, p. 71]. And although it was necessary to explain it to the military authorities later, the deed was done.

Among the pre-war projects of Shostakovich and Khrapchenko, one can highlight the preparation for the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Modest Mussorgsky in 1939 — Shostakovich then headed the anniversary organising committee — as well as work on the edition of *Boris Godunov*:

the composer dated the completion of the orchestration to 10 May 1940. It is also worth noting Shostakovich's participation in the Decade of Leningrad Art in May 1940: according to Maximilian Steinberg, Khrapchenko personally selected the repertoire, including the *Fifth Symphony* in the programme of the Leningrad Philharmonic [14, p. 126].

In Shostakovich's letters,⁸ addressed to Khrapchenko at the beginning of the war, the tone becomes noticeably more confidential. This is quite natural in light of the hardships and trials that befell the composer. Now it was necessary to worry not only about creative matters, but also about moving relatives from Leningrad to Kuibyshev, worry about feeding the family, how to get food coupons, about a country house for the children...

Thus, at the beginning of January 1942, Shostakovich wrote to Khrapchenko from Kuibyshev about the completion of the *Seventh Symphony* and requested financial assistance for his mother, Sofya Vasilievna. This was not the first such request. In November 1941, in a letter to Isaak Davidovich Glikman, the composer, reporting on his move to Kuibyshev, wrote: "We settled in the dormitory of the Bolshoi Theatre, and in early November, thanks to the efforts of M. B. Khrapchenko, we received a room. The room is good (22 metres), warm, cozy. This is how we live" [15, pp. 31–32].

Khrapchenko also supported his mother's request to move. In March, Sofya Vasilievna, together with her eldest daughter Maria Dmitriyevna and grandson Mitya, came to visit her son in Kuibyshev; in the same month, Shostakovich, having gone to Moscow for the capital's premiere of the *Seventh Symphony* and not finding Khrapchenko there, left him a new letter. In it, he requests transport for his father-in-law and mother-in-law, Vasily Vasilyevich and Sofya Mikhailovna Varzar, to Kuibyshev in a deluxe or first-class carriage; he also requests that he be moved from the poorly heated Metropol Hotel to the Moskva or National. The second request was fulfilled immediately; in any case, Sofia Mikhailovna Khentova mentions Shostakovich's stay only at the Moskva Hotel [16, p. 37]. The first one was also completed quite quickly: just 10 days later, on 31 March, the composer wrote to Glikman about the move of his father-in-law and mother-in-law as if it were a fait accompli [15, p. 42].

With the arrival of summer 1942, life for the large Shostakovich family, which had been relatively stable, became significantly more complicated. On 4 June,

⁸ Twelve letters from Shostakovich addressed to Khrapchenko were published by Vladimir V. Perkhin [12]. From here on, letters are quoted from this edition.

in a letter to Khrapchenko, Shostakovich asks for his children to be sent out of the city and provided with food, as well as for the extension of his family's ration books for essential goods and food. At the end of the letter, the composer states his desire to move to Moscow and asks Khrapchenko to make arrangements for him to be provided with an apartment.

Sure enough, Shostakovich's children were sent to dachas belonging to the Kuibyshev regional committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks), and Khrapchenko began to resolve the housing issue. It wasn't easy to find a suitable option. At first, he turned to Vasily P. Pronin, the Chairman of the Moscow City Executive Committee, but this did not bring positive results. Pronin offered the composer two rooms in different locations, which Shostakovich immediately reported to Khrapchenko as an unacceptable option [12, pp. 637–638]. Then (in March 1943) Khrapchenko addressed a letter to Molotov in which he gave the order to allocate Shostakovich an apartment on Kirov Street, 21 (currently Myasnitskaya Street). Although the composer assessed the apartment as “nasty” [15, p. 56], he lived in it until the spring of 1946, i.e. until Joseph Stalin and Lavrentiy Beria took direct part in his affairs [17].

Professor Vladimir Perkhin, a researcher and commentator on Khrapchenko's correspondence with artists, cites the following letter from Shostakovich addressed to Stalin: “Dear Joseph Vissarionovich, today I spoke on the telephone with Comrade L. P. Beria. He said that he spoke with you about my affairs, about which I wrote to him. Lavrenty Pavlovich told me that you were very sympathetic to my situation. All my affairs are going very well. In June I will receive a 5-room apartment. In July I will get a dacha in Kratovo and in addition I will receive 60,000 rubles for the furnishings. All this made me extremely happy” [12, p. 643]. The address of the new home was also determined: Mozhaiskoe Shosse, Building 37/45 (now Kutuzovsky Prospekt): Shostakovich lived in this apartment until 1962, later moving to Nezhdanova Street (Bryusov Lane).

In February 1943, already in Moscow, Shostakovich asked Khrapchenko for employment: the family did not have enough money. On May 17, the composer received the position of consultant on music issues in the Committee for Arts: Khrapchenko, by his order, assigned him a personal salary of 4,000 rubles, thus giving him the opportunity to engage only in creative work, as Shostakovich

had requested [12, p. 639]. At the beginning of May 1945, in connection with a new request to increase his salary to 12,000 rubles, which was probably quite difficult, Khrapchenko ordered that Shostakovich be awarded a letter of gratitude from the Committee for Arts in addition to the medal he had previously received “For Valiant Labour in the Great Patriotic War.” This provided significant benefits in terms of keeping expenses under control.

However, Shostakovich’s requests to Khrapchenko were not only for himself. In 1942, following the death of Boleslav Yavorsky, he wrote from Kuibyshev about the need to posthumously award the scholar the Stalin Prize for his work *Tvorcheskoe myshlenie russkikh kompozitorov ot Glinki do Skryabina* [*The Creative Thinking of Russian Composers from Glinka to Scriabin*]. In order to sort out the archive of the outstanding musicologist, he also requested that his student Sergei Protopopov be summoned to Moscow. The composer also asked for other people: the pianist and inventor Lev Weintraub, who needed to leave Ufa for Moscow; for the conductor Evgeny Akulov, whom the Bolshoi Theatre was evicting from his apartment to a small room; for the widow of the composer Igor Miklashevsky. All this speaks not only of the “restless conscience of the artist” as defined by Professor Perkhin [12, p. 641], but also of a special trusting attitude towards the Chairman of the Committee, who did not reject a single request from Shostakovich.

Participation in the Project to Create the USSR Anthem

Two major projects can be considered quite indicative in terms of Khrapchenko’s attitude towards Shostakovich: the creation of the USSR Anthem and his work in the Stalin Prize Committee, which Khrapchenko was a member of from the day the prize was founded in 1940 until his dismissal in 1948.

The competition to create an anthem was announced in 1943. Although this event might have seemed inappropriate in the context of the war, the “Internationale” began to seem increasingly “out of place” against the backdrop of the strengthening of allied relations between the USSR, the USA and Great Britain in the fight against Nazi Germany [18]. The need for a new anthem was also indicated by a number of internal events. After the victory in the Battle of Stalingrad and the Kursk Bulge, a number of orders were established: the Order of Victory and the Order of Glory, and somewhat earlier, the Orders of Alexander Nevsky, Alexander V. Suvorov and Mikhail I. Kutuzov [5, p. 398]. According to Perkhin, “this was a straightforward assertion

of continuity in the Russian historical process, prompted by the course of contemporary events” i.e., in contrast to those forces that counted the country’s history only from 1917 [19, p. 41].

Attention to national themes had its own characteristics. In the pre-war period, following the adoption of the 1936 Constitution, it manifested itself in the grandiose project of “Friendship of Peoples,” in which Khrapchenko was fully involved. Since his appointment, Decades of National Art were held regularly (twice a year), on an unprecedented scale and making a significant contribution to the formation of the all-Union multinational artistic canon. In this sense, one of Stalin’s table speeches, delivered at a reception in the Kremlin (22 April 1941) in honour of the Decade of Tajik Art, is noteworthy. In this speech he emphasised that “Lenin had priority in the formation of Soviet national policy, which transformed the ‘prison of nations’ — tsarist Russia — into the USSR, ‘a union of free nations’” [20, p. 324]. Even the lexical structure of this text is characteristic, anticipating the textual turns of the future main state song of the country (“Unbreakable Union of freeborn Republics...”).

In June 1943, with the participation of Khrapchenko, a meeting was held on the issues of the future anthem. The Chairman of the Committee was responsible for inviting poets and composers, as well as organising the listening of the prepared works. Among those invited were poets Demyan Bedny, Vasily I. Lebedev-Kumach, Mikhail A. Svetlov, Alexey A. Surkov; composers Matvey I. Blanter, Reinhold M. Glier, Ivan I. Dzerzhinsky, Isaak O. Dunaevsky, Dmitry B. Kabalevsky, Vano I. Muradeli, Aram I. Khachaturian, Tikhon N. Khrennikov, Yuri A. Shaporin, Vissarion Ya. Shebalin, Dmitry D. Shostakovich. In total, more than forty poets and one hundred sixty-five composers took part in the competition. The auditions, which took place in the Beethoven Hall of the Bolshoi Theatre on 17 July, as on 11 and 24 August, did not yield encouraging results. Finally, in September, the text version by Sergey V. Mikhalkov and Gabriel A. El-Registan was approved. The work process is reflected in sufficient detail in many publications, which provide an extensive body of documentary and memoir evidence. Among them, one can highlight those that speak of Khrapchenko’s special participation in the work of the poet Mikhail Isakovsky and the composers Sergey Prokofiev, Yuri Shaporin and Dmitry Shostakovich [12; 19; 21].

On 31 October 1943, members of the Politburo began listening to the different musical versions of the anthem by various authors together with the state commission.

The audition took place, like all subsequent ones, at the Bolshoi Theatre. The anthems were performed by the Red Banner Red Army Song and Dance Ensemble of the USSR. It was led by its creator, composer, professor of the Moscow State Tchaikovsky Conservatory, conductor Alexander V. Alexandrov.

Khrapchenko's diary also contains evidence of the progress of work.⁹ He notes that during the break, Stalin said that Shostakovich and Khachaturian (in collaboration) did the best, but, in his words, "the chorus didn't work out." Khrapchenko began to defend Shostakovich's anthem and talk about the composer's special talent: in addition to the joint anthem with Khachaturian, Shostakovich also composed his own anthem. Nevertheless, Stalin decided to use Alexandrov's anthem as a basis.

The second audition took place on 16 November. As Khrapchenko writes in his diary, Stalin seemed upset by the anthems he heard. He suddenly requested that the hymn "God Save the Tsar..." be performed, which he knew well. But then he immediately cancelled the request and ordered the English anthem. Then he asked for the Khachaturian — Shostakovich anthem. Voroshilov no longer knew how to calm Stalin, who had fallen into an extremely irritated state. We decided to listen to the list. The leader was dissatisfied with almost all the work. Only three works finally caught his attention — those by Alexandrov, Khachaturian — Shostakovich and the Georgian composer Iona Tuskiya.

Khrapchenko's diary entry also reflects an episode later described by Volkov in his *Testimony*. This concerns the orchestration of Alexandrov's anthem. Khrapchenko claims that Stalin was the first to point out the poor orchestration.

He declared that the orchestra sounded very bad and asked Shostakovich: "What do you think?"

Shostakovich replied: "There are a lot of drums. The anthem is basically instrumented correctly, but there are a lot of trumpets and drums. The orchestra thundered."

Aleksandrov immediately stated that it was not he who orchestrated it, but Knushevitsky. Khachaturian rather sarcastically made a remark about Knushevitsky being a very experienced musician and orchestrating well.

Stalin: "We need to orchestrate the anthem differently. Let the composers help orchestrate... And who is in charge of this matter, who oversees the orchestration, who orders the orchestration?" [5, pp. 410, 412].

⁹ From here on, the events are described based on Khrapchenko's diaries, first published in 2025 [5, pp. 406–429].

Khrapchenko writes that at that moment he was sure that Alexandrov would put everything on him.

However, everything turned out well; the composers came to the rescue. Shostakovich and Khachaturian stated: “Usually the composer himself orchestrates and should orchestrate.”

Voroshilov added: “It is believed that a real composer is one who can do everything himself.”

Stalin then turned to Alexandrov and asked sarcastically: “Tell me frankly, are you not good at this?”

Aleksandrov began to extricate himself: “I’ll take on the orchestration myself. I will do it” [5, p. 410].

However, he didn’t. At first, it was entrusted to the composer Sergei Vasilenko, but his version was also rejected. Then Khrapchenko turned to Dmitry Rogal-Levitsky, who was known for his mastery of orchestration. In his memoirs, Rogal-Levitsky also emphasises the confrontation that arose in the government between supporters of the Alexandrov and Khachaturian — Shostakovich anthems. He writes that Voroshilov called Alexandrov’s anthem a “lame horse” — every sixteenth made him feel like he was stumbling. But Stalin heard in it the majesty of a huge ship cutting through the waves, and was for this reason inclined toward this option. Alexandrov had high hopes for Rogal-Levitsky’s orchestration. This was probably the main intrigue of the final stage of the work.

Volkov, however, emphasises somewhat different points:

Stalin began asking Alexandrov why he had done such a poor arrangement of his song. Alexandrov had expected anything but this—a conversation with Stalin on orchestration. He was pulverized, confused, destroyed. You could see that he was bidding farewell not only to the anthem, but to his career and perhaps to something more. <...> Alexandrov made a base move. In an attempt to defend himself, he blamed the arranger. That was unworthy and low. The arranger could have lost his head as the result of such a conversation.

I saw that things could end badly; Stalin was interested in Alexandrov’s pathetic justifications. It was an unhealthy interest, the interest of a wolf in a lamb. Noticing the interest, Alexandrov began laying it on thicker. The poor arranger was being turned into a saboteur, who had purposely done a bad arrangement of Alexandrov’s song.

I couldn’t take any more. This vile spectacle could have meant a lot of trouble for the arranger, the man would have died for nothing. I couldn’t allow

that and said that the arranger in question was an excellent professional and added that it wasn't fair to take him to task [22, p. 262].

As can be seen from this description, Volkov embellished with speculation a simple and fairly short conversation in which Khrapchenko did not see anything dangerous, except for the possible shifting of blame onto himself. As it turned out, it was he who was tasked with finishing Alexandrov's anthem.

The last audition of the anthems took place on 15 December 1943. By this time, Mikhalkov and El-Registan, at Stalin's request, had reworked the text of the chorus. Four finalist anthems were listened to: the anthem of the Bolshevik Party by Alexandrov, then the anthem of Khachaturian — Shostakovich, Tuskiya's, and, finally, the new version of Khachaturian / Shostakovich and that of Alexandrov.

In Khrapchenko's diary, the episode is described as follows:

After the performance of the Bolshevik Party anthem, it became clear to me that this music would be accepted. The choir's performance was met with lively approval. Molotov made signs to me, showing how wonderful the choir sounded. The orchestral performance... also received a positive response, although not as lively. The music of Khachaturian — Shostakovich was listened to attentively, but coldly. Tuskiya once again stirred up a number of his comrades, and they were especially pleased with his masterful command of the orchestra. Beria was very pleased. But Stalin did not express any signs of approval [5, p. 415].

Khrapchenko's assumption turned out to be correct. Only Voroshilov defended the Shostakovich — Khachaturian anthem, but Stalin objected to him, saying: "In Alexandrov's anthem, one line is drawn from beginning to end. It is all one piece. It moves forward like a cruiser, cutting through the waves. Khachaturian-Shostakovich does not have this quality. They decorated the anthem, but there is no integrity" [5, p. 415].

Unexpectedly, Khrapchenko supported Voroshilov and began to object to Stalin, stating that "it will be very difficult for an ordinary person to sing Alexandrov's anthem." [5, p. 415]. Stalin responded quite serenely: "In what way is it difficult? There is nothing difficult about it." And he sang the first verse quite accurately. Those present were shocked by the attack of the Committee leader. Khrapchenko did not argue further.

Discussions in the Committee on Stalin Prizes

Another page in the relationship between Khrapchenko and Shostakovich is connected with the awarding of Stalin Prizes. As is known, Shostakovich was a five-time laureate of the Stalin Prize, being awarded the first-degree prize three times and the second-degree prize twice.

The decision to establish Stalin Prizes was made on 20 December 1939. The Resolution stated: “In commemoration of the sixtieth birthday of Comrade Joseph Vissarionovich Stalin, the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR decrees: to establish 16 Stalin Prizes (in the amount of 100 thousand rubles each), awarded annually to figures in science and art for outstanding work.”¹⁰ The right to nominate candidates for the prize was granted to creative unions and organisations, as well as theatres, publishing houses and magazines. Then the nominated works were to be discussed by the Committee for Stalin Prizes, after which the proposals were sent to the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR, where, with the participation of the Politburo, the results were personally approved by Stalin.

The emergence of such a form of encouragement as a prize for artistic achievements became a continuation of another form of cooperation between the authorities and artists. The annual summing up of the results brought Soviet art into a broad public space and established certain criteria that should be followed when creating new works. Khrapchenko noted in his diary that during discussions in the Kremlin, Stalin often inquired about how well a particular work was known to the public and how successful it was with them. In addition, he took into account the possible reaction of the Western intelligentsia. That is, at the first stage of the award’s existence, public resonance was considered the main criterion.

In May 1940, the composition of the Stalin Prize Committee was determined. It included 36 people, each of whom had considerable influence in their own field of creativity. The chairman was People’s Artist of the USSR Vladimir Ivanovich Nemirovich-Danchenko, and the deputies were Mikhail Sholokhov, Reinhold Glier and Aleksandr Dovzhenko. Khrapchenko was introduced to the committee as the head of the main department for arts affairs (*Illustration 4*).

¹⁰ Postanovlenie SNK SSSR ob uchrezhdenii premij imeni Stalina po literature [Resolution of the Council of People’s Commissars of the USSR on the establishment of Stalin Prizes for Literature]. (1940, February 2). *Pravda*, (32).

The first meeting of the Committee on Stalin Prizes in Literature and Art took place on 16 September 1940. From that day onwards (except during the evacuation period) all meetings were held in the lower foyer of the Moscow Art Academic Theatre building. The transcript was taken and signed by Olga Sergeevna Bokshanskaya, Nemirovich-Danchenko's personal secretary. The extremely detailed nature of the documents she prepared — letters, transcripts — gives them exceptional



Illustration 4. Meeting of the Committee on Stalin Prizes. Group of Soviet art figures.

Among them: Reinhold M. Glier, Vladimir I. Nemirovich-Danchenko, Ivan M. Moskvina, Alexander M. Gerasimov, Alexey N. Tolstoy, Alexander B. Goldenweiser, Nikolai Ya. Myaskovsky, Yuri A. Shaporin, Alexander V. Alexandrov, Vera I. Mukhina and others.

Copy of a photograph from 1940–1943. Russian National Museum of Music
(M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture
KP-4310/305. N-1513/V vsp).

historical value today. For that matter, Khrapchenko's diary entries are also distinguished by their pedantic detail.

At the first meeting, sections were formed. These were headed by Alexey N. Tolstoy (literature), Ivan M. Moskvina (theatre and cinema), Reinhold M. Gliere (music), and Igor E. Grabar (fine arts). Khrapchenko participated in all the Committee's discussions and reported the results at the Kremlin meetings, where not only works of literature and art were considered, but also scientific inventions (*Illustration 5*).



Illustration 5. Dmitry Shostakovich at a meeting
of the Committee for the USSR Stalin Prizes in Literature and Art in the premises
of the Gorky Moscow Art Theatre of the USSR.
Next to him on the right is the sculptor Sergey Merkurov. Russian National Museum of
Music (*M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture* KP-6467/4. N-27355/2)

The need to agree on approaches to discussing the prize required fundamental agreements. For this reason, the discussion revolved around the main definition: “outstanding work.” Sculptor Sergei Dmitriyevich Merkurov proposed the criterion of “that which does not cause controversy” as a means of determining which works should be considered worthy of the prize. Khrapchenko objected:

The term “magnificent work” becomes something of a bogeyman. Everyone begins to be “afraid of their own shadow” — the outstanding and the not-so-outstanding. Of course, the bar must be high. But it cannot be assumed that every year there will be epoch-making works. And the prize is annual. Therefore, to award a prize to a work that does not give rise to controversy dooms this enterprise to the fact that there will be no such prize. If a sculpture contains something that has a significant number of advantages, it can be awarded a prize despite any imperfections that may be evident. For we certainly will not have classically completed works every year.¹¹

It was Khrapchenko who proposed introducing prizes for graphic works, which made it possible to recognise the work of defence poster artists during the war years. He also defended the mass song; the proposal to include this genre in the list of nominees was put forward by Nikolai Mordvinov. The conversation was about the songs of Isaak Dunaevsky, about which Khrapchenko said: “Still, one cannot deny that for the people as a whole his work turned out to be very significant and useful. If we talk about the joy that the composer gave to the people, then a large share of this joy belongs to Dunaevsky. But it is impossible to forget about the joys of the people.”¹²

A new and very significant stage began in Khrapchenko’s professional activity. Participation in the discussion of annual awards in the field of literature and art not only introduced him to the diverse world of artistic creativity, but also allowed him to get closer to artists and better understand their interests, plans and hopes. In addition,

¹¹ Transcripts of the Plenum of the Committee for September 16, November 11, 13, 18, 21, 24, 26 and December 24, 1940. In *RGALI*. Fond 2073. Inventory 1. Archival Unit 1, pp. 89–90.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 156. For the same reason, in 1946 Khrapchenko proposed discussing the nomination of Leonid O. Utesov, Lidiya A. Ruslanova, Anna A. Redel and Mikhail M. Khrustalev — he had not forgotten what colossal authority these artists enjoyed during the war years and how they were awaited at the front. See Transcripts of the Plenum of the Committee for March 11, April 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 13, 14 and 18, 1946. In *RGALI*. Fond 2073. Inventory 1. Archival unit 16, pp. 229–230.

one cannot fail to note the enormous influence on the formation of Khrapchenko's personality that his close acquaintance with the outstanding people of his time had for him. Communication with Nemirovich-Danchenko had a particularly noticeable influence on him. Khrapchenko's diary entries describe in detail their many-hour conversations, the general tone of which is reminiscent of dialogues between a teacher and a student.

Based on the example of his outstanding mentor, Khrapchenko was increasingly encouraged to abandon opportunistic approaches to evaluating works. If, at the first meetings, he was one of the consistent proponents of the party line — insisting that the two main criteria for awarding the prize should be breadth of appeal and public resonance, thereby excluding works of the chamber genres — then within a year, under the influence of Nemirovich-Danchenko, he changed his position. In March 1941, Khrapchenko sent a letter to the government requesting differentiation of prizes in the field of musical art. Here, the discussion was about chamber music compositions. If his proposal had not been accepted, two works by Shostakovich would not have been included in the lists: the *Piano Quintet* (1941 prize) and the *Piano Trio* (1946 prize). It was Khrapchenko who defended the *Piano Quintet* at the meeting in the Kremlin.

To this day, some researchers tend to see something mysterious in the awarding of the prize to the *Quintet*. For example, Volkov asks the question: “What had attracted Stalin in the *Quintet*? Its political and ‘civic’ value must have seemed like zero to him then. Could he have been charmed by its neo-Bachian restraint, spiritual profundity, and impeccable craftsmanship?” [23, p. 140].

Indeed, such questions would have been entirely legitimate if the decisions about the award had been made personally by Stalin. However, the transcripts reveal a much more complex picture. The members of the Stalin Prize Committee, including Khrapchenko himself, were by no means silent extras. During the discussions, disputes and disagreements often arose. The names of some of the “committee members” (among them Khrapchenko appears more often than others) are still mentioned with resentment for not supporting and defending.

Of course, the lists of laureates were agreed upon with Stalin; indeed, there were also quite a few cases of categorical interference on his part. However, it also happened that he did not even get acquainted with the proposed work

(as was probably the case with Shostakovich's *Quintet*). Much here was decided by personal preferences — for example, Stalin was obliged to read literary works. As for instrumental music or works of art, judging by a number of indicators, these were not among his priority areas.

Khrapchenko's position was also neither unambiguous nor stable. Indeed, in February 1941 he defended Shostakovich's Piano *Quintet*, although before that he had advocated for the "breadth of sound and public resonance" of the nominated works. It is noteworthy that the *Quintet* still passed muster, despite Stalin's rather sceptical attitude. Contrary to Volkov's opinion, there was nothing special about this work that attracted the leader. During the discussion in the Kremlin, Stalin questioned the "public resonance" of the work, while Khrapchenko defended this "resonance." His diary entry for March 19, 1941 describes the episode as follows:

Stalin asks: Who has heard Shostakovich's *Quintet*?

Khrapchenko pointed at Poskrebyshhev.

Poskrebyshhev then stated that he had heard it and liked it. The music is simple and clear.

Stalin: Where was the *Quintet* performed?

Khrapchenko: It was performed in the Tchaikovsky Hall and in the Conservatory.

Stalin: It was probably performed for a small group?

Khrapchenko: No, there were about one and a half thousand people there.

In addition, the *Quintet* was broadcast on the radio.

(Stalin became noticeably irritated.)

Stalin: Do the broad masses know it?

Without waiting for an answer, Stalin began to find fault with the wording: How is it written here: "completed [fem.acc.] in 1940" or "completed [masc.acc.] in 1940"? What is important is not to say this, but whether this work is being shown and since when. It needs to be redone. (Silence). Why should we work for you?

(After some time, I formulated it. I read out...)

After a pause, Stalin asked the question again: Has the musical score of this work been published?

Khrapchenko: The score was published in a relatively small print run. There is no need for a large print run. This is a *quintet*, we don't have many *quintets* [5, p. 375].

When Khrapchenko said that only Poskrebyshhev heard the *Quintet*, he was being somewhat economical with the truth. According to Vadim Borisovsky, one

of the members of the Beethoven State Quartet, Poskrebyshev was not the only one familiar with Shostakovich's work. On November 25, 1940, a special rendition of the *Quintet* was performed for Khrapchenko in his office. In Borisovsky we read: "Urgent execution, for which: I. Shostakovich's departure to Tbilisi was cancelled; II. VI [D. Tsyganov] wanted by the Committee; III. V-la [V. Borisovsky] [found] at a string instrument factory; IV. Cello [S. Shirinsky] was removed from classes at the conservatory" [24, p. 50] (*Illustration 6*).

Shortly before this, on 12 November 1940, the *Quintet* was performed at the Moscow House of Composers for members of the music section of the Stalin Prize Committee. Borisovsky wrote in his diary: "At the insistence of A. B. Goldenweiser, the *Quintet* was repeated in full behind closed doors for members



*Illustration 6. Shostakovich with members of the Beethoven State Quartet.
Russian National Museum of Music.*

M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture KP-6389/19. N-8897

of the Committee (Goldenweiser, Samosud, Shaporin, Glier, Gadzhibekov); and on the 19th at the plenum of the Committee for Stalin Prizes. Finally, on November 23, 1940, the public premiere of the *Quintet* took place in the Small Hall of the Moscow Conservatory, performed by the Beethoven Quartet and the composer. Parts III and V of the *Quintet* were encores" [24, p. 49]. Before the New Year of 1941, the *Quintet* was performed five more times.

As a result, Shostakovich received the Stalin Prize, 1st degree, for this composition. It is noteworthy that in the article in the newspaper *Pravda* dedicated to the awards ceremony, Shostakovich's *Quintet* was the only work characterised precisely from the position of its "celebrity": "The first diplomas were received by composers — Yu. A. Shaporin, the composer of the symphony-cantata *On the Kulikovo Field*; A. V. Bogatyrev, the composer of the opera *In the Forests of Polesie*; and D. D. Shostakovich, the composer of the famous *Piano Quintet*."¹³ The information was received by *Pravda* from the Committee for Arts Affairs.

From that time on, Khrapchenko supported the Beethoven Quartet in every possible way. One episode that occurred at the beginning of the war can testify to his special attitude. According to the recollections of Borisovsky's widow, in the summer of 1941 the Beethoven Quartet almost perished during military exercises: three quartetists (with the exception of Vasiliy P. Shirinsky, who accompanied his family to evacuation at that time) enlisted in the militia. It was decided to test them in a 25 km march. At the beginning of the war, there was terrible heat in Moscow. On the first day, the musicians somehow walked these kilometres, and the next day, during another run, an emergency occurred: Vadim Borisovsky passed out. It took a long time to bring him back to his senses, and then he was taken to the commander. He immediately began calling the Committee for Arts, and when Khrapchenko learned about what had happened, he immediately ordered the musicians to be returned to Moscow. Thus, the quartet received an exemption, which, as it later turned out, saved the lives of its members. After returning to Moscow, the quartet were to perform 150 concerts at the front and in the navy during the war years [25, pp. 138–139]. Tragically, the rest of the Conservatory militia detachment — they called themselves the "Tchaikovsky Battalion" — perished in the Vyazma cauldron in October 1941.

¹³ Vручение дипломов деятелям искусства — лауреатам Сталинской премии [Presentation of Diplomas to Laureates of the Stalin Prize]. (1941, April 22). *Pravda*, (111).

Some aspects related to the success of Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony* are also noteworthy. Many well-known sources claim that it was received with great enthusiasm almost everywhere, both by musicians and the general public. Wherever the *Symphony* was performed — in Kuibyshev, Moscow, Novosibirsk, Leningrad — eyewitness accounts were invariably enthusiastic. Valerian Mikhailovich Bogdanov-Berezovsky recalled that the preliminary listening, which took place in the presence of composers Yuri Kochurov and Gavriil Popov on 17 September 1941 — that is, before Shostakovich was evacuated from besieged Leningrad — took place in an atmosphere of intense attention, in complete silence, without a single remark. The only thing those present asked for was to repeat what had been played. That is, the impression from the *Symphony* directly at the moment of experiencing the tragic events of the war was genuinely powerful and even stunning.¹⁴

In Khrapchenko's Kuibyshev report, which took place on 2 February 1942 (that is, even before the premiere of the *Symphony*, which was being prepared for 5 March), he spoke of it as “a remarkable, truly outstanding work by the widely known and beloved composer Shostakovich. The *Seventh Symphony* will go down in the history of Soviet art and world art as a remarkable document of the era, as a work that is filled with our Soviet life and our struggle...”¹⁵ The *Symphony* will be mentioned several times throughout the report, but this is not the only important thing. The *Seventh Symphony* became a justification for supporting major works of art, which had been pushed into the background in the confusion of the first months of the war. This is clearly read in the words of Khrapchenko, spoken in the same speech: “Now the question is being raised about what kind of art is needed — large or small forms... Now, they say, there is no time for ‘War and Peace’. This is a wrong point of view. We need works that... generalise life, large-scale works that would reflect our era in a massive multifaceted form.”

These were not random words. The support for large-scale compositions, which Khrapchenko repeatedly proclaimed in his public appearances, gave rise to discontent among songwriters. Even the always friendly Dunaevsky, who was probably offended

¹⁴ Bogdanov-Berezovsky, V. M. (1971). *Dorogi iskusstva. Kniga pervaya* [Roads of Art. Book One]. Muzyka, pp. 243–245.

¹⁵ “Sovetskoe iskusstvo v Otechestvennoj vojne”. Doklad na obshchem sobranii rabotnikov iskusstva g. Kujbysheva. Stenogramma [“Soviet Art in the Patriotic War.” Report at the General Meeting of Art Workers of the City of Kuybyshev. Transcript]. In *RGALI*. Fond 2894. Inventory 1. Archival unit 8. 18 pages.

by the discussion of the 1940 prizes, wrote a letter to Khrapchenko in January 1941: “A mass song is deprived of the opportunity to compete for the most honourable prize, because in the opinion of the committee, an average *Symphony* will always be higher and more worthy than the best song, and perhaps only a dozen or so *Songs about the Motherland* can compare in their eyes with Shostakovich’s *Quintet*” [12, p. 581]. In 1944, the mass song was already under discussion for the Stalin Prize, but the irritation did not go away. The poet Alexei Aleksandrovich Surkov, speaking in September 1944 at the Union of Soviet Writers, asserted that the lack of attention to Soviet mass song could in no way be compensated for by the monumental symphonic works that were gaining strength:

Without the symphonic works of Shostakovich, Khachaturian and other symphonists, without large forms, folk music cannot exist, and, obviously, it determines the historical significance of music in the future. But take even Shostakovich’s *Seventh Symphony*. It was performed 5 times in Moscow, another 5 times in the suburbs, where there are large orchestras <...> Then it is put on the shelf in music libraries, and the people want bread... they want to sing themselves in the tragic moments of their lives, to sing themselves in the uplifting moments of their lives.¹⁶

It is noteworthy that the creators of mass song each time, for some reason, mentioned the work of Shostakovich as a counter example, although it was Shostakovich, being a member of the jury of the largest song competitions, who invariably supported the best of them, which entailed both increased prestige and material reward. Nevertheless, it is precisely with large-scale works that Khrapchenko connects the future activities of the Stalin Prize Committee. The *Seventh Symphony* greatly strengthened the position of the so-called “academicians,” as the Committee called the supporters of academic art.

In February 1942, even before the premiere of the *Symphony*, a preliminary meeting of the Committee for Stalin Prizes in Literature and Art took place in Kuibyshev, at which Shostakovich played the *Seventh Symphony* on the piano. Present were Alexey N. Tolstoy, Renhold M. Glier, Boris E. Khaikin and Mikhail B. Khrapchenko. And just two weeks later, on 19 February 1942, in Tbilisi, where Nemirovich-Danchenko was at the time, the *Seventh Symphony* was nominated for a first-degree prize, also before its first performance.

¹⁶ Stenogramma tvorcheskogo soveshchaniya na temu “Pesnya v dni Otechestvennoj vojny” [Transcript of a Creative Meeting on the Topic “Song during the Patriotic War”]. In *RGALI*. Fond 631. Inventory 15. Archival unit 681, pp. 30–31.

Almost all sources claim that it passed unanimously, without discussion. This is true, but only for discussion at the sectional meeting of the Stalin Prizes Committee. There, the question of awarding the first-degree prize was decided in literally two remarks.

19 February 1942, morning session

Nemirovich-Danchenko: Shostakovich. *Seventh Symphony*. Any comments?

Khrapchenko: In my opinion, there is no need to discuss it due to complete clarity.

Chiaureli: There were such enthusiastic reviews about this *Symphony* that there can be no doubt.¹⁷

At this point, Nemirovich-Danchenko announced a break and during the evening session they did not return to the *Seventh Symphony*.

The *Seventh Symphony* was discussed somewhat differently during the discussion in the Kremlin that took place on 10 April 1942. In addition to Stalin himself, G. M. Malenkov, A. A. Andreyev, V. M. Molotov, A. S. Shcherbakov, Voznesensky, Poskrebyshev, Saburov, Tevosyan took part in the discussion.

Shcherbakov reported. Shostakovich's *Seventh Symphony* evoked the remark: "Is this the very work to which we were forced to award a prize last year?" [5, p. 377].

This turn of phrase is typical: "they forced him to award a prize": this is probably how Khrapchenko's persistent position in relation to the *Piano Quintet* was remembered. It is also characteristic that those present at the Kremlin meeting were rather cool in their response to the enthusiastic reaction that the *Symphony*, which had already been performed in Kuibyshev, played on the radio and noted in the central press as a major social and musical event, had evoked.

When asked about last year's work, Shcherbakov replied that it was a new work, adding: "It was overpraised, but it is a major work" [5, p. 377].

The common word of that time, "overpraised" was previously heard at a sectional meeting of the Stalin Prize Committee. However, this was not in reference to Shostakovich, but rather to Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera, *Krov' naroda* [*The Blood of the People*].

¹⁷ Zasedanie Komiteta po Stalinskim premiyam v oblasti literatury i iskusstva [Meeting of the Committee on Stalin Prizes in Literature and Art]. February 19, 1942. In *RGALI*. Fond. 2073. Inventory 1. Archival unit 6, p. 44.

Nikolai Myaskovsky said about this opera: “The music there is pathetic... The apotheosis stands completely separately. The hero, the heroine, the Germans speak the same language.” Shaporin added: “In relation to this opera, one can say the same thing that Nemirovich-Danchenko said in relation to Korneychuk: it’s a shame that he was over-praised.”¹⁸ Shaporin is referring to Dzerzhinsky’s rise after Stalin approved the opera *Tikhij Don* [*Quiet Flows the Don*] — just as later happened with Alexander Korneychuk’s play *The Front* (1942), to which Stalin personally made edits. Khrapchenko later wrote that this artificially constructed play, which directly reflected the conflict between generations of commanders, was perceived by viewers by 1943 as an amusing comedy.¹⁹

After this remark by Shcherbakov, the *Seventh Symphony* was no longer discussed, but no support from above can be seen in the episode cited. Moreover, the awarding of the Stalin Prize to Shostakovich, which tended to be extremely favourable during the sectional discussions of the Stalin Prize Committee, was each time met with a rather casual attitude in the government. The texts of Khrapchenko’s transcripts and diary entries show that many government officials were noticeably irritated by Shostakovich. This is also evident from the recording made in 1944, when the *Eighth Symphony* and *Trio No. 2* were discussed.

The *Eighth Symphony* already evoked conflicting assessments at the sectional meeting. It was discussed twice — on 16 and 24 March 1944. Myaskovsky recommended it as a work that is recognised by everyone, despite different tastes. However, he was supported only by the artist Igor Grabar and the sculptor Vera Mukhina. Alexander Borisovich Goldenweiser found the *Eighth Symphony* “extremely pessimistic,” while nine of the eighteen members had never heard it. At Khrapchenko’s suggestion, the decision was postponed for a week.²⁰

¹⁸ Zasedanie Komiteta po Stalinskim premiyam v oblasti literatury i iskusstva [Meeting of the Committee on Stalin Prizes in Literature and Art]. In *RGALI*. Fond 2073. Inventory 1. Archival unit 6, p. 48.

¹⁹ Khrapchenko — Shcherbakovu o “postepennoe snyatii s repertuara p’esy ‘Front’ Korneychuka” 03.11.1943 [Khrapchenko to Shcherbakov about the “Gradual Removal of Korneychuk’s Play *The Front* from the Repertoire.” November 3, 1943]. (2005). In *Bol’shaya tsenzura: Pisateli i zhurnalisty v Strane Sovetov. 1917–1956* [*Great Censorship: Writers and Journalists in the Land of Soviets. 1917–1956*]. MFD; Materik, p. 542.

²⁰ Here and below, the transcript of the sectional meetings of the Committee on Stalin Prizes on 16 and 24 March 1944 is quoted: *RGALI*. Fond 2073. Inventory 1. Archival unit 9, pp. 140–226.

The next discussion was opened by Khrapchenko. Describing the *Eighth Symphony*, he said:

Probably, from the point of view of musical technique, this work contains enormous possibilities. But I approach this piece as an ordinary listener. I listened to it three times, and I have the impression that, in the *Eighth Symphony*, Shostakovich returns to themes that he had developed earlier. Here we see, as it seems to me, a deliberately complicated language... My feeling as a person who cannot be considered a connoisseur of music is that this is a piece that leads Shostakovich away from the path he took in the *Quintet* and the *Seventh Symphony*... I love Shostakovich very much, I highly value his talent, but I cannot help but say this, if I am honest in my statements...

I wanted to express one more thought: there are works whose assessment does not immediately become clear. Maybe the same will happen with the *Eighth Symphony*?

Khrapchenko was supported by many, including Ivan Moskvina, Solomon Mikhoels and Alexander Goldenweiser. Isaak Dunaevsky opined that the *Eighth Symphony* is “not a path that should be recommended” to young composers. Nevertheless, the *Symphony* was left on the voting list and even nominated for a second-degree prize. However, in any case, this turned out to be a year that the government decided not to award prizes. The resolution was expected in April 1945, but was not published, and a new selection was scheduled for the end of March. This may have been due to the political turbulence that arose in the run-up to victory, when many assessments were being hastily revised. The next cycle of meetings began on 3 April 1945. The Music Section of the Stalin Prize Committee returned to discuss both the *Eighth Symphony* and the newly presented *Trio* (*Illustration 7*).

When studying the archival documents, one cannot help but notice that by this time the main criterion for evaluating works had shifted from “public resonance” to “impact on the listener”: the criterion of a good work was seen in its ability to evoke an immediate and direct response. Both in newspaper articles and in public discussions, the somewhat sentimental rhetoric of the 1930s, when it was customary to quote letters from readers and listeners received by newspaper editors, was revived. A typical example is a letter from young pioneers addressed to Maxim Gorky: “We want books that will make us girls cry.”²¹ The image of a crying girl,

²¹ *Pervyj Vsesoyuznyj s'ezd sovetskikh pisatelej. Stenograficheskij otchet* [First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers. Verbatim report]. (1934). Khudozhestvennaya literatura, p. 468.



*Illustration 7. Meeting of the Committee on Stalin Prizes.
Alexander E. Korneychuk, Mikhail B. Khrapchenko, Alexander B. Goldenweiser.
Russian National Museum of Music.
M. I. Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture
KP 316820/34. NF 110718 Ф 110718*

later transformed into a “crying listener” and adopted by music critics, would later appear more than once on the pages of Soviet newspapers and magazines as weighty evidence of the high quality of a composition.

This decided the fate of the Trio against the backdrop of the rejected *Eighth Symphony*. It should be emphasised that it was Khrapchenko, who had rejected the *Symphony* a year earlier, who most persistently recommended the *Trio* for the award of the Stalin Prize of the first degree. Elena Dvoskina, the publisher of the 1945 transcript fragment, believes that the best argument was the touching speech of Alexander Fadeyev. Indeed, the speech of the head of the Writers’ Union played the necessary role. At that time, the words found by Fadeyev turned out to be the most convincing:

“I am a person with a complete lack of musical education, but this work impressed me extremely, and I remained under its impression for a long time. Of everything we heard at the Committee, the strongest impression I had was from this *Trio*” [26, p. 91]. The word “impressed,” repeated three times throughout a short statement, and repeated by a professional writer who knows the immutable laws of literature well, largely decided the outcome of the matter.

However, one should also pay attention to the beginning of Fadeyev’s speech, when he said:

On the issue of Shostakovich, I support the point of view of Mikhail Borisovich that he should be awarded for the *Trio* and given first prize. I do not agree with Mordvinov that the *Trio* can be called a formalistic piece. It impresses a person who is very inexperienced in specific matters of music. This work simply captivates a person with a living soul. This is an outstanding work [26, p. 91].

In the end, the *Trio* received the award, but this time, too, the Kremlin meeting was not without controversy. Recording some significant moments of the discussion in his diary, Khrapchenko refers to the special opinion of Beria, who proposed removing the issue from discussion altogether, since “the material was not sent out, and no one had time to prepare.”

Next, Khrapchenko reproduces verbatim the dialogue between Stalin and Beria.

Stalin asked whether it was true that the question had not been prepared?

Beria insisted that the material must first be studied. His next line shows that it was not about the *Trio* at all. “Some comrades receive bonuses year after year. Here in art — every year Shostakovich, Khachaturian — Khachaturian, Shostakovich.”

Stalin asked Khrapchenko how many times the prize had been awarded to Shostakovich.

Khrapchenko replied that he had received it twice and was now presenting himself for the third time.

Stalin, addressing Beria: Well then, what do you want? Postpone?

Beria confirmed.

Stalin: If we simply take your statement into consideration, I hope that will satisfy you?

Beria objected.

Stalin: So, you are trying to postpone the discussion. And you categorically insist on your proposal. You are a desperate person.

Stalin addressed everyone: Well, how is it?
All supported the proposal to postpone [5, p. 382].

Thus, the decision to award the *Trio* in the Kremlin was made only at a repeat meeting.

Many facts indicate that no disagreements between Khrapchenko and Shostakovich became a reason for administrative pressure on the composer and that this was not a factor in the banning of his works (*Illustration 8*).

1946 saw the publication of the score of the *Eighth Symphony* by Muzgiz and its performance in Leningrad. The reaction to Shostakovich's letter, addressed to Vladimir Kemenov, the deputy chairman of the All-Union Society for Cultural



Illustration 8. From left to right: Tamara E. Tsytovich, Mikhail B. Khrapchenko, Dmitry D. Shostakovich (1943).

Family archive. Permission from Tatyana Valeryevna Khrapchenko, February 27, 2024

Relations with Foreign Countries, can also be considered confirmation of Khrapchenko's special position in relation to the composer. It contains a request for the performance of the *Eighth Symphony* at the Prague Spring festival. The letter was received by the office of the Committee on Arts Affairs. According to Perkhin, Khrapchenko's resolution implied agreement with the composer's demands [12, p. 643]. As a result, the *Eighth Symphony* was performed twice in Prague with great success by the Czech Philharmonic Orchestra under the direction of Yevgeny Mravinsky, just as the composer wanted. According to Grigory Shneerson, the ovation lasted more than thirty minutes.²²

The *Ninth Symphony* also caused consternation at the Stalin Prize Committee. Its discussion took place in the spring of 1946. Only Shaporin spoke in favour of the *Symphony*, characterising it as an entertaining grotesque symphony: "It was done with the brilliance and wit inherent to Shostakovich. Sounds good."²³ However, only Dunaevsky supported him:

The positive and enormous significance of the *9th Symphony* is that Shostakovich, as a legislator of symphonic "fashions," in this case poses a very important and necessary problem of a light genre symphony — extremely necessary, because if the master opens the way to a wonderful world, this riot of sounds, this extraordinary light and mischief, which make this work optimistic, deserves all attention. I am not a fan of Shostakovich's sound concept, but the piece makes a sunny impression.²⁴

Khrapchenko objected:

Symphony No. 9, in my opinion, is not one of Shostakovich's best works. It's masterfully written, but I don't feel it has much sparkle or depth. It seems to me that this work is rather of an intermediate nature. This is a work that the composer carried out during a break between major works, and there are no serious grounds for putting it forward.²⁵

As a result, the *Ninth Symphony* did not receive any prize. At the same time, Khrapchenko censored a critical article about it, which Yuri Keldysh had submitted for publication in the journal *Sovetskaya muzyka* [Soviet Music].

²² Shneerson, G. M. (1976). Zhizn' muzyki Shostakovicha za rubezhom [The Life of Shostakovich's Music Abroad]. In *D. Shostakovich. Stat'i i materialy* [D. Shostakovich. Articles and Materials]. Sovetskij kompozitor, pp. 246–247.

²³ RGALI. Fond 2073. Inventory 1. Archival unit 16, pp. 214–216.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

The chairman of the VKDI also prohibited the publication of a report on a meeting of the Union of Soviet Composers, which was being prepared in the same *Sovetskaya muzyka*, at which the supposedly intolerable situation in the field of criticism was discussed. He would be reminded of this later, at the height of the 1948 campaign. In his famous speech at a meeting of composers and musicologists in Moscow, Tikhon Khrennikov described Khrapchenko's position as "the suppression of even timid attempts to criticise the formalistic trend" [12, pp. 121–122].

The Years of Troubles

The events of 1948, which became tragic not only for many composers, but also for Khrapchenko, approached gradually. The Chairman of the Committee had already begun to feel growing discontent both from his colleagues and from the authorities. In 1945, a denunciation was written against him and his family. Vladimir Petrovich Kozlov points out that in this document "the only more or less real fact is the nationality of Khrapchenko's wife's relatives (Germans). Everything else is speculation and assumptions, on the basis of which Khrapchenko turns into almost a German spy, since he has the opportunity to see Stalin and then retell what he heard to his German relatives, who, by the way, live in another city."²⁶ The same period also saw the beginning of numerous reports by a Pyotr V. Fedotov, a 3rd-rank state security commissioner, which noted the "unsatisfactory leadership of the All-Union Committee for Arts in the general management of theatres," which led to a lag in dramaturgy, a slow development of directors and actors, and an unsatisfactory state of theatre criticism. In addition, Fedotov collected the opinions of actors, directors and other figures in the arts who discussed among themselves the crisis tendencies of the first post-war period.²⁷

One of the sources of dissatisfaction with Khrapchenko's activities was the position of Andrei Alexandrovich Zhdanov. In 1946, the Chairman of the Committee could have lost his position as a result of departmental reform. In March,

²⁶ Kozlov, V. A. (n.d.). Fenomen donosa (Po materialam fonda NKVD-MVD SSSR, khranyashchegosya v GA RF. 1944–1953 gg.) [The Phenomenon of Denunciation (Based on Materials from the NKVD-MVD USSR Collection, Stored in the State Archives of the Russian Federation. 1944–1953)]. In *Skepsis* [Magazine of Science and Social Criticism Skepsis]. Retrieved July 24, 2025, from https://skepsis.net/library/id_3810.html

²⁷ O deyatelnosti teatrov [On the Activities of Theatres]. In *Central Archives of the FSB of Russia*. Fond 4. Inventory 3. File 390.

the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR was transformed into the Council of Ministers, the People's Commissariats into ministries, and the People's Commissars into ministers. However, Stalin then left Khrapchenko in office. But already in April, Zhdanov, speaking at a meeting on improving agitation and propaganda work, unleashed the full force of his irritation on Khrapchenko:

Comrade Stalin said that they are mocking the people, showing counts and princes, there is simply no concern for the people... In this regard, we must direct departmental newspapers that make criticism not in the interests of the people, not in the interests of the country in the broadest sense, but in the interests of Khrapchenko and his department... We must strengthen our control over Khrapchenko. Since we represent the interests of the people, we have the right to demand from Khrapchenko and the theatre directors that they stage two or three plays a year — they may stage them however they wish, but they must stage them [28, pp. 49–50].

Khrapchenko and the team of the Committee's employees were fully aware of what was happening, as evidenced by a number of publications in the newspaper *Sovetskoe iskusstvo* [*Soviet Art*], in which, with no less acuteness than in Zhdanov's speeches, the issues of dramaturgy, directing, acting in dramatic and musical theatres, as well as the situation in the field of musical and fine arts and criticism were raised. Probably, the reason for the irritation was something else: fatigue, the growing pressure of censorship, which could be associated with Khrapchenko's policies, since the power of the Committee Chairman at that time still seemed to be strong and unshakable. At the same time, one very important circumstance should be emphasised. At the meeting of directors and artistic directors of Moscow theatres, which took place in the Committee on September 11–12, 1946, not one of the speakers followed Zhdanov in criticising the leadership of the Committee. Whatever the artists said behind the scenes, whatever Pyotr Fedotov wrote down about them, none of them wanted to speak publicly or in print to condemn Khrapchenko.

However, anonymous complaints about Khrapchenko continued to come in; particular discontent was caused by his article *Rastsvet sovetskogo iskusstva* [*The Rise of Soviet Art*], published in the magazine *Ogonyok*.²⁸ It was so thorough, with such a wealth of details and specifics, that it might have seemed as though the chairman

²⁸ Khrapchenko, M. B. (1947). *Rastsvet sovetskogo iskusstva* [The Rise of Soviet Art]. *Ogonyok*, (45), 6–7.

of the Committee was summing things up and, upon leaving, bidding farewell. Indeed, so it soon transpired. In the article, which was destined to be Khrapchenko's last publication as Chairman of the Committee, he once again named the works of playwrights, artists, and composers in whose creation he was personally involved in one way or another, considering them the greatest achievements of an entire era. For the last time, he also expressed words of gratitude to Shostakovich, mentioning not only the laureate works — the *Piano Quintet*, *Trio* and *Seventh Symphony*, but also the *Fifth Symphony*.

In December, Khrapchenko suffered a setback with Vano Muradeli's opera *The Great Friendship*. This came as a surprise to the Committee. During the war years, fragments of this opera, then entitled *The Extraordinary Commissar*, had been broadcast on the radio, were popular with listeners, and did not cause the slightest discontent among the authorities. The singer Vladimir Bunchikov (who performed the role of the Commissar) recalled this when describing his work at All-Union Radio: "We learned the opera *The Extraordinary Commissar* quickly, and after a month and a half presented it to Muradeli... The author's text was read by Mikhail Tsarev." After the opera was broadcast, Vano Muradeli was so delighted that he joyfully invited all the participants of the production to his place for dinner..."²⁹

These recollections demonstrate that, up to a certain point, no one considered there to be anything particularly subversive in Muradeli's opera. Like some other works, it was swept up in the vortex of rapidly changing circumstances: it is no coincidence that twenty theatres were preparing the opera for the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution, and not a single one doubted its political reliability. The Committee repeatedly reported to the country's political leadership about work on the opera, and there was simply no "suddenly" that Zhdanov later spoke about loudly at the Conference of Soviet Music Figures (January 11–13, 1948).³⁰

At the same time, Stalin gave instructions to the Minister of Finance Arseny Zverev to conduct an audit of the financial costs of preparing what was now titled *The Great Friendship*. It was already clear that Khrapchenko had been chosen as the "scapegoat":

²⁹ Bunchikov, V. A. (n.d.). *Kogda dusha poet (Neizdannyye vospominaniya pevtsa)* [When the Soul Sings (Unpublished Memoirs of the Singer)]. In N. Kruzhkov. Virtual'naya Retro Fonoteka. Retrieved July 24, 2025, from <http://retrofonoteka.ru/pevets/bunchinech/bunchinech.htm>

³⁰ *Soveshchanie deyatelej sovetskoj muzyki v TsK VKP(b)* [Meeting of Soviet Music Figures in the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks)]. [Stenographic report]. (1948). Pravda.

at the aforementioned Conference, Zhdanov directly stated that “Khrapchenko bears the main responsibility for this matter.”³¹

Zhdanov’s position was supported, with varying degrees of firmness, by Tikhon Khrennikov, Aram Khachaturian, Dmitry Kabalevsky, as well as the musicologists Yury Keldysh and Izrail Nestev. Keldysh and Kabalevsky spoke about an episode related to the removal of a critical article about Shostakovich’s *Ninth Symphony* from the journal *Sovetskaya muzyka*.

The only one who spoke out in Khrapchenko’s defence was Shostakovich. “The composer could have taken advantage of the opportunity to settle scores with Khrapchenko, who criticised the *8th* and *9th Symphonies* at meetings of the Stalin Prize Committee,” notes Perkhin. “Perhaps this was the kind of ‘revenge’ Zhdanov was counting on. But he was met with moral nobility... After Shostakovich, Zhdanov ended the discussion, even preventing the remaining two registered speakers from making their statements...” [12, pp. 121–122].

In the few days that passed between the meeting and his dismissal, Khrapchenko hurried to complete the most urgent matters and signed several important orders — in particular, appointing the disgraced writer Valentin Petrovich Kataev, author of the banned play *Domik*, as deputy artistic director of the Moscow Satire Theatre.³² And already on 23 January, Zhdanov had ordered the collection of material resources from Khrapchenko. For several subsequent years, Khrapchenko paid money for the opera *The Great Friendship* as a penalty for the squandering of state funds, and, according to eyewitnesses, lived in a cramped apartment filled with books. The chairman of the Committee had acquired nothing during his 10 years in office.

Afterword

Few dared to maintain relations with the disgraced People’s Commissar. And indeed, the need to do so had disappeared. The letter from conductor Boris Khaikin (1948) is noteworthy in this sense: “Dear and respected Mikhail Borisovich! I am very sad that there is no reason to see you, but it is also very nice that I don’t have to ask you for anything (which is something to which both you and we are accustomed)”

³¹ Vstupitel’naya rech’ tovarishcha A. A. Zhdanova na soveshchanii deyatelej sovetskoj muzyki [Opening speech by comrade A. A. Zhdanov at a Meeting of Soviet Music Figures]. (1952). *Vystuplenie tovarishcha A. A. Zhdanova na soveshchanii deyatelej sovetskoj muzyki* [Speech by Comrade A. A. Zhdanov at a Meeting of Soviet Music Figures]. Gospolitizdat, p. 6.

³² RGALI. Fond 962. Inventory 3. Archival unit 1742, p. 22.

[12, p. 541]. At that time, rumours were spreading around Moscow from mouth to mouth that Stalin had shouted at Khrapchenko right in the lodge of the Bolshoi Theatre: “Do you think you are a professor? You are a swineherd!” According to Igor Vishnevetsky, the “swine” referred to the herd of contemporary art figures he protected [29, p. 586].

Soon Khrapchenko began to be called in for interrogations. His son Valery Mikhailovich later claimed that his father was saved by Beria’s arbitrary rule. Stalin, apparently having decided to remind his zealous assistant who was boss in the Kremlin, ordered him to leave Khrapchenko alone and stop the interrogations. But even after this, the Writers’ Union was afraid to give the seriously ill Khrapchenko even a ticket to the House of Creativity; for this, Fadeyev’s personal intervention was required.

Of the 126 figures from literature, theatre, music and fine arts who had once been in regular correspondence with Khrapchenko, only a few now remained. Shostakovich was one of them. Until the end of his life, he corresponded with Khrapchenko, congratulated him on holidays, and later on orders and titles. And, whenever the need arose, he felt able to ask for any help. Indeed, by the 1960s, Khrapchenko had again become an influential person, a high-ranking official of the USSR Academy of Sciences, holding high positions as academician-secretary and member of the Presidium of the Higher Attestation Commission. He continued to respond to all of the composer’s requests and probably never forgot how, in the most terrible moment of his life, Shostakovich was perhaps the only one who never renounced him.

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**Revision of the Orchestral and Vocal Works
of Modest Musorgsky by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.
Part I. The Publication History and Legal Aspects
of Musorgsky's Works Edited by Rimsky-Korsakov**



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Abstract. The revision of Modest Musorgsky's orchestral and vocal works by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov has not been the subject of research yet. The present article is the first attempt to explore this aspect of the work of the Russian classical composer. This article is divided into three parts. The first part, focusing on the history of publications and legal aspects of publishing Musorgsky's works as edited by Rimsky-Korsakov, is published in this issue of the journal. The second and third parts that examine the revision of the orchestral works and song cycles of Musorgsky by Rimsky-Korsakov will appear in subsequent issues. This study was undertaken in connection with preparations for the publication of the *Academic Edition of Musorgsky's Complete Works* at the State Institute for Art Studies. The article examines Rimsky-Korsakov's relationship with brothers Vladimir and Dmitry Stasov, the publisher Vasily Bessel, as well as the publication of Musorgsky's vocal works and orchestral scores as edited by Rimsky-Korsakov in 1882–1908, indicating their differences from the original versions.

Keywords: Modest Musorgsky, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, Vasily Bessel, Vladimir Stasov, song cycles, *The Nursery*, *Sunless*, *Songs and Dances of Death*, orchestral works, *March*, *Scherzo* in B-flat major, *Intermezzo*, *Academic Edition of Musorgsky's Complete Works*

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Источниковедение

Научная статья

**Н. А. Римский-Корсаков в работе над оркестровыми
и вокальными сочинениями М. П. Мусоргского.
Часть I. История публикаций и юридические аспекты
издания сочинений Мусоргского
в редакции Римского-Корсакова**

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Аннотация. Работа Н. А. Римского-Корсакова над оркестровыми и вокальными сочинениями М. П. Мусоргского еще не становилась предметом научного изучения. Представленная статья — первый опыт такого исследования. Она делится на три части. Первая часть, посвященная истории и юридическим аспектам издания сочинений Мусоргского в редакциях Римского-Корсакова, публикуется в настоящем номере журнала. Вторая и третья части, в которых рассматривается редакторская работа Римского-Корсакова над оркестровыми сочинениями Мусоргского и его вокальными циклами, выйдет в следующих выпусках.

Изучение предпринято в связи с подготовкой к изданию Полного академического собрания сочинений Мусоргского в Государственном институте искусствознания. В статье рассмотрены взаимоотношения Римского-Корсакова с братьями Владимиром и Дмитрием Стасовыми, издателем В. В. Бесселем, публикации вокальных произведений и оркестровых партитур Мусоргского в редакциях Римского-Корсакова в 1882–1908 гг., выявлены их отличия от авторских версий.

Ключевые слова: М. П. Мусоргский, Н. А. Римский-Корсаков, В. В. Бессель, В. В. Стасов, вокальные циклы, «Детская», «Без солнца», «Песни и пляски смерти», оркестровые сочинения, «Марш», «Скерцо (B-dur)», «Интермеццо», Полное академическое собрание сочинений М. П. Мусоргского

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Introduction

The revision of Modest Musorgsky's (1839–1881) orchestral and vocal works by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908) constitutes a substantial and significant part of his creative legacy. For the history of musical culture, the most important works that introduced Musorgsky to the world were his operas *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina* (*The Khovansky Affair*) — abridged, re-instrumented, and effectively rewritten by Rimsky-Korsakov. In addition to these, the musical material of the following works was revised: four orchestral opuses (*Night on Bald Mountain*, *Intermezzo in modo classico*, *Scherzo*, and march *The Capture of Kars*), three major choral works (*Oedipus in Athens*, *The Destruction of Sennacherib*, and *Jesus Navin*), three song cycles (*The Nursery*, *Sunless*, *Songs and Dances of Death*), the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition*, numerous romances, and the unfinished opera *Marriage*. It can be said that after his death, Rimsky-Korsakov left behind almost a complete collection of revised works of Musorgsky that reflected his own vision of the legacy of his deceased friend and colleague.¹

The work of Rimsky-Korsakov was a pioneering endeavor, laying the methodological foundation for the next generation of music editors who continued to work on Musorgsky's pieces (Vyacheslav Karatygin, César Cui, Anatoly Lyadov, Alexander Glazunov, and Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov). Rimsky-Korsakov edited Musorgsky's compositions from the time of the composer's death in 1881 until his own death in 1908. According to Evgeny Levashev, Rimsky-Korsakov did “a tremendous amount of selfless work covering a period of almost thirty years of his life and dozens of full and piano scores in virtually all musical genres to which Musorgsky's works belonged” [2, p. 41]. Starting with the completion of unfinished compositions, Rimsky-Korsakov primarily thought about his role as a publisher and, in a sense, even as a pioneer

¹ The topic of Rimsky-Korsakov's editorial work was first addressed by Vladimir Skuratovsky (1963–2016) in his thesis, which was defended in 1988 at the Moscow Conservatory. An expanded version of the introduction to the thesis was published in *Mnozhestvennost' nauchnykh kontseptsij v muzykoznanii* [*The Multiplicity of Scientific Concepts in Musicology*]. See [1].

of the late composer's music. He wrote that "an edition for performance, for practical and artistic purposes, was required"² [3, p. 252].

Initially, Rimsky-Korsakov made virtually no changes to the works published during Musorgsky's lifetime, probably finding it impossible to oppose the composer's will, which was clearly expressed in the printed material. Subsequently, he gradually changed his attitude, allowing for greater creative freedom. The most striking example is the editing of *Boris Godunov*. After the opera was removed from the repertoire of the Mariinsky Theatre, Rimsky-Korsakov created his own abridged version, publishing a piano score in 1896³ and a full score in 1898.⁴ For the works that Musorgsky completed but never published during his lifetime, Rimsky-Korsakov initially adopted a more liberal approach, changing the form and orchestration and making lots of changes to all elements of the music: harmony, melody, dynamics, texture, rhythm, phrasing, and tempo, thus becoming a co-composer, i.e., he proceeded in the same way as with his own compositions [4].

Legal Aspects of Publishing Musorgsky's Works
Edited by Rimsky-Korsakov

Attempts to ascertain the role of Stasov brothers — Vladimir Vasilievich and Dmitry Vasilievich, — Rimsky-Korsakov, and Vasily Bessel⁵ in the publication and republication of Musorgsky's orchestral scores and vocal compositions spanning a quarter of a century, from 1882 to 1908, are doomed to almost complete failure, as little documented evidence of their long-term collaboration remains.

² Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. (1926). *Letopis' moej muzykal'noj zhizni* [*My Musical Life*] (A. N. Rimsky-Korsakov, Ed.). Gosudarstvennoe Izdatel'stvo. Muzykal'nyj sektor, p. 252.

³ Musorgsky, M. P. (1896). *Boris Godunov. Narodnaya muzykal'naya drama v 4-kh dejstviyakh s prologom (po Pushkinu i Karamzinu) M. P. Musorgskogo* [*A National Musical Drama in Four Acts with a Prologue (after Pushkin and Karamzin) by M. P. Musorgsky*]. Arrangement for piano and voices (N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, arrang., instrum., foreword). W. Bessel and C^o.

⁴ Musorgsky, M. P. [1898]. *Boris Godunov. Narodnaya muzykal'naya drama v 4-kh dejstviyakh s prologom (po Pushkinu i Karamzinu) M. P. Musorgskogo*. Full score for orchestra (N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, arrang., instrum.), W. Bessel and C^o.

⁵ Vasily V. Bessel (1843–1907), a Russian music publisher.

The first written evidence, which is often cited and undisputed (though unverified), of Rimsky-Korsakov's decision to edit Musorgsky's music is attributed to Ilya Tyumenev (1855–1927), who was present at the composer's funeral on March 18, 1881, at the Tikhvin Cemetery.⁶ Noteworthy is that three of the above-mentioned individuals — Vladimir Stasov, Dmitry Stasov, and Rimsky-Korsakov — were actively involved in organizing Musorgsky's funeral and attended the burial ceremony. According to Tyumenev:

Passing through the crowd after the service [...] Nikolai Andreevich, who was discreet and even secretive about the prospective musical contributions, told Stasov in a deliberately loud voice (probably by prior agreement) that he would revise and edit everything left behind by the deceased and that he would complete and publish as many pieces as possible, starting with *Khovanshchina*. For musicians, this was worth more than a large number of speeches.⁷

The context of Tyumenev's memoirs suggests that Rimsky-Korsakov's words cannot be considered random, spontaneous, or caused by painful experiences: they were carefully considered in advance and, most likely, either agreed upon with Vladimir Stasov or became a public reaction to certain preliminary private conversations about the fate of Musorgsky's musical legacy. In any case, on the day of the funeral, it was Rimsky-Korsakov who publicly assumed the responsibility to be Musorgsky's musical executor.

Nothing is known about what happened during the following year. The currently available sources describing the work of Rimsky-Korsakov on Musorgsky's orchestral opuses and song cycles provide no information.⁸ Only at the end of April 1882, a letter was discovered from the composer to his student, Moscow music critic Semyon Kruglikov (1851–1910), which came as a surprise since he had only shared news about *Khovanshchina* with him.

⁶ Presently, the Necropolis of the Masters of Art.

⁷ Tyumenev, I. F. (1959). *Poslednij put' Musorgskogo (iz vospominanij)* [Final journey of Musorgsky (from memoirs)]. *Sovetskaya Muzyka*, 7(248), 92. See also [5].

⁸ In the case of *Khovanshchina*, conversely, Rimsky-Korsakov's correspondence contains sufficient information to reconstruct the chronology of revisions during those months [6, pp. 365–366].

In a letter dated April 25, among other news, it is mentioned in passing: “I am preparing Musorgsky’s *Songs and Dances of Death* for publication; they will be published by Bessel in the summer.”⁹

This is the starting point from which further events should be considered. In May, Rimsky-Korsakov’s correspondence with Vladimir Stasov becomes more frequent. In particular, on May 25, on the eve of his departure for the village of Stelyovo, Rimsky-Korsakov, not finding Stasov at the Public Library, wrote him a note in which Rimsky-Korsakov mentioned *Songs and Dances of Death*: “I have brought you [...] four ‘dances of death’ ready for printing [...] once you have settled matters with Bessel, give him the ‘dances’ to be printed.”¹⁰ The very next day, Stasov hastily replies, expressing his regret that the meeting did not take place:

I wanted to discuss with you Musorgsky’s affairs and the draft contract with Bessel, which I had rewritten after my brother Dmitry’s review and intended to read to you.¹¹ He made no particular comments, only advising that whenever you give Bessel the finished original version, as a precaution, you should always get a receipt from him indicating the month and date, so that he would not try to claim later on that, say, an original was handed over to him too late and he, therefore, did not have time to print it when he should have. But my brother also agrees with me that it would not hurt, just in case, to safeguard ourselves and to state in the contract that if Bessel fails to fulfill his obligations

⁹ Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. (1981). *Perepiska s S. N. Kruglikovym: Pis'ma 1879–1895 gg.* [Correspondence with S. N. Kruglikov: Letters (1879–1895)]. In Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska* [The Complete Works. Literary Works and Correspondence]. (8 Vols., Vol. 8-A.). Muzyka, p. 87.

¹⁰ Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. (1963). *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska* [The Complete Works. Literary Works and Correspondence] (8 Vols., Vol. 5). Gosudarstvennoe muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo, p. 375.

¹¹ The role of Dmitry Stasov (1828–1918) has been extensively studied from the perspective of jurisprudence and the development of the legal profession in Russia. However, we believe that his activities in the field of protecting the copyrights of Russian composers (Alexander Dargomyzhsky, Mikhail Glinka, and Pyotr Tchaikovsky) and his efforts to establish professional concert venues and educational institutions (Imperial Russian Musical Society and St. Petersburg Conservatory) are not sufficiently reported. See [7].

(for example, to print scores while having already printed profitable vocal pieces), he will lose the rights to what has already been printed, or, at least, the same rights will be transferred to another publisher, meaning he will have competition.¹²

The context of these messages is explained in detail by Anastasia Lyapunova in her comments:

Stasov conducted negotiations with Vasily Bessel on the publication of Musorgsky's works, whose editing and preparation for printing after the author's death were undertaken by Rimsky-Korsakov. Vladimir Stasov (with the help of his brother Dmitry Stasov) drafted the contract between Rimsky-Korsakov and Bessel. Several drafts of this agreement were preserved in the archive of Stasov.¹³ One of them was written in pencil by Rimsky-Korsakov himself and is, evidently, the very first draft. The second [draft] was written by Stasov and revised by Rimsky-Korsakov. The third and final draft was written by Stasov, taking the corrections made by Rimsky-Korsakov into account, and amended by Bessel.¹⁴

Two and a half weeks later, Stasov informed Rimsky-Korsakov that he had given Bessel *Songs and Dances of Death*:

Today I invited Bessel [...] and gave him all four *Dances of Death* to be printed. He was very pleased and said that the engraving of metal plates would start that day, as the engravers had no other work at that moment. He added that in two weeks' time everything would be engraved, and it would be great if he could receive the rest of Musorgsky's works at the same time.¹⁵

On the same day, the contract between Rimsky-Korsakov and Bessel was finalized. Below are only general provisions and those that are relevant to the publication of orchestral scores and song cycles.

¹² Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. (1963). *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska* [The Complete Works. Literary Works and Correspondence] (8 Vols., Vol. 5). Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo, pp. 377–378.

¹³ Here, Lyapunova evidently refers to the family archive of the House of Stasov (f. 294) at the Institute of Russian Literature (the Pushkin House). Unfortunately, she does not provide the archiving numbers of these documents.

¹⁴ Rimsky-Korsakov, N. A. (1963). *Polnoe sobranie sochinenij: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska* [The Complete Works. Literary Works and Correspondence] (8 Vols., Vol. 5). Gosudarstvennoe Muzykal'noe Izdatel'stvo, pp. 376.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 381.

We, the undersigned, agree to the following terms:

I, Bessel, acquire the full ownership rights of all works by the late Modest Musorgsky, which have not been sold to anyone yet and currently belong to Privy Councilor T. I. Filippov according to the deed of gift, with the obligation to publish them within the time frame specified below. These works include [...] four romances entitled *Songs and Dances of Death*; [...] the romance *Ride on a Hobby Horse* (continuation of *The Nursery*); [...] works for orchestra: *Intermezzo* (Scherzo), *Scherzo* (B-flat major); *Night on Bald Mountain*; *Turkish March* (Alla turca) [...]

I, Bessel, undertake to publish the above-mentioned compositions [...] by May 1885, specifically the orchestral compositions in full scores and four-hand adaptation, as well as the works for voice and piano in their original form.

[...] I, Rimsky-Korsakov, undertake to gradually deliver the above-mentioned works by Modest Musorgsky (prepared by me for publication) to Mr. Bessel by May 1883: the orchestral works [...] in score form [...] and the works for voice and piano in their original form. I, Rimsky-Korsakov, undertake to deliver all these works to Mr. Bessel one after another, at intervals of no more than one month.¹⁶

The final version of the contract was signed by Bessel on July 1, which we learn from another letter from Stasov: “I signed our contract, which I rewrote myself, as you wished, with all the new details.”¹⁷

Publishing Concept and Main Sheet Music Series

In the summer of 1882, the music publishing company of Bessel began engraving music in order to publish the material that had not been published during Musorgsky’s lifetime and to republish previously printed materials. Nothing stood in Bessel’s way at that time to implement his ambitious plans, specifically to concentrate the entire legacy of the composer in his hands. At that time, he also conceived two series: *Romances and Songs by Modest Musorgsky* and *Works for Orchestra by Modest Musorgsky*. The participation of Rimsky-Korsakov in their planning and preparation can be assumed only hypothetically, since no reliable information has been found to date.

The vocal collection, whose first editions appeared in mid-1882, included 21 romances and three cycles:

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 376.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 386.

1. *Child's song.*
2. *The Orphan.*
3. *Cradle Song.*
4. *The Magpie.*
5. *The Ragamuffin.*
6. *King Saul.*
7. *Sleep, Son of Peasants.*
8. *Night.*
9. *The Classicist.*
10. *The Gallery.*
11. *Not Like Thunder from Heaven.*
12. *Softly the Spirit Flew up to Heaven.*
13. *Pride.*
14. *Is Spinning Man's Work?*
15. *It Scatters and Breaks.*
16. *The Vision.*
17. *A Garden Blooms by the Don.*
18. *The Dnieper.*
19. *Song of the Flea from Goethe's Faust.*
20. *Little Kalistrat.*
21. *The Wanderer.*

Sunless: a collection of poems by Arseny Golenishchev-Kutuzov.

1. *Within Four Walls.*
2. *You Did not Recognize Me in the Crowd.*
3. *The Useless, Noisy Day has Ended.*
4. *Be Bored.*
5. *Elegy.*
6. *On the River.*

The Nursery: episodes from the life of children

1. *With Nanny.*
2. *In the Corner.*
3. *The Beetle.*
4. *With the Doll.*
5. *At Bedtime.*
6. *Ride on a Hobby Horse.*
7. *The Cat Sailor.*

Songs and Dances of Death: poems by Arseny Golenishchev-Kutuzov.

1. *Trepak*.
2. *Lullaby*.
3. *Serenade*.
4. *The Field Marshal*.

The music plates for the first ten romances, the song cycle *Sunless*, and five songs from *The Nursery* remained unchanged, i.e., in the same form and with the same numbers as during Musorgsky's lifetime. Romances Nos. 11 to 21, *Songs and Dances of Death*, and the last two songs in *The Nursery* (Nos. 6 and 7) were edited and prepared for publication by Rimsky-Korsakov after the composer's death. For the first time, they were published posthumously, which was clarified on the cover: "All posthumous works were published under the editorship of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov." (*Illustration 1*)

As specified in the contract with Bessel, Rimsky-Korsakov edited and prepared for publication two unpublished songs by Musorgsky, *Ride on a Hobby Horse* and *The Cat Sailor*, which were part of the unfinished song cycle *At the Dacha*. However, for some reason, even then, they were considered to be a continuation and expansion of *The Nursery* cycle. Although it remains unclear who arbitrarily added these songs to *The Nursery*, seven songs, rather than five, were ultimately entitled *The Nursery*, which was contrary to Musorgsky's creative will. It is this expanded editor's and publisher's version that firmly established itself in history, replacing the original.

Rimsky-Korsakov made significant changes to the structure of *Songs and Dances of Death*, changing the order of the songs. Starting with *Lullaby*, Musorgsky intended to finish with *The Field Marshal*. In Rimsky-Korsakov's version, *Trepak* was put first, followed by *Lullaby* and *Serenade*. As the final culminating piece of the cycle, *The Field Marshal* was left in its place.

Musorgsky	Rimsky-Korsakov
1. <i>Lullaby</i>	1. <i>Trepak</i>
2. <i>Serenade</i>	2. <i>Lullaby</i>
3. <i>Trepak</i>	3. <i>Serenade</i>
4. <i>The Field Marshal</i>	4. <i>The Field Marshal</i>



Illustration 1. Cover for the series *Romances and Songs* by Modest Musorgsky engraved in 1882 by the publishing firm W. Bessel and C^o

The series *Works for Orchestra by Modest Musorgsky*, started by Bessel in 1883, included three scores published for the first time — *Scherzo*, *Intermezzo*, and *March* — with a brief note: “edited by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov.” The fact that the orchestral works are also published posthumously is indicated by Bessel at the top of the cover in French: “Oeuvres Posthumes de M. Moussorgsky.” (*Illustration 2*)

In the second half of the 1890s, a series of orchestral works edited by Rimsky-Korsakov began to be published, including numerous revisions and reorchestrations of compositions that only partially belonged to the composer. The works of “pseudo-Musorgsky” were, essentially, reworkings of the original musical material by other composers: for example, a fantasy for orchestra *Night on Bald Mountain* (also known as *A Night on the Bare Mountain*), the orchestral suite *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and the Introduction and Polonaise from the opera *Boris Godunov*. These “latest” editions proved to be popular and became commercially very successful.

In the table of contents on the cover (*Illustration 3*) of the score, the *Scherzo* and *Intermezzo* were written in Latin: No. 1. *Scherzo* (B-flat major); No. 2. *Intermezzo* (B minor). The name of the next piece — No. 3. *Marche turque* (A-flat major) — was changed: from “March” in the 1883 edition to “Turkish March” with a clear reference either to the *Turkish March* from *The Ruins of Athens* by Ludwig van Beethoven or to *Rondo alla turca* from the piano sonata KV 331 by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Two orchestral pieces were added from the opera *Khovanshchina*: No. 7 (Introduction de l’opéra *Chowantchina*) and No. 9 (Entr’acte de l’opéra *Chowantchina*) instrumented by Rimsky-Korsakov. Noteworthy is that these opuses were not considered by Musorgsky to be separate concert pieces. Not to mention the orchestral suite from *Khovanshchina*, which did not exist at all, but which was offered by Bessel under number 10: *Suite: Introduction, Entr’acte et Danses persanes de l’opéra Chowantchina*.

The title No. 8. *Tableaux musicaux. Suite* was misleading, as Musorgsky did not compose this orchestral work. In fact, Bessel published eight pieces from the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition* orchestrated by Mikhail Tushmalov (1861–1896), a violinist and composer who was a student of Rimsky-Korsakov. The involvement of his teacher in the writing of the score still remains unclear.

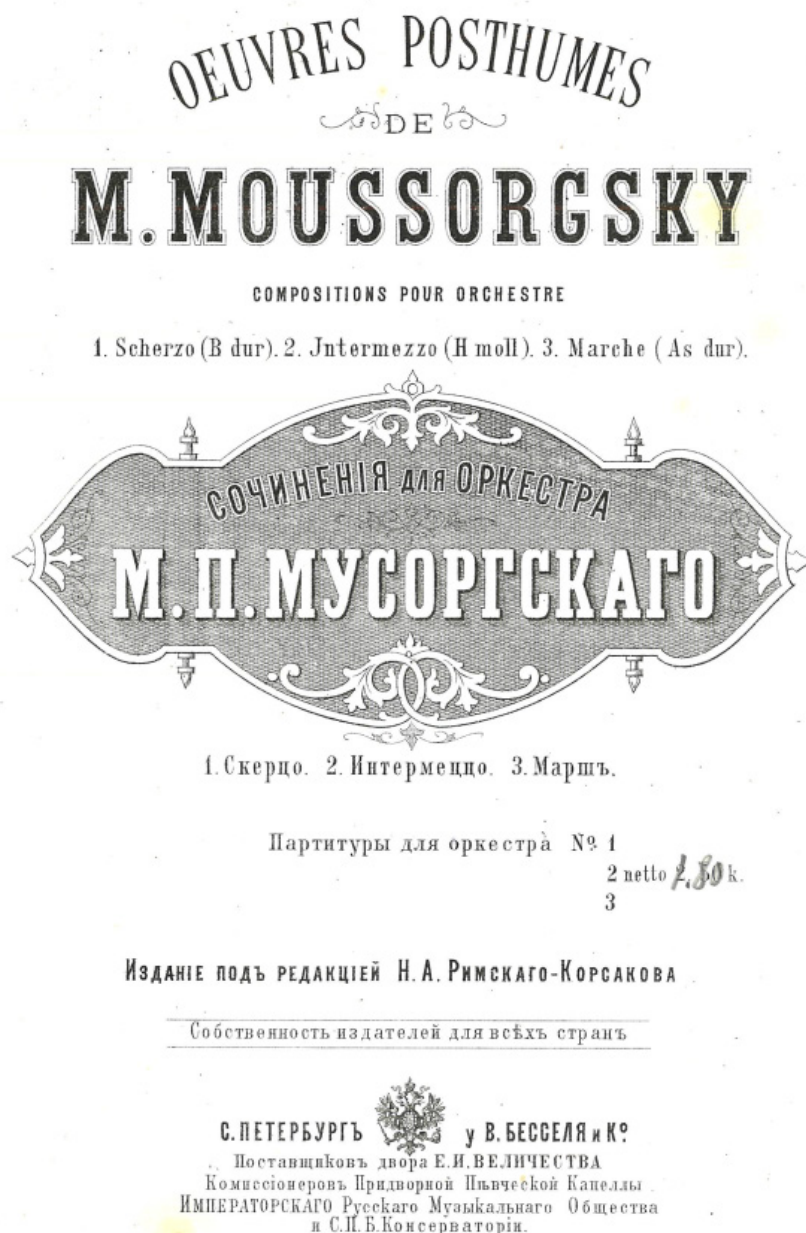


Illustration 2. Cover for the series Works for Orchestra by Modest Musorgsky engraved in 1883 by the publishing firm W. Bessel and Co

OEUVRES POSTHUMES
DE
M. MOUSSORGSKÿ
pour l'orchestre

М. МУСОРГСКИЙ

СОЧИНЕНИЯ ДЛЯ ОРКЕСТРА
ИНСТРУМЕНТОВАННЫЯ Н. А. РИМСКИМЪ-КОРСАКОВЫМЪ

	Partition	Parties	Piano à 4-mains
N° 1. Scherzo. (B-dur).	net. — 75 c	net. 1.35 c	— 85 c
2. Intermezzo. (H-moll).	M. 1.70 1.80 c	M. 3.40 2. Rbl.	M. 2.— 1.35 c
3. Marche turque. (As-dur).	M. 5.— 1.20 c	M. 5.— 1.75 c	M. 3.— 1.15 c
4. Danses persanes de l'opéra „Chowantchina“.	M. 2.60 2. Rbl.	M. 4.75 2.60 c	M. 2.50. 1.25 c
5. Une nuit sur le mont chauve. Fantaisie.	M. 4.50 2.50 c	M. 6.50 4.50 c	M. 8.— 2.75 c
6. Introduction et polonaise de l'opéra „Boris Godounoff“.	M. 6.— 2 Rbl.	M. 12 3.25 c	M. 6.— 1.25 c
7. Introduction de l'opéra „Chowantchina“.	M. 5.— 60 c	M. 8.15 1.50	M. 2.50
8. Tableaux musicaux. Suite.	M. 1.50 3 Rbl.	M. 3— 5. Rbl.	M. — 2.25 c
9. Entr'acte de l'opéra „Chowantchina“.	M. 6.80. — 60 c.	M. 10— 1.50 c.	M. 5—
10. Suite: Introduction, Entr'acte et Danses persanes de l'opéra „Chowantchina“.	M. 1.50.	M. 3—	

N° 2 et 5, arrangés pour deux Pianos.

N° 4, 5, 7 et 8 se vendent aussi pour le piano seul.

Marche turque, arrangée pour piano seul par C. Tchernoff 50 cop.
M. 1.—

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W. BESSEL et C^{ie} EDITEURS
S. PÉTERSBOURG MOSCOU
Newsky, 54. Petrowka, 12.
LEIPZIG CHEZ BREITKOPF ET HAERTEL.
Imprimerie de musique de W. Bessel et C^{ie} à St-Petersbourg.

Illustration 3. Cover for the series Modest Musorgsky. Works for Orchestra instrumented by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, engraved in the late 1890s by the publishing firm W. Bessel and C^o

From the second half of the 1890s, Bessel started providing a reference to the Leipzig printing house of *Breitkopf & Härtel* (Germany's oldest publishing house) on the cover page. According to Felix Purtoy, he established "commission-based relationships with a number of leading European firms. In 1888, a relevant agreement was signed with *Breitkopf & Härtel* (Leipzig) and *Adolph Fürstner* (Berlin)" [8, p. 473]. In 1902, the operas *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina*, orchestral works, the piano suite *Pictures at an Exhibition*, and the song cycle *The Nursery* were included in the catalog of *Breitkopf & Härtel* and began to be distributed in European countries and the United States.¹⁸

*Musorgsky's Song Cycles as Edited by Rimsky-Korsakov
in 1900–1908*

At the beginning of the century, the series of vocal compositions was expanded and new editions were published, partly due to the fact that Bessel's publishing house entered the European market. In 1900, *The Nursery* cycle, which includes seven pieces, was re-engraved, and a new censorship permit was granted on July 5, 1900.¹⁹ The score was typeset in a freer manner than in the edition published during the composer's lifetime, but the characteristic frame and vignettes on each page were preserved. The text was corrected for punctuation; the titles of each piece were printed in Russian and French; French text was added to the lyrics (*Illustration 4*).

The cover for *The Nursery*, designed in 1872 by the artist Ilya Repin, was slightly changed to include the name of the translator: *Paroles françaises de Michel Delines*, i.e., French lyrics by Michel Delines — writer, publicist, and translator Mikhail Ashkinazi (1851–1914), who worked under the pseudonym Michel Delines. The composer's name is engraved in French: *Musique de M. Moussorgsky* (*Illustration 5*).

¹⁸ *Verzeichnis des Musikalienverlages von Breitkopf & Härtel in Leipzig. Vollständig bis Ende 1902.* (1902). Breitkopf & Härtel, pp. 704–705.

¹⁹ Moussorgsky, M. (1900). *Enfantines: Sept mélodies piano et chant, musique et poesie de M. Moussorgsky.* W. Bessel & C^{ie}. [Depôt unique pour la France et la Belgique chez E. Frommont à Paris (Rue d'Anjou, 40)]. The dissemination of music by Russian composers abroad in the last decades of the 19th century contributed to the establishment of the authority of publishing houses [9].

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пальцамъ такъ больно, ма-ма. Ма-ма! вотъ въ самыхъ кончикахъ, вотъ тутъ, такъ
Oh, que j'ai mal et que je souffre! I - ci, les ongles me font si mal;

но-етъ, но-етъ такъ.... Нѣтъ! ка-ковъ коготъ, ма-ма....
ils me brûlent, oh! Mais, ce chat, quel brigand, ma-ma,

ad libit. parlando

Vivo.

a?
dis!

sf p f sf

Дозв. Ценз. С. п. б. 5 Июля 1900 г. 135 б Лит. В. Вессель и К. Троиц. ул. № 24.

Illustration 4. The last page of *The Nursery* with the date of the censor's approval

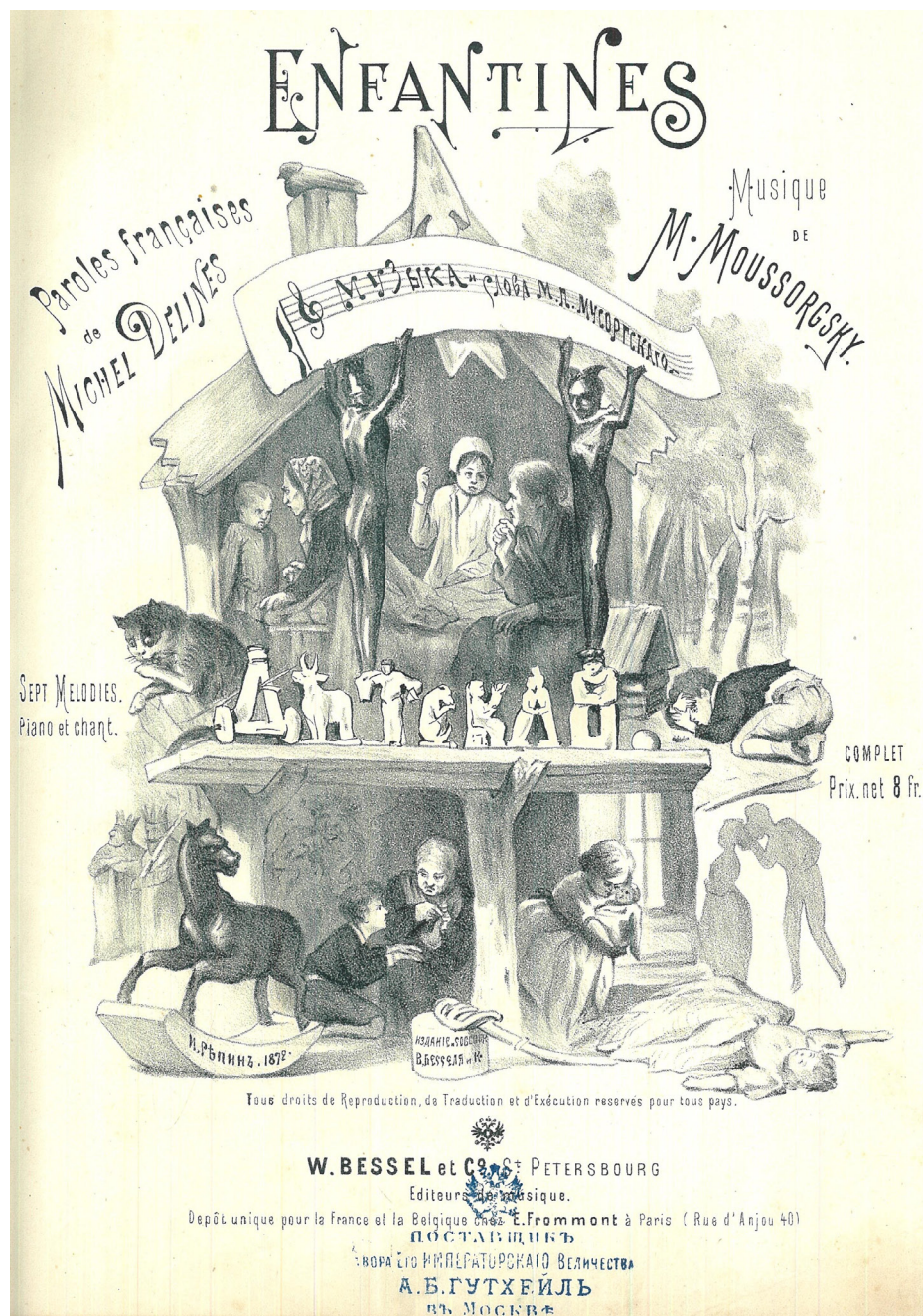


Illustration 5. Cover for Musorgsky's song cycle *The Nursery* with French lyrics intended to be sold in France and Belgium. The name of the translator is specified on the upper left side of the page: "Paroles françaises de Michel Delibes"

In the 1900 edition, the song cycle appeared under a new title in French — *Enfantines* — which indicated considerable liberties taken by the publisher. The fact is that *The Nursery* obviously implied a special room in which most of the action of the five songs took place. In this case, the accurate translation would be the French *chambre des enfants*. However, the plural form of the adjective *Enfantines* can be understood as “children’s songs,” “children’s music,” or “children’s notebook.” It is precisely these, not the most accurate meanings, that are conveyed by the title *Enfantines*. The publication did not include the name of the editor. Rimsky-Korsakov was not named on the cover, nor was he mentioned on the cover pages for the songs *Ride on a Hobby Horse* and *The Cat Sailor*, whose score he had prepared for publication.

The next publication of Musorgsky’s vocal compositions by Bessel dates back to 1908. It was intended not only for Russian and French but also for German musicians. The series had only a French title: *M. Moussorgsky. Oeuvres vocales. Mélodies et Scènes lyriques a une voix avec accompagnement de piano. Nouvelle édition. Rédigés par N. Rimsky-Korsakow*, i.e., *Modest Musorgsky. Vocal Compositions. Romances and Opera Scenes for Voice with Piano Accompaniment. New Edition. Edited by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov* (Illustration 6).

The total number of vocal works remained the same, i.e., 21 romances and three song cycles, as in the 1882 publication. The French verb *rédigier* used by Bessel to describe the nature of Rimsky-Korsakov’s work has no accurate and unambiguous translation into Russian. Depending on the context, it can be understood as both “to edit” and “to write,” which may have been done deliberately in order to provide a general description of Rimsky-Korsakov’s work or to indicate certain copyright subtleties.

The editing and publishing innovations of the 1908 publication, produced jointly by Russian and German firms and intended for European and American musicians, were as follows:

- the music plates were newly engraved;
- Rimsky-Korsakov revised all of Musorgsky’s vocal compositions included in this edition, not just those published posthumously;
- the cover page for the publication listing Musorgsky’s vocal compositions published by Bessel exists only in French;

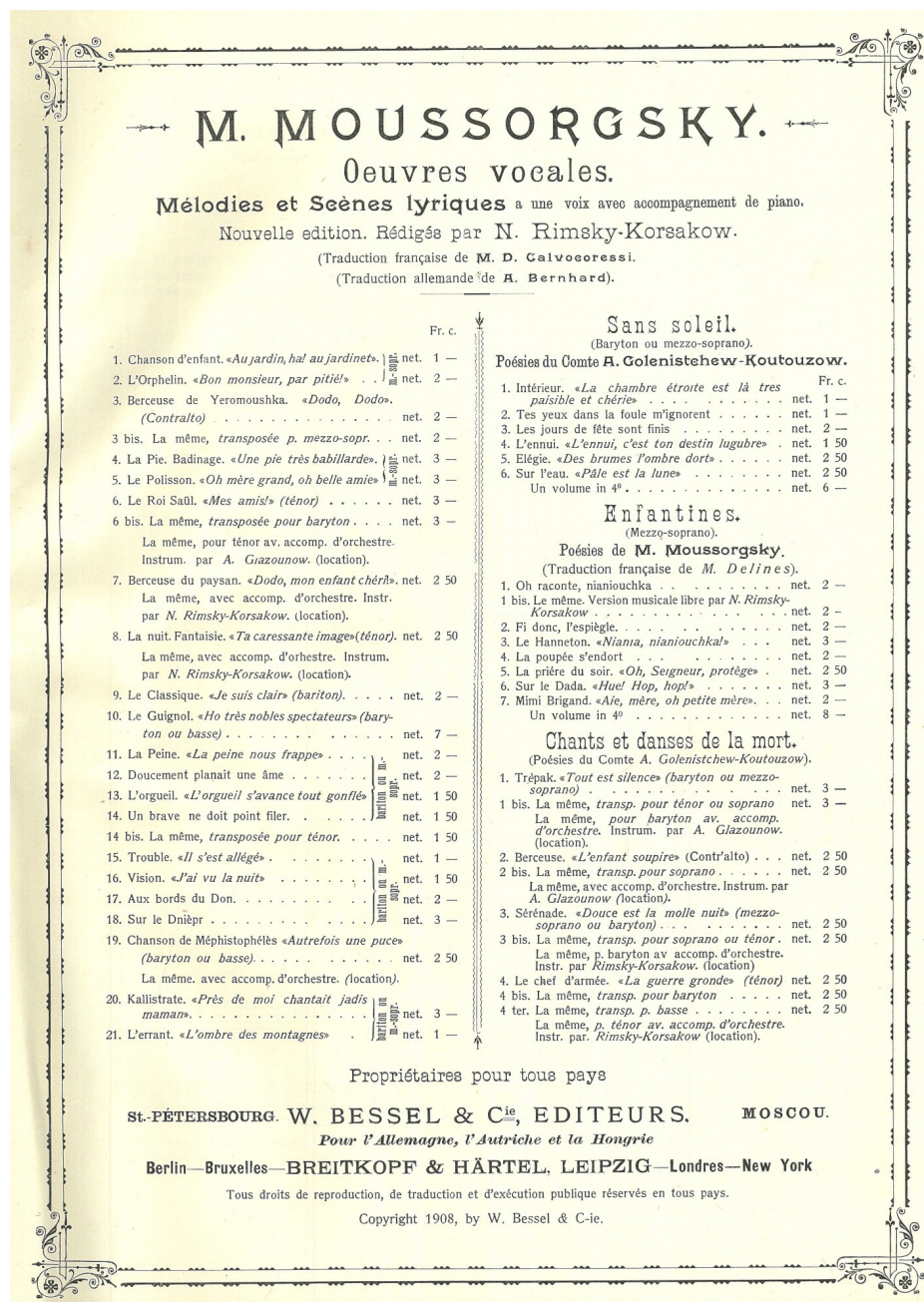


Illustration 6. M. Moussorgsky. Oeuvres vocales. Mélodies et Scènes lyriques à une voix avec accompagnement de piano. Nouvelle édition. Rédigés par N. Rimsky-Korsakow. Cover for the 1908 edition

- the title of each song and the author of the lyrics are given in three languages: French, German, and Russian;

- the lyrics are also engraved in three languages: French (top line), German (middle line), and Russian (bottom line). Most of the French translations were specially made for this edition by Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi²⁰ only in *The Nursery*, the texts by Delines (from the previous publication) were kept. The German translations were made by the musicologist and composer August Bernhard.²¹

To *The Nursery*, Rimsky-Korsakov added a “1bis” version, composing back in 1897 what he described as a free musical interpretation of the romance, which was not published until 1908. For *Songs and Dances of Death*, Rimsky-Korsakov created, either on his own initiative or at Bessel’s suggestion, several transposed versions of each piece, intended for different types of singing voices. Additional versions are denoted by Latin ordinal numbers: “bis” (second) and “ter” (third). Musorgsky did not specify for which type of voice (soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, or bass) each romance was intended; however, the ranges of vocal parts suggest that he did not expect the cycle to be performed by a single singer from beginning to end. With the additions made by Rimsky-Korsakov, it became possible for a single person to perform the entire cycle. For example, for *Trepak* the versions are specified on the cover: No. 1 — for medium voice (baritone or mezzo-soprano); No. 1bis — for high voice (tenor or soprano); No. 1ter — for low voice (bass or contralto).

It is known that Rimsky-Korsakov saw Bessel’s edition about a month before his death on June 8 (21), 1908, as evidenced by Vasily Yastrebtsev’s diary entry on May 6, 1908: “During my visit to the house of Rimsky-Korsakov, I was looking through the new edition of Musorgsky’s romances (with French lyrics) at the study and saw that the romance with nanny from *The Nursery* was available in two

²⁰ Michel-Dimitri Calvocoressi (1877–1944), a French-British music critic, musicologist, and translator.

²¹ August Bernhard (1852–1908), Russian musicologist, translator, composer, and educator. Director of the Saint Petersburg Conservatory in 1897–1905.

versions: in its original form and under the same number with the note ‘bis’ in Rimsky-Korsakov’s free musical interpretation.”²²

The 1908 publication was the final, most complete, and most accurate version for both Rimsky-Korsakov and the music publishing company of Bessel.

Vasily Bessel died in 1907. After his death, the publishing house was inherited by his younger brother Ivan and his two sons, Vasily and Alexander [10]. In 1917, they emigrated to Belgrade, then moved to London, and later to Paris. Purtov provides information about the existence of six volumes of unpublished correspondence between two music publishers (W. Bessel and C^o. and *Breitkopf & Härtel*) in the Saxon State Archives in Leipzig, covering the period from 1910 to December 1935. The first one and a half volumes are devoted to the business contacts between the two publishing houses until December 1913. They address issues such as the publication of works by Russian composers, the protection of copyrights to their works that are held by the publisher, the staging of operas by Musorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov in Europe and the United States, and the receipt of a share of the profits from opera performances in various theaters [8, pp. 473–474].

The website of *Breitkopf & Härtel* currently offers sheet music for Musorgsky’s works as edited by Rimsky-Korsakov. Of the orchestral works, the scores of *Scherzo* in B-flat major²³ and *Night on Bald Mountain* as arranged by Rimsky-Korsakov are advertised²⁴ (*Illustration 7*).

The domestic segment of the market for sheet music publications by major publishing houses — *Musyka*, *Kompozitor*, *Kompozitor • Sankt-Peterburg*, *MPI (Music Production International) • Auto Graf* — offers no works by Musorgsky as edited by Rimsky-Korsakov. However, numerous editions by W. Bessel and C^o. can be found in sufficient quantities and good condition in library collections — Printed Music and Sound Recordings

²² Yastrebtsev, V. V. (1960). *Nikolaj Andreevich Rimskij-Korsakov. Vospominaniya V. V. Yastrebtseva* [Nikolai A. Rimsky-Korsakov. *Memoirs of V. V. Yastrebtsev*]. (2 Vols., Vol. 2: 1898–1908). Gosudarstvennoe muzykal’noe izdatel’sтво, p. 515.

²³ Musorgskij, M. P. (n.d.). *Scherzo in Bb major*. Breitkopf & Härtel. <https://www.breitkopf.com/work/4871/scherzo-in-bb-major>

²⁴ Musorgskij, M. P. (n.d.). *A Night on the Bare Mountain*. Breitkopf & Härtel. <https://www.breitkopf.com/work/4863/a-night-on-the-bare-mountain>

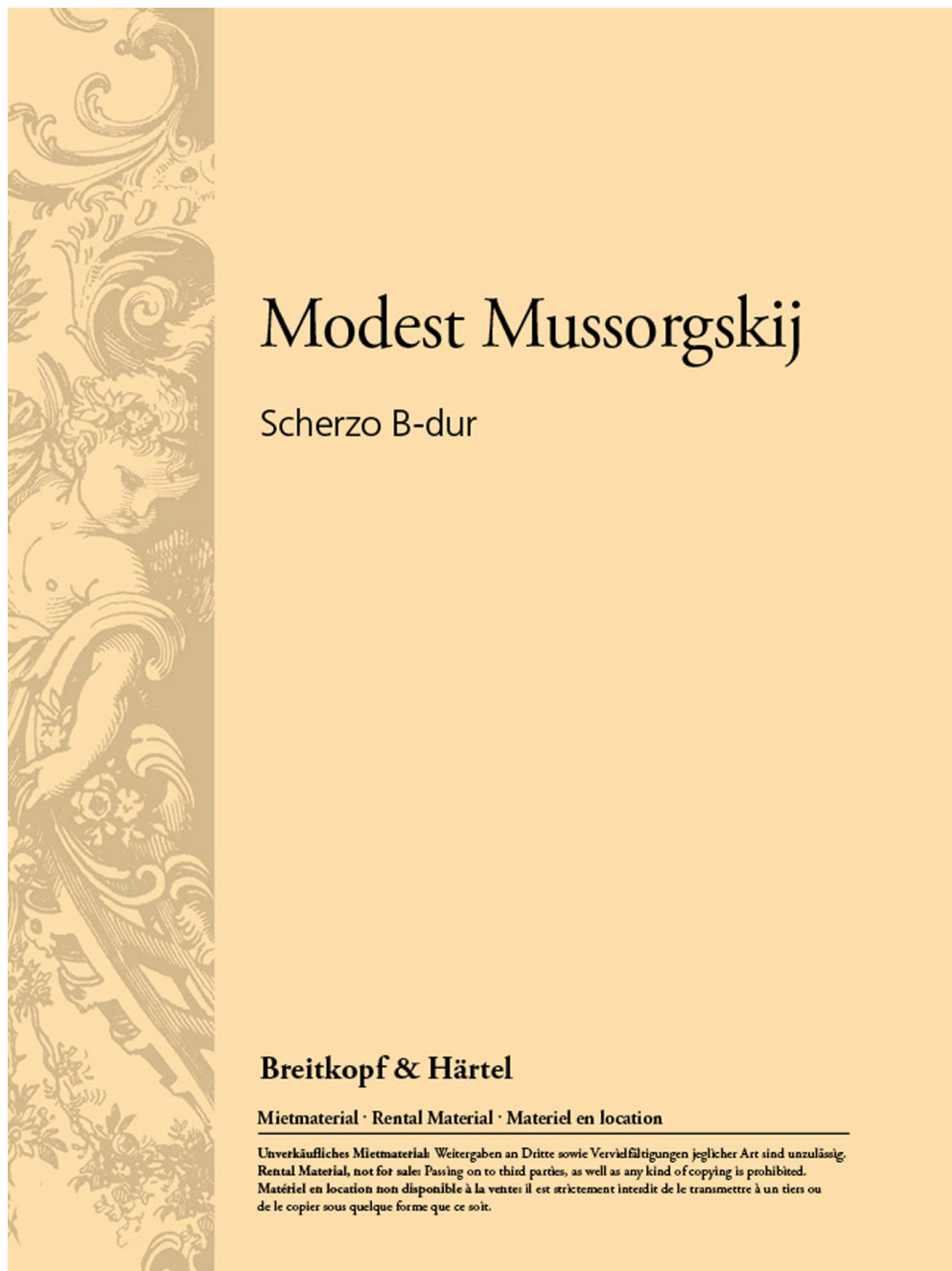


Illustration 7. Modest Musorgsky. Scherzo in B major as arranged by Rimsky-Korsakov [orchestral score] on the website of Breitkopf & Härtel

of the Russian State Library (Moscow) and Printed Music and Recorded Sound of the National Library of Russia (St. Petersburg).

Conclusion

It is well known that a wide range of performers and listeners in Russia, Europe, and America first became acquainted with Musorgsky's compositions through Rimsky-Korsakov's editions rather than their original form. For over 40 years (1882–1928), only Rimsky-Korsakov's editions of symphonic opuses and song cycles were used in concert practice [11].

However, after Pavel Lamm²⁵ published his versions of vocal compositions as part of *Complete Works by Modest Musorgsky* (1927–1939), interest in Rimsky-Korsakov's editions gradually declined, and they were performed less frequently in concert halls. Just as musicians rediscovered forgotten or completely unknown versions of Musorgsky's works around the turn of the 1920s–30s, the vocal editions of Rimsky-Korsakov currently need to be rediscovered [12].

An academic publication of Musorgsky's orchestral and vocal works as revised by Rimsky-Korsakov, which are textually verified against surviving manuscripts and the edition published by Bessel, will be carried out as part of a research and publication project by the State Institute for Art Studies (*Academic Edition of Musorgsky's Complete Works*). The editions by Rimsky-Korsakov, a great musician and outstanding practitioner, along with the original works, will become available for study and performance to professional musicians, teachers, students, and music lovers.

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²⁵ Pavel A. Lamm (1882–1951), a musicologist, pianist, expert in source studies, textual analyst, and the chief science editor of *Complete Works by Modest Musorgsky* (1927–1939), which was never completed.

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Rachmaninoff and France: 1920–30s

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Abstract. As a concert pianist, Rachmaninoff performed in France notably less frequently than in many other countries. The reasons for this are of undoubted interest for historical and biographical research. The attitude of Parisians towards his creative personality was ambiguous: while enthusiastic reviews of their compatriot's concerts regularly appeared in the Russian émigré press, French-language critics paid him much less attention.

The lyrical and dramatic line of Russian music (Tchaikovsky and Rachmaninoff) did not find a favourable response among Parisians. And although Rachmaninoff's phenomenal skill and powerful artistic individuality remained beyond doubt, the stereotypes of French perception in the 1920s and 1930s were clearly evident in the published descriptions of his appearance and playing. However, Rachmaninoff's interpretations of famous and beloved works frequently provoked strong protests: in particular, critics noted the "rationality" and "dryness" in the performance of romantic music. The discussion about the performance style of Rachmaninoff's late years continues to this day. The general impression is formed that Rachmaninoff was not attracted by the noisy and "bustling" atmosphere of Parisian life and the exaggerated recourse to extra-musical criteria for evaluating and perceiving his work as reflected in the press reviews.

Keywords: Rachmaninoff the pianist, Russian music, France, Parisian press, Russian emigration, Russian émigré press

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*История музыки
в письмах и документах*

Научная статья

**С. В. Рахманинов и Франция:
1920–1930-е годы**

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Аннотация. Рахманинов-пианист выступал во Франции гораздо реже, чем во многих других странах. Причины этого представляют несомненный интерес для историко-биографического исследования. Отношение парижан к его творческой личности отличалось неоднозначностью. Русские эмигрантские издания регулярно публиковали восторженные отклики на концерты соотечественника, в то время как франкоязычная пресса уделяла ему несравненно меньше внимания, многое не принимая в его искусстве. Лирико-драматическая линия русской музыки (П. И. Чайковский и Рахманинов) явно не нашла достойного отклика у парижан. Стереотипы французского восприятия в 1920–1930-е годы ярко проявились в газетных описаниях внешности и игры Рахманинова, при этом вне сомнений оставались его феноменальное мастерство и мощная артистическая индивидуальность.

Однако рахманиновские трактовки известных и любимых произведений часто вызывали решительные протесты: критики отмечали «рациональность» и «сухость» в исполнении романтической музыки. Дискуссия об исполнительской манере позднего Рахманинова продолжается и в наше время. Итогом всех наблюдений становится вывод о том, что Рахманинова не привлекала шумная и «суетная» атмосфера парижской жизни и отраженное в отзывах прессы преувеличение внемузыкальных критериев оценки и восприятия его творчества.

Ключевые слова: Рахманинов-пианист, русская музыка, Франция, парижская пресса, русская эмиграция, русские эмигрантские издания

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Introduction

The tours of Sergei Vasilyevich Rachmaninoff generally left a noticeable mark on the musical life of those cities and countries where he performed. The press and public reactions to these performances provide expressive evidence of the public perceptions not only of Rachmaninoff's own art, but of Russian music in general. These responses also provide the opportunity to evaluate many features of the artist's performing style and creative evolution. Moreover, the reactions to Rachmaninoff's concerts in the various countries in which he performed had their own specifics that reflect the characteristics of the national mentality. In earlier works, the present author considered the reception of Rachmaninoff's creative personality in the USA and Britain [1; 2]. The present article is a continuation of the same line of research using material relating to a different country.

Rachmaninoff's creative contacts with France are marked by an obvious paradox: on the one hand, they are marked by unconditional success and the enthusiastic love of listeners (especially Russian emigrants), while on the other hand, they bear testament to the very modest position that France occupied in the concert schedule of the famous musician. This paradox was first noted by Stuart Campbell in his 2021 article *The Russian Paris of Sergei Rachmaninoff* [3]. Continuing Campbell's observations, it is interesting to examine this contradiction in more detail.

Rachmaninoff: The Case of France

In fact, Rachmaninoff did not frequently give concert tours in France. His European tour during the years of emigration (after moving to the USA) began in 1924 with a performance in England (in Bournemouth on 2 October 1924). He was clearly in no hurry to play in Paris: his first solo concert there took place on 2nd December 1928. According to the author of the article, from 1928 to 1939 he gave 17 concerts in the country, 13 of which were in Paris (including 11 solo and two with an orchestra) and four in other cities: in Strasbourg (13 February 1936), in Nice (22 February 1938), in Cannes (20 and 22 February 1938).

These figures, of course, are not comparable with the number of performances in the USA, where he gave dozens of concerts a year. However, even compared with his European schedule, Rachmaninoff was apparently more willing to perform in other countries than France. From 1924 to 1938, he toured most frequently in England: during this period, he gave 88 performances, of which 22 were in London. To begin with, Germany and Austria occupy a prominent place in the musician's touring "geography." However, after the National Socialists came to power in Germany in 1933 and their influence in Austria increased, Rachmaninoff avoided visiting these countries.

Rachmaninoff the pianist was invariably warmly received by the Parisian public, the overwhelming majority of whom were Russian émigrés. Their attitude towards Rachmaninoff was determined not only by the powerful influence of his art, but also by the generous assistance he provided to his compatriots. His charitable activities in France in our time have been adequately reflected in special studies.¹ It was in France that the composer's 60th birthday was celebrated in 1933 with particular scope and emotional intensity. Congratulatory letters were published in Russian Parisian newspapers (such as *Rossiia i slavyanstvo* [*Russia and Slavdom*], *Poslednie Novosti* [*Les Dernières Nouvelles*]), and on 7 May 1933, a celebration of the anniversary took place in the hall of the "Hearth of Russian Music."²

¹ Zvereva, S. G. (2008). Blagotvoritel'naya deyatel'nost' Sergeya Rakhmaninova v otnoshenii Russkoj Pravoslavnoj Tserkvi [Sergei Rachmaninoff's Charitable Activity for the Russian Orthodox Church]. In S. V. Rakhmaninov — natsional'naya pamyat' Rossii [Sergei Rachmaninoff: The National Memory of Russia]: Proceedings of the Fourth International Scientific-Practical Conference. May 26–28, 2008 (pp. 23–33). Museum-estate of Sergei Rachmaninoff "Ivanovka," Publishing House "Rachmaninov Tambov State Musical Pedagogical Institute." (In Russ.); Kuznetsova, E. M. (2014). S. Rachmaninoff's Charity in Exile: Touches to the Portrait of the Composer. *Journal of Moscow Conservatory*, 5(2), 203–214. (In Russ.); Reesor, K. A. (2023). Rakhmaninov kak russkij emigrant: chelovek, muzyka, retseptsiya, 1918–1940 [Rachmaninoff as Russian Émigré: Man, Music, and Reception, 1918–1943]. In V. B. Val'kova (Ed.), *Prinoshenie S. V. Rakhmaninovu. K 150-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya. Issledovaniya raznykh let* [Tribute to Sergei Rachmaninoff. To the 150th Anniversary of His Birth. Studies of Different Years] (pp. 355–364). Publishing House "Gnesin Russian Academy of Music." (In Russ.).

² The music club *Ochag russkoj muzyki* (*The Hearth of Russian Music*) was established in 1933 to support the daily needs of Russian musical figures located in Paris. *The Russian*

The celebration was preceded by a hugely successful charity concert on 5 March in the Salle Pleyel, the entire proceeds from which, according to newspaper advertisements, were donated “to help and support Russian emigrants in need, including young emigrant students.”³

As a private individual, Rachmaninoff often visited Paris, with which he had many connections. For one thing, both of his daughters settled there; for another, it was convenient for him to maintain business relations with the *Éditions Russes de Musique*. In Paris he opened, by his own definition, a “publishing business” under the name *TAIR*, combining the names of his daughters Tatyana and Irina. From 1925 to 1932, the Rachmaninoffs spent every summer in France — in Nice, in Cannes, in Villers-sur-Mer, as well as in the picturesque outskirts of Paris in rented country houses in Corbeville and Clairefontaine, where numerous relatives from Paris and Dresden gathered. From these suburbs it was convenient to visit Paris for business meetings, as well as to attend the various artistic events for which the French capital was famous. However, judging by the composer’s letters, life near Paris had less attractive aspects for him. He was rarely delighted with visiting theatres and concerts and often complained about the “dissipated way of life” of his daughters, into which he was involuntarily drawn, as well as the noise and bustle of Paris, where he had to go often:

My life in Paris, where I have been for a week now, is very tiring, as usual. I spend a lot of time “sitting in public.” I talk a lot, don’t get enough sleep, and played a lot before the concert — as a result, I feel more tired and weak. [...]

Musical Society and the Conservatory also operated within the auspices of the club, sharing the costs of renting the premises with *Ochag* (announcement of the opening of *Ochag* was published in the Russian language newspaper *Vozrozhdenie (Renaissance)* on 25 April 1933, issue 8, No. 2884).

³ (1933, May 2). *Poslednie Novosti [Les Dernières Nouvelles]*, 4423. From here on all quotes from the Parisian press are given from newspaper clippings collected by Sofia Alexandrovna Satina and donated by her to the Library of Congress of the USA. Photocopies of some of them were given by Satina to the Russian National Museum of Music in Moscow, where they are now kept (*RNMM [Russian National Museum of Music]*. F. 18. Nos. 624, 1566–1571 and others). Some of the newspaper articles used in this article were provided to the author by Keenan Reesor from his personal collection. All translations from French are done by the author of the article.

In the morning and afternoon by car in search of a dacha (*Pavillon* sold) or even the purchase of a dacha; then breakfast, lunch, mostly in restaurants, some theatre and finally a night cabaret, which I refuse, but the children are present.⁴

It would seem that the sincere and ardent love of Russian Paris for Rachmaninoff was enough for him to perform more often and more willingly in the French capital. As Campbell rightly notes, “until the German occupation of the city in 1940, Paris’s status as the capital of *Russia Abroad* was beyond competition” [3, p. 76]. It is also certain that Paris remained one of the largest centres of artistic and musical life in Europe during the interwar decade, and as such was very attractive to touring virtuosos.

By the time Rachmaninoff began to visit Paris regularly (since 1925), musical life there was largely determined by the initiatives of people from Russia — Sergei Pavlovich Diaghilev, Igor Fyodorovich Stravinsky, Sergei Sergeyevich Prokofiev, Pyotr Petrovich Souvchinsky and others. The same circle also included the French, members of the *Les Six* that had disintegrated by that time (Arthur Honegger, Darius Milhaud, Francis Poulenc, Germain Tailleferre), and creative contacts with artists from Soviet Russia were also a constant throughout the 1920s. Although many more famous names and bright events could be adduced, this would take up too much space. It is important to note that the attitude of emigrants towards guests from the USSR was sometimes contradictory, but also very curious. It is significant that one of the most influential Parisian figures, Diaghilev, “who kept his finger on the pulse of Soviet cultural life...” [4, p. 149], paid attention to their work.

Although this diversity of the new Russian Paris could not help but touch and excite Rachmaninoff, he clearly kept it at the periphery of his attention. His preference for keeping a comfortable distance from it can be seen in his very reserved responses to the artistic events of the *City of Lights*. However, this restraint, to varying degrees, also distinguished the positions of the older generation of emigrants — Konstantin Balmont, Ivan Bunin, Dmitry Merezhkovsky, Zinaida Gippius, Nikolai Medtner and many others.

⁴ Pis'mo k E. K. i E. I. Somovym ot 20 marta 1932 [Letter to E. K. and E. I. Somov dated 20th March 1932]. (2023). In Z. A. Apetyan (Ed.), *S. V. Rakhmaninov. Literaturnoe nasledie* [S. V. Rachmaninoff. Literary Heritage]. (2nd ed.). (3 Vols., Vol. 2). Muzyka, pp. 297–298.

Rachmaninoff's isolation from the circle of arbiters of Parisian musical fashion is especially noticeable in comparison with the jealous interest in it of the young Prokofiev (see [4, pp. 146–163]), whose emigrant routes in the 1920s often intersected with Rachmaninoff's.

Parisian Disappointments

Although, contrary to Campbell's assertion, the French-language press did not create a "vacuum" around Rachmaninoff's performances, it must be acknowledged that his personality and activities received incomparably less attention than in Russian-language émigré publications. The different tone of the articles by French journalists is also very noticeable. Their judgments seem to have largely been determined by the taste preferences that had developed among the Parisians by that time, in which the music for which Rachmaninoff was famous already did not occupy a prominent place.

The markedly selective attitude towards Russian music was already evident during Rachmaninoff's first performance in Paris in 1907. Then, in the final concerts of Diaghilev's Russian season on the 13 and 26 of May, Rachmaninoff performed his *Second Piano Concerto* and conducted the *Spring cantata* (the soloist was Chaliapin). Although the performance was a success with the public, it could not compete with the enthusiasm with which Parisians received the works of composers of the St. Petersburg school — first and foremost Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov and Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky. The Parisian musicians also showed a complex attitude towards the music of Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky, whose overture-fantasy *Francesca da Rimini* was performed at the same time. In his report on these events Nikolai Dmitrievich Kashkin quotes Rachmaninoff himself:

What is perhaps most interesting to us is the relative hostility, or at least dislike, with which Parisians treat Tchaikovsky's works. [...] However, *Francesca da Rimini*, which was performed under the direction of Mr. Nikisch, had a very great success, but rather among the public than among Parisian musicians, for even the orchestra performers at the rehearsal simply laughed at this composition [...]

A scene from the third act of Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* had a great success [...] The greatest honours fell to the lot of Rimsky-Korsakov...⁵

Rachmaninoff, as Kashkin reports, spoke of his performance with disappointment, admitting that he was “not particularly pleased with the orchestra of the *Lamoureux Concert Society*, which had the main task of performing.”⁶ It is obvious that at that time the work of the “Moscow lyricists,” as Boris Vladimirovich Asafyev called them, did not find the proper response. Later, these principles were reinforced and strengthened by the success of Diaghilev's *Ballets Russes*, which presented Paris with a different, exotically colourful wing of Russian music.

The rebellious statements of the *Les Six* composers, who protested in the early 1920s not only against “German profundity” and impressionist “fogginess,” but also against “Russian influences,” also left their mark on French culture. Jean-Marie Charton, a researcher of Rachmaninoff's work, explained these features of artistic mentality with reference to the book of the French historian of Russian music Michel-Rostislav Hofmann: “La musique russe, c'est pour nous trop souvent des décors éclatants, des costumes féériques, des danseurs bondissants, une orgie de lumières... L'attrait de l'exotique!.. Nous faisons à cette musique une fausse place dans nos émotions”⁷ (Cit. ex: [5, p. 60]).

Thus, the characteristics of national artistic taste, which had by the end of the 1920s been fully defined and were to persist for a long time, included attention to bright colours, external characteristic images, and sensitivity to visual associations in music.

The Parisians' dislike of a certain branch of Russian music had apparently become a kind of ingrained stereotype. It is no coincidence that Prokofiev, always sensitive to musical rumours, wrote in his diary on 27th July 1925:

⁵ Kashkin, N. D. (1907, May 24). Russkie kontserty v Parizhe. (Beseda s S. V. Rakhmaninovym) [Russian concerts in Paris. (Conversation with S. V. Rachmaninoff)]. *Russkoe slovo* [Russian Word], 118, 4.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Hofmann, M.-R. (1946). *Un siècle d'opéra russe: (de Glinka à Stravinsky)*. Corrêa, p. 9.

“...Rachmaninoff gave his daughter in marriage to the Most Serene Prince Volkonsky, and since the prince is studying painting in Paris, he decided to spend the summer in hated France, hated because they laugh at his music here.”⁸ Let us note, by the way, that the caustic tone in this case does not contradict the sincere respect and even tender affection in Prokofiev towards his peer. He left another testimony in his diary:

1926. [...] 28 January. [...] Today Koussevitzky rehearsed Scriabin's 3rd Symphony. I do not understand why modern Paris, led by Stravinsky and Diaghilev, scolds Scriabin, considering the passion for him to be a marker of bad taste.⁹

To this observation we can add the obvious indifference with which Parisian musicians treated Medtner's performance — he gave two concerts of his own compositions in Meudon (3 November 1927) and in Paris (19 November of the same year in the Salle Érard). The composer's wife, Anna Mikhailovna Medtner, wrote about her disappointment with these concerts in a letter to Sergei Vasilyevich and Natalia Alexandrovna Rachmaninoff on 26 November 1927:

Despite the fact that both evenings were very successful and there were many conversations with compliments, Kolya was left with the feeling that it was not worth wasting so much time on this [...] Kolya's mood became very sad.¹⁰

The cool attitude of the Parisians towards Medtner's art is offset by the enthusiastic reception he received during his tour in England in February and November 1928,¹¹ not to mention the solemn celebration in Moscow in 1927.¹²

⁸ Prokofiev, S. S. (2002). *Diary. 1907–1933*. (3 Vols., Vol. 2). sprkfv, p. 345.

⁹ Ibid., p. 374.

¹⁰ Apetyan, Z. A. (Ed.). (1973). *Medtner N. K. Letters*. Sovetskij kompozitor, pp. 366–367.

¹¹ After the performance in London on February 6, 1928, Medtner wrote to his brother: “The concert was brilliant in all respects. Such a reception and success generally only happens in Russia”. Ibid., p. 373–374.

¹² Anna Medtner reported about the concert on 18th February in Moscow in a letter to Rachmaninoff: “There was a lot of noise. <...> they arranged a ‘celebration’ for him and read a greeting, very touching...” [Ibid., p. 361].

As we can see, Russian music by composers of the Moscow school did not take up a central position in terms of the interests of the Parisian public, at least not its most authoritative and “advanced” part, which Prokofiev defined as “modern Paris, headed by Stravinsky and Diaghilev.” There is reason to believe that this state of affairs, which had developed by the end of the 1920s, remained relevant in the following decade.

Rachmaninoff was also familiar with the disappointment after his Parisian performances. On 16 March 1932, he wrote to Elena Konstantinovna and Yevgeny Ivanovich Somov:

Overall, my concert was a success. Takings — 93 thousand (short of ten). [...] Only the most important thing is missing. I played *badly* and suffered greatly for the first two days after the concert. Now the sharpness has passed. [...] I can also add to my concert that I have not had such a cold audience as this time in Paris for a long time, and they coughed so much and loudly. It was a torment to play.¹³

Here, it is difficult to determine what was the cause and what was the effect — the coldness of the audience or the artist’s own state of health during the concert. However, Rachmaninoff was not the only one who was dissatisfied with his performances. After an earlier concert on 1 December 1929, Prokofiev wrote in his diary:

In the evening of the same day — [there was] Rachmaninoff’s concert, very grand, we paid three hundred francs for two tickets. A few days earlier, I met Rachmaninoff at the publishing house. He came in with his younger daughter, hunched over: his back was out. Old, lethargic. I tried to be friendlier. He was quite willing to converse... During the concert he wasn’t in good shape either, played worse than last year. I still wanted to go backstage to shake his hand, but when he ended with his new paraphrase of some vulgarity by Kreisler (and the paraphrase itself was mediocre), I became so furious that I didn’t go backstage. How can a man who makes such an impression on the audience dare to present such rubbish?¹⁴

¹³ Pis'mo k E. K. i E. I. Somovym ot 20 marta 1932 [Letter to E. K. and E. I. Somov dated 20 March 1932]. (2023). In Z. A. Apetyan (Ed.), *S. V. Rakhmaninov. Literaturnoe nasledie* [*S. V. Rachmaninoff. Literary Heritage*]. (2nd ed.). (3 Vols., Vol. 2). Muzyka, pp. 197–198.

¹⁴ Prokofiev, S. S. (2002). *Diary. 1907–1933*. (Vol. 2). sprkfv, p. 738.

It is quite possible that the same representatives of “modern Paris” sometimes shared this opinion.

When considering evaluations of Rachmaninoff’s work as a composer during his French tours, the picture was also ambiguous, being shaped by the specifics of the concert life, in which Rachmaninoff’s own compositions occupied a rather modest place. It is significant that the composer did not often give the French public a reason to express their attitude towards his music. He performed his own major works in Paris only a few times. The Paris premieres of his new works were as follows: On 27 November 1930 he played the *Fourth Piano Concerto*; on 5 February 1936 *Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini* (the poem *The Bells* was performed at the same concert); on 16 March 1932 *Variations on a Theme of Corelli*. And while individual pieces performed in solo concerts invariably received positive reviews, they were still overshadowed by more famous and popular pieces, including scherzos, nocturnes, ballads, sonatas by Chopin, works by Liszt and others.

Rachmaninoff’s *Second* and *Third Piano Concertos*, which had already become public favourites in various countries by that time, were also familiar to Parisians but not in the author’s performance. Thus, according to reports from Russian newspapers, in the 1932–1933 season, the *Second Concerto* was performed by Arthur Rubinstein and Marcel Gazelle with Charles Lamoureux’s orchestra; in the following season, it was performed twice — in symphonic concerts by Gaston Poulet, with Nikolai Andreevich Orlov and Marie Chassin as soloists.¹⁵ On 16 November 1932, Vladimir Horowitz performed the *Third Concerto* with the Paris Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Alfred Cortot.¹⁶ So far, it has not been possible to find any responses to these events in French-language newspapers. It can be inferred that the reaction to them in France was rather muted.

¹⁵ The name of the pianist Marie Chassin is mentioned in the article: Lolliy, L. (1934, March). Rachmaninoff. *Rossiya i slavyanstvo* [*Russia and Slavdom*]. However, no information could be found about her.

¹⁶ Ibid.

Charton gives a cursory review of newspaper reviews of the concerts (unfortunately, without references to sources) and notes that many critics, “en louant de virtuose, on égratigne le compositeur” [5, p. 83]. Their conclusion is: “Et si l’on condescend à accepter son classicisme, on n’oublie pas de sourire de ca ‘biensonance’, insinuant que le temps de la musique agréable à l’oreille fait terriblement démodé” [5, p. 83].

The Legendary Prelude

It is probably safe to say that Rachmaninoff’s reputation as a composer in France, more than anywhere else, was determined by the incredible popularity of his *Prelude in C-sharp minor*, which became a kind of obsession, even a morbid passion for many music lovers. The critics did not miss the opportunity to emphasise this with ironic comments. Emile Vuillermoz (a famous musicologist, author of books about Claude Debussy and Gabriel Fauré) wrote in a note about Rachmaninoff the pianist’s first performance in Paris:

C’est que ce Prélude tient dans la culture musicale européenne une place démesurée. Chez nous, le Français moyen l’entend chaque soir au cinéma dans les instants tragiques et, dès son réveil, ce sont ses graves accords qui traversent les murs de son appartement par le soins de tous les pianistes de son immeuble.¹⁷ (See *Illustration 1*)

Another critic, composer René Doire, began his newspaper report thus: “Le célèbre Rahmaninoff, l’auteur du fameux Prélude que les Jowers, à l’Empire, jouent aussi irrespectueusement que savoureusement sur l’accordéon, a mis en mouvement toute la Russie parisienne: donc salle comble et splendide.”¹⁸

It is possible that this is precisely the reaction to Rachmaninoff’s music that Prokofiev had in mind in the already cited statement from his diary.

¹⁷ Vuillermoz, E. (n. d.). Le Concert Rachmaninoff. [Unknown newspaper]. Copy from the private collection of Keenan A. Reesor. Here, we are talking about one of two Sunday concerts: either 2 December 1928 or 1 December 1929. (See *Illustration 1*).

¹⁸ Doire, R. (1930, November 29). [Rachmaninoff’s Concert of November 22, 1930]. *Record*.

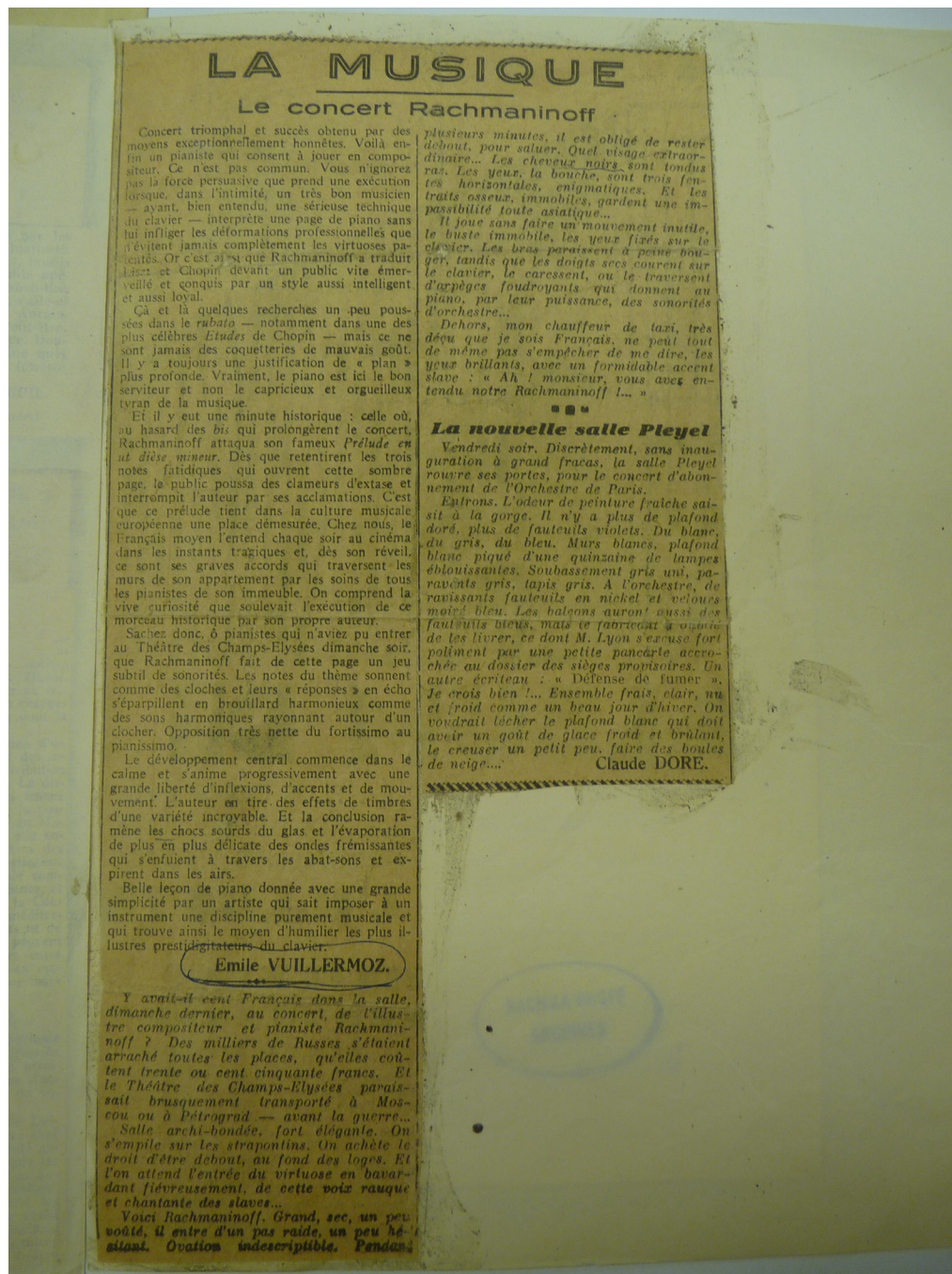


Illustration 1. Vuillermoz, E. (n. d.). Le Concert Rachmaninoff.
[Unknown Newspaper]. Copy from the private collection of Keenan A. Reesor

Nevertheless, one cannot help but notice that the tastes of music lovers often diverged from the assessments of the Parisian musical elite; indeed, the success of the *Prelude* calls into question the established opinion that the French do not like open emotional expressions in art. Of course, no one seriously disputed the merits of the work that had become fashionable. As one critic claimed, “le célèbre *Prélude en do dièze mineur*, qui, présenté par l’auteur, revêt une grandeur impressionnante que d’innombrables exécutions n’ont pas réussi à amoindrir.”¹⁹

About Rachmaninoff in French

Naturally, Rachmaninoff’s performances were significant events, first and foremost, for the Russian diaspora in Paris. It is equally natural that the characteristic “Russianness” of the atmosphere in which these concerts took place became the subject of special attention in the French press.

One of the commentators exclaimed: “Y avait-il cent Français dans la salle, dimanche dernière, au concert d’illustre compositeur et pianiste Rachmaninoff?”²⁰ And continued: “Des milliers de Russes s’étaient arraché toutes les places, qu’elles coûtent trente ou cent cinquante francs. Et le Théâtre des Champs-Élysées paraissait brusquement transporté à Moscou ou à Petrograd — avant la guerre...”²¹ At the end of his note, as evidence of the complete “appropriation” of Rachmaninoff by the Russian public, the critic cites a characteristic episode: “Dehors, mon chauffeur de taxi très déçu que je sois Français, ne peut tout de même pas s’empêcher de me dire, les yeux brillants, avec un formidable accent slave: ‘Ah, monsieur, vous avez entendu notre Rachmaninoff’.”²²

¹⁹ [Concert of 22 November 1930, Salle Pleyel]. (1930, November 26). *L’Excelsior*.

²⁰ Vuillermoz, E. (n. d.). Le Concert Rachmaninoff. See footnote 17.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid. A hint of an attempt to “appropriate” Rachmaninov on the part of French musical figures can be found in the recently published book by Erwan Barillo and Arnaud Friele entitled *Russian Destinies in Paris. One hundred years of the Rachmaninoff Conservatory, 1924–2024*. The authors call the Variations on a Theme of Corelli Rachmaninoff’s “only French work”, referring to the fact that the Variations were written during the composer’s summer stay at the Pavillon summer house in Clairefontaine in 1931 [6, p. 83].

René Bizet, a renowned writer and publicist, who was on friendly terms with Maxim Gorky and clearly took the fate of the Russian emigration to heart, emphasises the same theme in the very title of his article: *Chants d'Exilés. Quand les Russes écoutent Rachmaninoff* [*Songs of Exiles. When Russians listen to Rachmaninoff*]. The atmosphere of the concert is described here very expressively:

Entr'acte. Le public est étonnant. Toute l'immigration russe est là. Depuis les loges où des hermines voisinent avec des chinchillas jusqu'aux dernières places où les gens ont des vêtements de pauvreté travailleuse, ce ne sont que visages de romans russes. Voici, avec ses bandeaux noirs plaqués sur ses joues pâles, la romantique héroïne de Pouchkine ou de Lermontoff; avec sa large face aux pommettes saillantes, rougies par le fard, c'est là, malgré la robe remise à la mode une paysanne de Konolenko. Quelques barbes de Tourgueneff, quelques visages exaltés, cheveux longs d'étudiants de jadis entr'aperçus dans les livres d'Arzibachev; peu de jeunes femmes modernes comme nous les voyons dans nos journaux de mode. Les chevelures d'ont pas été sacrifiées. Une atmosphère d'ailleurs et d'autrefois, émouvante par la fidélité qu'on devine, la misère qu'on suppose malgré le soin qu'on a mis ce soir à la cacher. Contrairement à l'habitude, dans les récitals, l'entr'acte se prolonge, pour que cette fête du piano soit aussi une fête de l'amitié. On se retrouve dans ce hall, on forme des groupes, on bavarde, on baise des mains, on revit dans l'illusion et dans la féerie d'un instant...²³

And in addition, one more observation from the Parisian press: "Le soir du concert de Rachmaninoff, un peuple slave déferte salle Pleyel et envahit toutes les places. On voit entrer des Russes agitées et barardes, couvertes d'hermine, de diamants, d'autres vêtues de fourrures rapées, des hommes en habit, des hommes en veston de couleur."²⁴

Stereotypes in the French perception of Russian music and Russian artists during the 1930s were clearly evident in descriptions of Rachmaninoff's appearance and playing. In his appearance they caught the features of a mysterious eastern sage, a steppe horseman, a dashing Cossack — in a word, all those characters that Parisians loved after Diaghilev's performances

²³ Bizet, R. (1928, December 2). *Chants d'Exilés. Quand les Russes écoutent Rachmaninoff. Intransigent*. The newspaper title translates as "intransigent."

²⁴ Le gala Rachmaninoff. (1930, November 27). *Candide*.

of *Les Danses polouvtsiennes*, *Petrouchka*, *Le Sacre du printemps* and other plays with exotic plots. Here, the vividness of the critics' imagination is striking in terms of their unique — one would like to say, purely French — sensitivity to the external appearances produced by the event. These reports are notable for their lack of attention to the music.

Vuillermoz, in the article already cited, gives a very expressive description of the artist's appearance: "Quel visage extraordinaire... Les cheveux noirs sont tondus ras. Les yeux, la bouche, sont trois fentes horizontales, énigmatiques. Et les traits osseux, immobiles, gardent une impassibilité tout asiatique..."²⁵ Bizet constructs his impressions of the concert into a gripping plot, quite in the spirit of the colourful productions of the *Saisons Russes*:

Trois mille personnes applaudissent, crient rugissent. Le virtuose se plie en deux à droite puis à gauche, puis devant soi. Les politesses raides, militaires et respectueuses sont finies, Serge Rachmaninoff s'installe devant le clavier.

Ce n'est pas seulement pour lui un mouvement nécessaire. C'est une prise de possession. Ce tabouret large devient pour ce cavalier une sorte de selle sur quoi il s'installe commodément, essayant le jeu de ses jambes, s'assurant d'une position parfaitement stable. Il est certain de n'être pas désarçonné; il prélude par quelques notes, regarde autour de lui audessus de lui, contemple la salle puis brusquement, il joue.

Les doigts sont d'acier. Les bras font des courbes rapides. Ce Russe est à l'aise sur sa monture, mais il faut que la course soit nerveuse. Elle est niennée bon train d'abord avec Schubert, elle s'accélère avec Schumann, elle s'excite avec Chopin.

Impression étrange, du fond de cette foule passionnée et silencieuse, de ce piano net et brillant comme un cheval noir, et de ce cosaque qui le mène de ses mains puissantes qui frappent des coups secs et retombent, le coup donné, comme si elles laissaient flotter les rênes...²⁶

The critic then describes the marvellous wanderings and transformations of his hero:

Et, de nouveau Je cavalier reprend sa course. Rachmaninoff laisse souffler sa monture. Il joue ses Etudes, graves et colorée à la fois. Mais quand ils ont repris haleine et que les vastes plaines de Liszt se trouvent devant eux, alors, c'est l'irrésistible galop. Qui n'a pas entendu Rachmaninoff dans le Carnaval de Pesth

²⁵ Vuillermoz E. (n. d.). Le Concert Rachmaninoff. See footnote 17.

²⁶ Bizet, R. (1928, December 2). Chants d'Exilés. Quand les Russes écoutent Rachmaninoff. *Intransigeant*.

ne sait pas ce que sont le rythme, la vie des notes, la danse, la frénésie, l'ivresse, tout ce qui peut caractériser le tzigane délirant. On me sait plus où ça course le mène, la vitesse cadencée s'accroît de seconde en seconde, tout tourbillonne dans le vent, dans la lumière, dans un sorte de joie de sauvage qui vous laisse anéanti...²⁷

In connection with the ineluctable *Prelude in C-sharp minor*, a new plot twist arises at the end of the concert:

Alors, dans ces notes graves au milieu du requillement qui s'exalte en acclamations dès que résonent les premiers accords, passe toute la chanson des cloches de Kiev ou de Moscou. Ce n'est pas un cavalier qui est devant nous, c'est le sonneur de bronze. Tout tremble. Le piano est un bourdon géant...²⁸

In exactly the same spirit is the description of Rachmaninoff's appearance from another article:

Crâne tondu, jambes arquées comme celles d'un ancien cavalier, visage fermée et sévère, Rachmaninoff a un peu l'air d'un général de cosaques qui ne plaisante pas avec la discipline. Sûrement, il médite un châtiment terrible pour l'auditeur qui a eu le malheur de tousser, ou de tourner bruyamment une page de son prigramme!²⁹

The fancies of French journalists are quite comparable to the "action-packed" descriptions of Rachmaninoff's concerts in the USA [1]. Such a style, however, is difficult to imagine in serious, non-satirical articles in the Russian press.

Of course, critics did also pay some attention to purely musical considerations. For all those who wrote about the Russian pianist's concerts, his phenomenal mastery and powerful artistic personality remained beyond doubt. "Rachmaninoff est un des plus grands pianists contemporains," stated one of the commentators of the newspaper *Paris Soire*, continuing: "Et ce n'est certes pas le récital qu'il a donné l'autre soir chez Pleyel qui pourrait altérer cette opinion. Sa sonorité tient du prodige. Il y a en cet homme, la force, la finesse, l'intelligence et l'esprit: on est étonné et pris."³⁰

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Le gala Rachmaninoff. (1930, November 27). *Candide*.

³⁰ Le Récital Rachmaninoff. (1930, November 26). *Paris-soir*.

Rachmaninoff, the “Modernist”

Rachmaninoff’s interpretations of famous and beloved works sometimes provoked strong protests. One of the articles gives a precise formulation of this perception: “Certains discutent non la qualité de ses exécutions, que sont au-dessus de toute critique, mais la valeur de ses interprétations. On objecte qu’elles bousculent, en bien des cas, l’idée qu’on se fait communément de pièces. On invoque la Tradition.”³¹ The review of the already mentioned René Doire is typical:

Je ne voudrais faire aucune peine, pas plus aux aimables organisateurs de ce concert qu’aux amis de ce grand musicien et encore moins à lui-même, mais ma franchise doit dominer mon sentiment: Rachmaninoff a fait de Chopin une machine à sécher, comme on en voit tant de nos jours chez les blanchisseurs ou les coiffeurs. Ici elle aspire en quelques secondes toutes les larmes qui, depuis un siècle, se sont répandues à chaque audition des *Ballades* ou des *Nocturnes*. L’ataraxie (ne pas confondre avec ataxie) nous paraît avoir envahi les conceptions de Rachmaninoff dont les réalisations digitales obtiennent cependant certaines nuances, en antagonisme d’ailleurs avec la ligne et le fond de son interprétation. [...] Reconnaissons que le piano Pleyel, fidèle à Shopin, — ceci n’est pas une réclame — ne permet pas d’aller trop loin dans cette modernisation assez inattendue, chaque touche de l’instrument étant à un tel point imprégnée du romantisme proscrit que Rachmaninoff dut quelquefois céder devant la pieuse incrustation.³²

It seems that, contrary to the established image of a “belated romantic,” many Parisians perceived Rachmaninoff’s creative personality not as a phenomenon of romantic aesthetics or the refinements of *Art Nouveau* of the early 20th century, but as a phenomenon of hard modernism. An entry in Prokofiev’s diary from 2 December 1928 is quite consonant with all the reviews cited. While admitting that the concert had made a strong impression, he finds reasons for criticism:

In the evening, Rachmaninoff’s concert, the first in Paris in his entire life³³. Paris does not favour Rachmaninoff’s music, and Rachmaninoff has avoided it until now.

³¹ Imbert, M. M. (1936, March 9). Serge Rachmaninoff. *Le Journal de Debats*.

³² Doire, R. (1930, November 29). [Concert 22 November 1930, Salle Pleyel]. *Record*.

³³ Rachmaninoff performed in Paris for the first time in 1908 as part of Russian concerts organized by Sergei Diaghilev.

Today is a brilliant congress, crowds of dressed-up people. [...] It's a pity that Beethoven is not on the programme — this is the best that Rachmaninoff can do. He plays Bach well, but his Chopin is uneven: his technique is stunning, but his lyricism is mannered and hammer-like. When he plays his own music, it is bad: he destroys his poetry, which he forgot in his old age, replacing it with virtuosity. [...] He takes to the stage in a completely astonishing way: with a kind of awkward, unsteady gait, so much so that you don't believe he'll make it to the piano. But then the impression will be even greater when he starts playing. The audience roared with delight.³⁴

Boris de Schloezer responded to accusations of “violating traditions”: they say “that Rachmaninoff lyrical phrases are ‘not touching’.” Indeed, there is no sweetness in his playing, not a drop of sentimentality; it does not encourage dreaminess. But it takes over completely and conquers with its enormous spiritual tension, inexhaustible emotional wealth and diversity, a force that I would call elemental if there were not such a clear thought and power over itself behind it.³⁵

The “strangeness” and “dryness” of Rachmaninoff's interpretations were noted in those same years (the late 1920s and 1930s) not only by Parisian listeners. American journalists noticed a similar thing. We will cite just one, but very indicative review (for the concert on 27 March 1931):

His emotional detachment then is translated into terms of indifference, and one feels that Mr. Rachmaninoff has neither head nor heart for this task; nothing is expressed in his playing but weariness and lassitude of spirit. He is sufficiently the master of his instrument, sufficiently the musician always to play brilliantly, in a sense effectively; neither his technique nor his sense of values, of proportion, of style deserts him, but his pianism becomes spiritually, emotionally barren, conveys to us little or nothing of the meaning of the music, seem to us a mere repetition of interpretative formulae, devoid of conviction on Mr. Rachmaninoff's part.³⁶

³⁴ Prokofiev, S. S. (2002). *Diary. 1907–1933*. (Vol. 2). sprkfv, p. 653.

³⁵ Schlözer, B. (1928, December 2). Rachmaninoff's Concerto. *Latest News*.

³⁶ Review by Edward Cushing in the newspaper *The Brooklyn Eagle*, cit. ex: [7, p. 274].

Apparently, these assessments reflect not only the taste preferences of his contemporaries, but also a certain objective reality: Rachmaninoff's pianism carried new important qualities that, until now, perhaps, have not been fully aesthetically understood. An interesting attempt to do this was made by Vladimir Petrovich Chinaev. He asserts: "...Rachmaninoff's interpretations can still be perceived today as 'voluntaristic provocations,' and the ascetic image of Rachmaninoff the pianist somehow hardly fits the notorious performance characteristics of 'romanticism'" [8, p. 466]. According to Chinaev, "Rachmaninoff's existence in music is the expulsion of the sensual, the elimination of everything that can provoke the listener's empathy. Rachmaninoff takes us away from the pathos of passions — his world is hermetically sealed against the invasion of sentimental sincerity and fiery openness" [8, p. 470]. And yet, this is a direct response to Prokofiev's protest regarding transcriptions of popular music: "The artist-aesthete shows himself in the detached irony, as well as in the exaggerated — perhaps somewhat arrogant — swagger of the mastery with which Rachmaninoff performs salon trifles, in the way he knows how to present the cheapest clichés of old-world pianism" [8, p. 469]. "But behind such a stylised life," the researcher adds, "behind this 'system of happiness' there is another meaning hidden — the experience of life's existential abyss" [8, p. 474].

Similar characteristics are also quite applicable to the late compositional work of Rachmaninoff,³⁷ but this is too special a problem to delve into here.

Conclusion: Returning to the Case of Rachmaninoff

Let us return now to the question posed at the beginning: why did Rachmaninoff, whose performances in Paris attracted a huge and devoted audience, so rarely perform there, preferring other routes for his tours? It is possible that the reasons were purely external, related to the specifics of the work of the concert agents with whom he collaborated.

³⁷ This problem is touched upon in the article: [9].

Perhaps the specific nature of the Parisian émigré environment, which was largely made up of the same annoying visitors as in Russia, from whom he tried to escape during his sojourn in Dresden from 1906–1909, played a role. However, something else is more likely: Rachmaninoff was alienated by the atmosphere of quasi-musical or even extra-musical reasons for evaluating and perceiving his work, as reflected in the press reviews cited. While generously responding to all requests for help from his compatriots, Rachmaninoff nevertheless avoided excessively close creative contacts with “busy” Paris.

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Two *Frauen mit dem Dolche*: Operas by Mikhail Ostroglazov and Vladimir Rebikov Based on the Play by Arthur Schnitzler

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Abstract. The article is devoted to two opera works based on the drama by the Austrian playwright Arthur Schnitzler *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* (*The Lady with the Dagger*, 1901). The Russian composers of the two operas are Mikhail Andreevich Ostroglazov (1907) and Vladimir Ivanovich Rebikov (1910), respectively. The work introduces the opera by Ostroglazov into academic discourse for the first time, while Rebikov's opera is examined in more detail and within a broader context than in previous works. The scholarly interest arises not only from the obscurity of these works, but also from their style and the era of their creation.

A detailed musical analysis is preceded by a brief overview of the operatic legacies of both composers and an exploration of the main themes and character types from Schnitzler's play (such as creativity, dreams, and death). The article presents a scholarly examination of the musical dramaturgy, composition, and style of both pieces. In particular, it notes the composers' adherence to a concise, single-movement structure, through-composed development, impersonal character interpretation, predominance of dialogue, use of leitmotif technique, chamber-like and refined timbral solutions, diversity of vocal intonation types, and a chromatic pitch basis. The comparison concludes with the observation that Rebikov's opera is more artistically convincing through its more organic integration of new stylistic techniques. The conclusion also places these works in the historical context of the relationship between Russian opera at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries and symbolist trends in the wider culture. The presented operas by Ostroglazov and Rebikov are among the few surviving symbolist music dramas by Russian composers, which deserve particular and close attention from both scholars and practitioners due to the cultural significance of this transitional period.

Keywords: Mikhail Andreevich Ostroglazov, Vladimir Ivanovich Rebikov, Arthur Schnitzler, *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* (*The Lady with the Dagger*), Russian opera at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, symbolist drama

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*Музыкальный театр:
вопросы истории*

Научная статья

**Две «Женщины с кинжалом»: оперы
М. А. Остроглазова и В. И. Ребикова
на сюжет А. Шницлера**

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Аннотация. Статья посвящена двум оперным произведениям на сюжет драмы австрийского драматурга Артура Шницлера «Женщина с кинжалом» (*Die Frau mit dem Dolche*, 1901): Михаила Андреевича Остроглазова (1907) и Владимира Ивановича Ребикова (1910). Опера Остроглазова впервые вводится в научный оборот; опера Ребикова впервые рассматривается столь прицельно, и не сама по себе, а в контексте. Научный интерес связан не только с малоизвестностью этих произведений, но с их стилем и временем создания. Детальному музыкальному анализу предшествует небольшой обзор оперного наследия двух композиторов и разбор сюжетно-смысловых мотивов пьесы Шницлера (типы главных героев, темы — творчества, сна, смерти). Научному осмыслению подвергается музыкальная драматургия, композиция и стиль

обоих сочинений. В частности, констатируется приверженность авторов к сжатой одночастной структуре, сквозному развитию, надличностная трактовка образов, преобладание диалогической формы изложения, использование лейтмотивной техники, камерность и утонченность тембровых решений, разнообразие типов вокального интонирования, хроматическая звуковысотная основа. В итоге сравнения делается вывод о большей художественной убедительности оперы Ребикова, об органичности применения в ней новых стилистических приемов. Заключение статьи помещает рассмотренные в ней произведения в исторический контекст: взаимоотношений русского оперного театра рубежа XIX–XX веков с символистскими тенденциями. Автор приходит к выводу, что немногие дошедшие до нас символистские музыкальные драмы отечественных композиторов этого периода, включая оперы Остроглазова и Ребикова, заслуживают особого и пристального внимания как исследователей, так и музыкантов-практиков.

Ключевые слова: Михаил Андреевич Остроглазов, Владимир Иванович Ребиков, Артур Шницлер, «Женщина с кинжалом», русская опера рубежа XIX–XX веков, символистская драма

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Introduction

The present article discusses two operas having the same title *The Lady with the Dagger* (*Die Frau mit dem Dolche*) by Mikhail Andreevich Ostroglazov (1907) and Vladimir Ivanovich Rebikov (1910). The works have not previously attracted the attention of either researchers or performers.¹ With regard to Ostroglazov's unpublished work (the manuscripts of the vocal score, full score, and orchestral parts are held in the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art²), this lack of attention can be partly explained by the limited accessibility of the material; however, there is also a lack of interest in Rebikov's work, even though its vocal score was published by Jurgenson and the autograph manuscripts of the vocal score and full score are kept in the Russian National Museum of Music.³ The most likely reason for this is that both composers are considered to belong to the so-called "second tier," which leads to a stereotypical perception of their works as being of secondary importance; indeed, to some extent, this is true. Nevertheless, it is undoubtedly valuable to view these operas from a historical perspective since they represent unique examples within the operatic art of the Silver Age of engaging with the works of Arthur Schnitzler (1862–1931), a contemporary writer who can be seen as representative of Viennese Modernism. Furthermore, both operas have become rare examples of the embodiment of Symbolist tendencies in Russian opera at the beginning of the 20th century.

Before taking a detailed look at these works, let us briefly characterise the operatic work of their authors and its role in the musical process of the so-called Russian Silver Age.

¹ The author of the present article already had the opportunity to draw the attention of the musical community to Rebikov's opera *The Lady with the Dagger* as part of a study of the history of its creation [1] and the embodiment of Schnitzler's plots in Russian opera of the Art Nouveau era [2].

² RGALI [Russian State Archive of Literature and Art]. F. 952 (Jurgenson's notebook). Archival unit 541.

³ Rebikov, V. I. (n.d.). *The Lady with the Dagger* op. 41. Piano score. Autograph. RNMM (Russian National Museum of Music). F. 68. No. 860; Rebikov, V. I. (n.d.). *The Lady with the Dagger* op. 41. Orchestral score. Autograph and copy. RNMM. F. 68. No. 859.

*Operatic Heritage of Mikhail Ostroglazov
and Vladimir Rebikov*

The music of Mikhail Andreevich Ostroglazov (1873–1924), an amateur composer and officer, is now practically forgotten, with the exception of some choral works and songs.⁴ Nevertheless, Ostroglazov is the author of eight operas.⁵ Five of these were published by the P. Jurgenson company: the one-act *The Masque of the Red Death* (1896,⁶ text by K. Savvinov based on the story by Edgar Allan Poe); *Irresistible* (1908,⁷ based on the one-act play by Maurice Maeterlinck *L’Intruse*); *The Phantom* (1916,⁸ based on the text by E. I. O.); *Surgery* (1911,⁹ reprinted 1923, based on the story by Anton Chekhov); the three-act *Late* (1917,¹⁰ based on the composer’s own text). The manuscript of the piano score and the score of *The Lady with the Dagger* (1907) is also included in the so-called “music collection” of Pyotr Ivanovich Jurgenson, but for unknown reasons it was not published. (However, Boris Petrovich Jurgenson bought the rights to almost all of Ostroglazov’s works).

Musicologists have demonstrated little interest in Ostroglazov’s operas other than as part of a general overview of stylistic trends.¹¹

Conversely, the much more noticeable works of Vladimir Ivanovich Rebikov (1866–1920) in the musical life of Russia in the 1900s–1910s left a significant mark in musical history. Rebikov not only

⁴ The romances of Mikhail Ostroglazov are mentioned in the article: [3].

⁵ See the biographical article by A. A. Naumov in the *Orthodox Encyclopedia* [4]. The author states that Ostroglazov wrote, among other things, the opera *Sklirena* based on a plot from the 11th-century history of Byzantium as set out in the story by Alexey A. Smirnov.

⁶ The date is given according to the catalogue of the Russian National Library. Retrieved August, 20, 2025, from <https://nlr.ru/e-case3/sc2.php/note/lc/6178/28>

⁷ The date was established based on the announcement of the completion of the opera in the *Russkaya muzykal’naya gazeta* [*Russian Musical Newspaper*]. 1908. No. 20–21, 18–25 May. Column. 482.

⁸ Date according to the Russian National Library catalogue. Retrieved August, 20, 2025, from <https://nlr.ru/e-case3/sc2.php/note/lc/6178/44>

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¹⁰ Date according to the Russian National Library catalogue. Retrieved August, 20, 2025, from <https://nlr.ru/e-case3/sc2.php/note/lc/6178/42>

¹¹ In the monograph by Tatiana N. Levaya, *The Ghost* and *The Mask of the Red Death* are briefly mentioned as unsuccessful examples of the interpretation of symbolist plots [5, p. 37].

wrote a significant number (nine in total) of diverse works in the opera genre (although, as far as we can judge from the available data, only the first one — *The Christmas Tree* — and the last one — *A Nest of the Gentry* — were staged), but also became known as a theorist of musical and theatrical art. He widely explained his views and convictions in this area to develop his own theory of “musical psychography,” in which his positions in relation to words and music, the role and character of the vocal part and orchestra, etc., were set out.¹² While noting the contradictory nature of Rebikov’s work, most researchers acknowledge his innovative aspirations, sensitivity in the implementation of emotional nuances, and freshness of harmonic language.

Unfortunately, we know almost nothing about the circumstances of the composition of Ostroglazov’s opera. However, the history of the creation of Rebikov’s composition is reflected in sufficient detail in the composer’s correspondence with his friend and publisher Boris Petrovich Jurgenson.¹³ In particular, it is known that his work on the opera, which was carried out with great passion, was completed in less than two months; the clavier and vocal scores were completed in November–December 1910. The opera, which marked the beginning Rebikov’s late period of creativity, contributed to the emergence of a number of new musical and theatrical works, which the composer called “dramas of the spirit” (including *Alpha and Omega*, *Narcissus*, and *Arachne*).

As far as we know, neither opera has ever been staged. While there is unreliable information about a possible production of Ostroglazov’s work, it has not yet been confirmed. There were also plans to stage Rebikov’s opera at the Zimin Theatre, but these did not come to fruition.

¹² Rebikov’s main operatic views, as based on his articles in periodicals and autobiographical notes *From My Life*, are covered in detail in the monograph by Olga M. Tompakova [6], the textbook by Valentina A. Loginova [7], and also in the dissertation by Angelina A. Rybina [8].

¹³ Although Ostroglazov and Rebikov had a common publisher, Boris P. Jurgenson, the latter, as it appears from studying his correspondence with Boris Petrovich, learned of the existence of Ostroglazov’s opera only in the process of preparing for the publication of his own opera. For more information on the history of the opera’s publication, see [1].

Schnitzler's Play "Die Frau mit dem Dolche"

The one-act play entitled *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* (*The Lady with the Dagger*, 1901) is part of Arthur Schnitzler's cycle *Lebendige Stunden*. As a prominent representative of Viennese Art Nouveau, Schnitzler reflected in his work the main features of its poetics: attention to the subtlest nuances of the spiritual life of the characters, including the subconscious level of the psyche, i.e., sleep, as well as an appeal to existential questions, including the theme of death, and a special interest in themes related to the role of art and the artist.

The specifics of the drama plot were discussed in the previously published article: [1, p. 57]. Let us recall that it revolves around a painting by an unknown artist depicting a woman holding a dagger in her raised hand.

The story unfolds around this artifact: first in a modern gallery, then in a Renaissance art studio. In both cases, the same characters act as if transported in time: Pauline (Paola), her lover Leonhard (Lionardo), and husband (in the modern space, a certain playwright; in the past, the artist Remigio, the author of the painting). As the action progresses, it becomes clear that the impetus for the creation of the painting was Paola's murder of her lover [1, p. 57].

The characters portrayed in the play are quite remarkable for the Art Nouveau era. The female image personifies the elemental principle, while the male image — the playwright, the apprentice, the artist — represents the creative principle; they are artists in the broad sense of the word. The theme of creativity is central to the play, as well as to the entire cycle of which it is a part, which was entitled *Lebendige Stunden* (*Living Hours*).

In *Die Frau mit dem Dolche*, we are talking about the priority of art over life: it is the painting that becomes the root cause of life events that have occurred, both in the past and in the future. The artist Remigio, like his nameless double, Paulina's husband, a playwright, who is not present as a character, is completely absorbed in creativity; for him, the role played by his wife plays is that of a muse or source of inspiration. For Paulina/Paola, art is also a priority. The death of the lover Lionardo is a sacrifice made for the sake of the formation of the concept, representing the last detail that will allow the artist to bring the necessary emphasis to the work of art.

The ambivalence of time and place of action is important for understanding the play: it takes place simultaneously at a vernissage (private view) in the early 20th century and in a Renaissance art studio.

As in other works of the Art Nouveau era, especially those of Schnitzler himself, the theme of death becomes the main meaning-forming theme in *Die Frau mit dem Dolche*. It is precisely with death that the object in the title (the dagger) is connected; it is death that becomes a kind of key event, a “pointe,” which explains all the preceding events, as well as, possibly, predicting the subsequent ones (Paulina agrees to go on a date with Leonhard and, most likely, their date will end in murder) [2]. It is characteristic that death is associated with love experiences; many researchers (see, for example, [9; 10]) note the antinomy of Eros and Thanatos to have been a favourite topic in Viennese art at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries.

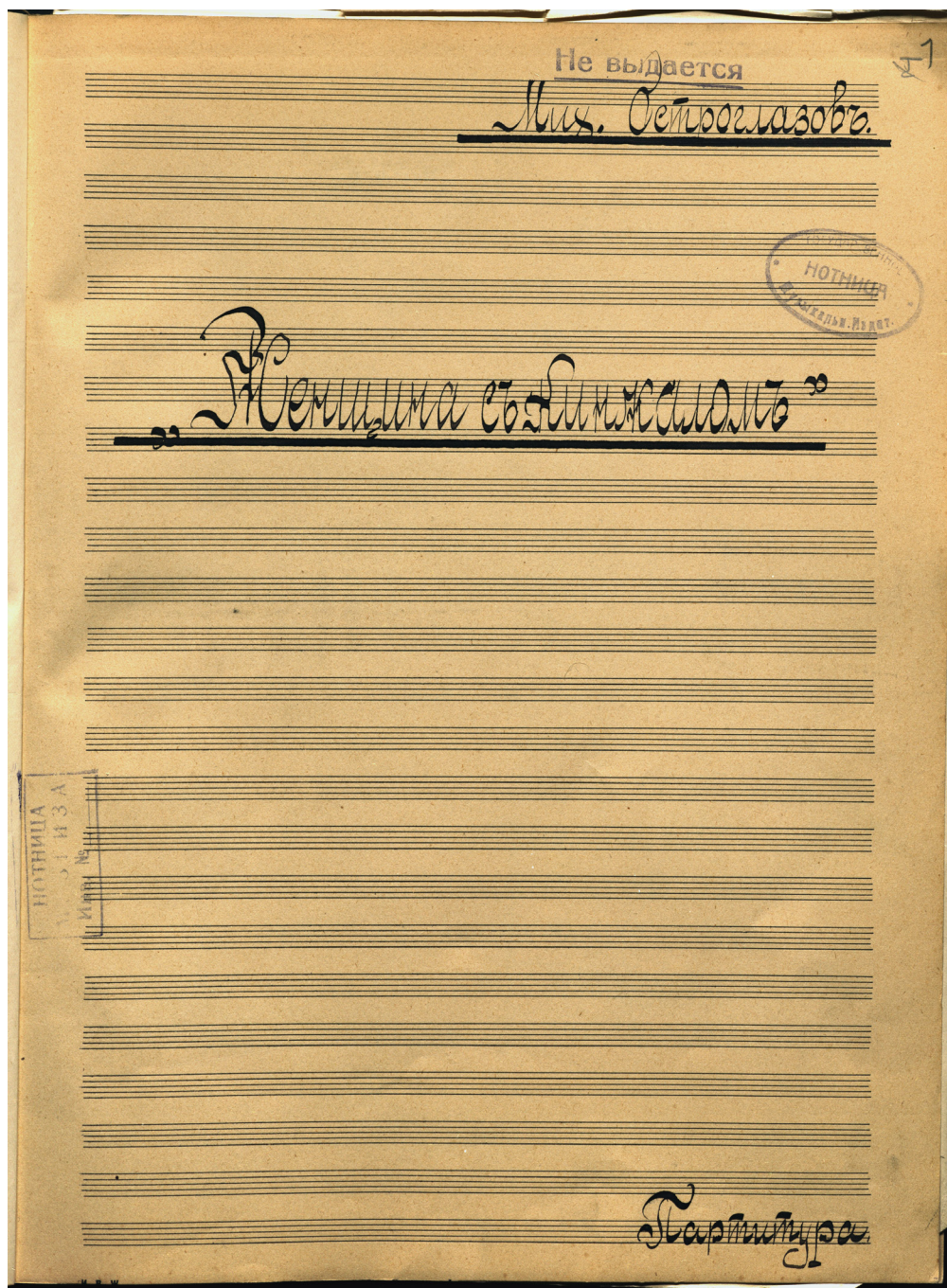
Operas by Ostroglazov and Rebikov:

Dramaturgy, Composition, Interpretation of Operatic Forms

The librettos for both operas, which were written by the composers themselves, were based on retellings of Russian translations published in the early 1900s.¹⁴

The drama required almost no cuts or rewrites. Schnitzler’s play, which is presented in one act, is very compact, having no side plots other than the love story. Both composers retain the three scenes present in Schnitzler’s work, which form an arch: the action is bookended by the two scenes in a modern art gallery, while the scene involving a Renaissance workshop is the centre. Thus, the composition displays clear features of a tripartite structure with a shortened reprise (the third scene is very concise). In Ostroglazov’s work, the form can be considered concentric due to the reverse order of presentation of the main thematic material in the third picture.

¹⁴ Published by *Zhizn'* [*Life*] (translated by Mikhail Svobodin, 1902) and *Pol'za* [*Benefit*] (series *Universal'naya biblioteka* [*Universal Library*], No. 95, translated by Augusta Gretman and E. Yu-ge, 1908).



Mikhail A. Ostroglazov. Opera *The Lady with the Dagger*.
Cover of the score. RGALI [Russian State Archive for Literature and Art].
F. 952. Op. 1. Ex. 541. L. 1.

Both operas are through-composed without caesuras.

The intimacy of the literary basis is reflected in the style. Neither of the operas feature choruses. The number of characters is very limited: these are the lovers Paulina and Leonhard and their 16th century “doubles” Paula and Lionardo (the roles are performed by the same actors: mezzo-soprano or soprano and tenor in Ostroglazov’s production, soprano and tenor in Rebikov’s production), and Paula’s husband Remigio (baritone). In his correspondence with Jurgenson, Rebikov particularly emphasised the “pragmatism” of the cast and consequent possibility of staging it even in a non-repertory theatre.

The images of the protagonists in Ostroglazov and Rebikov ostensibly appear to be over-individualised. However, in representing ideas of fate, passion, retribution, etc., they appear more like symbols than living characters. This seems similar to the central images of Debussy’s *Pelléas et Mélisande*: the same love triangle comprised of a woman and her men, one of whom is her husband, while the other is her lover (low and high voices, respectively). The conventionality of the characters is exacerbated by the “double frame” set by the plot: since Paulina/Paula, Leonhard/Lionardo are very similar in terms of their musical characteristics, they can be easily “rearranged” or even swapped. In both composers, the image of Remigio stands out especially in terms of timbre: in the thematics that characterise him, a large role is given to brass instruments, which also seems symbolic, referring to the semantics of this group in barocco opera. The premonition of a tragic ending in terms of a fatal predetermination of what is happening are characteristic of both Ostroglazov’s and Rebikov’s works. However, like in *Pelleas*, this predetermination is not the consequence of a consistent build-up of plot collisions and emotional escalation, as typically happens in verist and expressionist works.

In Rebikov’s version of *Die Frau mit dem Dolche*, it is the composer’s own ideas about musical-psychographic drama that are realised. In his opinion, which he repeatedly expressed both in his autobiography *Iz moej zhizni* [*From My Life*] and in various published articles, the main thing in such dramas is to convey the feelings of the characters and clearly instil the mood.¹⁵

¹⁵ Rebikov, V. I. [1912–20]. *Iz moej zhizni* [From My Life]. *RNMM* [Russian National Museum of Music]. Fond 68 (Rebikov). No. 78. L. 201; Rebikov, V. I. (1910). *Orfej i vakkhanki* [Orpheus and the Bacchantes]. *Russkaya muzykal'naya gazeta* [Russian Musical Newspaper], (1); Rebikov, V. I. (1913). *Muzykal'nye zapisi chuvstv* [Musical Recordings of Feelings]. *Rossijskaya muzykal'naya gazeta* [Russian Musical Newspaper], (48).

The main operatic form used in Rebikov's opera is the dialogue. The style of the vocal parts is declamatory, with virtually no arioso moments. There is little in the way of melodic character; rather, the principal mood is conveyed, and if the characters' feelings are similar, then the melodic lines are similar as well. In addition to singing, speaking voices are used. In general, the vocal part, as Rebikov asserted, should perform a purely informational task, conveying the text as such.

Of much greater importance for him is the orchestra, which carries the main emotional load. "The orchestra will first hypnotise the listener, instil certain feelings in him, and against the background of this feeling that has arisen in the listener's heart, it will be easy for him to believe in the truth of the words of the character," Rebikov believed.¹⁶ In addition, the orchestra performs a leading dramatic function, both carrying out the basic thematic material and developing it. In this sense, Rebikov is a follower of Wagner (which he himself readily admitted) and Debussy (which, on the contrary, he vehemently denied). Wagner's influence is evidenced by Rebikov's letters to his publisher: the composer requests the piano score of *Siegfried*, inquires as to the availability of a booklet setting out the main themes of the *Ring*, and draws the addressee's attention to the presence of leitmotifs in his new drama, even giving several musical examples.¹⁷ The opera uses themes of fate, Paulina's memories, Leonardo's love, and passion (for a description of them, see [8, pp. 118–121]), which are consistently carried out with certain changes throughout the entire score.

Leitmotifs are also of significant importance in Ostroglazov's work. They are heard already in the opera's introduction: the first, with a knocking rhythm in sixteenth notes, can be considered an embodiment of the image of impersonal fate; the second, featuring an expressive descending sixth, represents suffering. Next, the theme of love appears (in Leonhard's arioso "Why, dear, did you give me hope in my heart?" in the first scene), followed by a chordal motif that characterises Remigio (in the second scene). The leitmotifs, which serve not only a semantic but also a structural function, create several arches:

¹⁶ Rebikov, V. I. [1912–20]. *Iz moej zhizni* [From My Life]. *RNMM*. Fond 68 (Rebikov). No. 78. L. 202.

¹⁷ Rebikov, V. I. [1910, November, 29]. *Pis'mo k B. P. Yurgensonu* [Letter to B. P. Jurgenson]. *RNMM*. Fond 94 (Yurgenson) P. I., Yurgenson B. P. No. 1581. Dated according to the date of receipt according to the stamp of Jurgenson's company.

the material from the introduction forms the broadest circle, the theme of love serves as the second “tier,” while the theme of the orchestral interlude forms the third. The chords associated with Remigio are placed at the golden section point.

As in Rebikov’s version, it is the orchestra that carries out Ostroglazov’s main semantic and compositional functions. At the same time, the vocal parts of the latter are sustained in a more traditional arioso-declamatory style, with languid “Tristan-like” build-ups and fade-outs. As with Rebikov, the main operatic form is dialogue, sometimes including extended ariosos.

The orchestration in both operas is generally chamber-like, which corresponds to the general style of the works, but in Ostroglazov it is a little “weightier” (three trombones and a tuba versus two trombones and a tuba in Rebikov). Both composers use brass instruments primarily when Remigio appears, but in Ostroglazov brass also marks a number of other tense moments associated with Leonardo. Among the unusual timbres in Rebikov, we note the celesta, harp and piano, which emphasise the supratemporal layer, especially in the interludes that switch time and place of action; in Ostroglazov, in similar moments, three bells of different pitches sound against a quiet background of brass, which seems to be a more naturalistic display of the “clock strike” mentioned in the play. In Ostroglazov’s opera, percussion instruments are represented by timpani and cymbals, while in Rebikov’s opera, although they are limited to timpani, their use is very significant: one blow stands out in particular at the moment when Paula kills Leonardo. Both composers demonstrate a marked tendency towards timbral differentiation, making use of the established semantics of individual timbres while also following impressionist tendencies in orchestration.

Although the pitch organisation of the two operas appears outwardly similar, both being based on chromaticism, their essential approach differs. Ostroglazov employs chromatic tonality, at times incorporating elements of centric technique (such as the outlining of ninth chords in various keys with altered tones in interludes). In contrast, Rebikov’s opera, as is often the case in his works, is founded on chromatic modality based on various types of scales, among which the whole-tone scale is especially prominent.

In Rebikov, parallelisms of intervals and chords are also significant. The central element can be considered the tritone. Tonal features are present only to a limited extent; of particular significance is the moment in the interlude before the third scene of the opera, where a sustained organ pedal on F-sharp major creates an effect of tense anticipation for a tonal foundation.

Thus, in terms of the main parameters of musical dramaturgy, composition and style, the works of Ostroglazov and Rebikov are extremely close. At the same time, Rebikov's opera is distinguished by its greater stylistic originality, at least in the present author's opinion, and the sometimes too extravagant innovative musical solutions typical for this composer seem entirely justified by the dramatic situations they articulate. Ostroglazov's opera appears somewhat more trivial and secondary, notably in melody and harmony.

*Operas by Ostroglazov and Rebikov
in the Context of the Pursuits of the Era*

Having identified the dramatic and compositional features of the two *Ladies with a Dagger*, it seems appropriate to consider them at a higher historical and cultural level in the context of the implementation of Art Nouveau tendencies in the Russian opera theatre at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. Let us therefore focus our attention on symbolism as the leading movement of the 1890s–1900s.

As compared with the other Russian musical genres of the Silver Age, symbolist manifestations are generally less noticeable in opera. In the later works of the luminaries of the classical stage of Russian opera, Pyotr Ilyich Tchaikovsky (*The Queen of Spades*, *Iolanta*) and Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov (*Kashchey the Deathless*, *Kitezh*, *The Golden Cockerel*), symbolism interacts with traditional genre and stylistic features of psychological drama, fairy tale, and legend.¹⁸

It is noteworthy that the surge of interest in Maurice Maeterlinck, the most prominent representative of symbolism, is especially evident in Western European opera literature: Debussy's *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1902),

¹⁸ In this context, from the research of recent years, I would like to highlight the reflections of Vladimir V. Goryachikh on the opera *The Queen of Spades* [11]. For other examples of manifestations of Art Nouveau in the Russian opera theatre at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, see the monograph by Irina A. Skvortsova [12].

Monna Vanna by Émile Abry (1907) and Henri Février (1908), *La Mort de Tintagiles* by Jean Nouguès (1906), and *Ariane et Barbe-bleue* by Paul Dukas (1899–1906). Echoes of this enthusiasm can also be seen in the work of some Russian composers of the 1890s generation, though within the operatic genre such examples are rare: Ostroglazov's *The Irresistible* (after *L'Intruse*, 1907), Sergei Rachmaninoff's unfinished opera *Monna Vanna* (1906–1908), Alexander Gretchaninov's *Sister Beatrice* (1910), and Alexei Davydov's *Beatrice* (1910).¹⁹ With regard to Schnitzler, apart from the two versions of *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* by Ostroglazov and Rebikov, there was also Yuri Pomerantsev's opera *Beatrice's Veil* (1907). One should also mention Sergei Prokofiev's *Maddalena* (based on a play by Baron Lieven, itself influenced by Oscar Wilde, with two versions: 1911 and 1913).

The surprisingly small number of Russian composers' references to symbolist drama sharply contrasts with its effect on Russian drama: the Silver Age left remarkable examples in the works of Andrei Bely, Alexander Alexandrovich Blok, Dmitry Sergeyevich Merezhkovsky, Zinaida Nikolaevna Gippius, Innokenty Fedorovich Annensky, Konstantin Dmitrievich Balmont, and Vyacheslav Ivanovich Ivanov.

There are several possible explanations for this situation. The main one seems to be the inherent conservatism of the opera theatre: it is not for nothing that only a negligible amount of what was written was ever realised on stage. The habits of the domestic public were too closely tied to the traditions of Russian classical opera, with its "grand style" and realistic, social focus.

Thus, despite their possible artistic imperfections, the works of those commonly referred to as *figures minores* gain considerable significance for musicology due to their representation of distinct and incisive signs of the younger generation of Russian composers' quest for new directions. Therefore, the numerous common features of the two *Ladies with a Dagger* are indicative: they outline vectors, demonstrate clear directions.

¹⁹ For more details on the reception of Maeterlinck's work in Russia, see [13].

Both Ostroglazov and Rebikov reflect a keen sense of fresh trends in art. Their operas, including those discussed above, clearly display such important features of symbolism as mystery and unknowability. The characters are distinguished by the unpredictability of their actions and emotions. In the line of interaction between the protagonists and the other world, the emphasis is not so much on the confrontation between man and fate as on the contact and interaction of the two worlds. The resulting themes of metamorphosis and mutual transformation, including their refracted expression through motifs of reflection (both temporal and spatial) and duality are typically “modernist”; also popular in this discourse are the motifs of illusion and transience. The theme of destructive beauty becomes most important; here, we are not only talking about physical beauty, but also that created by man — that is, a work of art.

Most noticeable in these operas is the gravitation towards symbolist musical drama in its “Debussy” version — as a “drama of silence”. Such tendencies of the operatic art of the early 20th century as dramatic compression of the action, a tendency towards one-partness, and laconicism of expression are also characteristic.

Both Ostroglazov and Rebikov sharpen the already tense atmosphere of what is happening with their use of nervous, impulsive music. Both composers exercise a full palette of modern means of intonation, harmonic and timbre colours.

Conclusion

As we already know, the symbolist musical drama in Russia was not destined to receive a vivid implementation in future works of art. The other priorities that were established in their place are a subject for a separate discussion. Nevertheless, the two *Die Frau mit dem Dolche* operas considered in the article significantly complement our understanding of the Russian opera theatre of the early 20th century, as well as revealing potential avenues for its development. It is also hoped that attracting the attention of the musical community may establish of historical justice and gives these works the chance to see the limelight.

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EDN QRYVEG



**“The Black Box” of Musical Feeling:
Facts and Fiction**

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Abstract. Is it necessary and is it possible to look at musical emotion from the angle of both experimental psychology and musicology? Having in mind musicological theories and experimental data the author is making a description of psychological origin and actual contents of emotional response to music as well as emotivist and cognitivist approaches to it. There are two main sources for the discourse presented here: they are experimental psychology of music and theory of music perception by Vyacheslav Medushevsky. Main candidates for the status

of scientific facts are empathic nature of musical feeling as connected with imagined persona of musical narrative and communicational essence of music perception shaped by the most basic non-notational features of sound. This paper is the first out of two on the subject. The second one carrying the attempt of modeling a working pattern of music perception is planned for publication in the coming issues of the journal.

Keywords: musical communication, basic emotions, non-notational performative features of sound, empathic contents of musical emotion, emotivists and cognitivists, the imagined persona of piece and style

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≡ Музыкальная психология ≡

Научная статья

**«Черный ящик» музыкального переживания:
факты и фантазии**

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Аннотация. Фокусом внимания в статье выступает возможность и актуальность совместного рассмотрения музыкальной эмоции в рамках экспериментальной психологии и музыкознания. В ходе изложения на основании имеющихся музыковедческих теорий и экспериментальных данных трактуются вопросы психологического происхождения и содержания эмоционального отклика на музыку, а также эмотивистские и когнитивистские акценты существующих психологических концепций. Научным фундаментом изложенных в статье взглядов являются, с одной стороны, данные экспериментальной психологии и, с другой стороны, теория музыкального восприятия В. В. Медушевского. В качестве претендентов на статус

научных фактов предложены такие положения, как эмпатическая природа музыкального переживания, его психологическая связь с воображаемым интонационным «героем» — персонажем музыкального повествования, а также коммуникативная природа музыкального восприятия, опирающаяся на ненотируемые (исполнительские) свойства музыкального целого. Предлагаемая статья — первая из двух, связанных общей проблематикой. Вторая будет опубликована в следующих номерах журнала.

Ключевые слова: музыкальная коммуникация, базовые эмоции, ненотируемые (исполнительские) свойства звучания, эмпатическое содержание музыкальной эмоции, эмотивисты и когнитивисты, интонационный герой стиля

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Introduction: Musicology vs Psychology

Music perception research could be called “the servant of two masters” — experimental psychology and musicology. Both of them are looking at the process of decoding musical content with their own methods from their own bell tower. Musicology is supposed to be as old as music itself in contrast to experimental psychology being rather young: only in the end of the 20th century it started to thoroughly look at musical feeling that is the most interesting subject for any layman. This change of focus is mentioned by Mark Reybrouck and Tuomas Eerola:

Most of the efforts, up to now, have concentrated on perception and cognition, with the importance of octave equivalence and other simple pitch ratios, the categorization of discrete tone categories within the octave, the role of melodic contour, tonal hierarchies and principles of grouping and meter as possible candidate constraints. Music, however, is not merely a cognitive domain but calls forth experiential claims as well, with many connections with the psychobiology and neurophysiology of affection and emotions [1, p. 4].

Psychology of music although limited by laboratory conditions has started to consider the emotional reaction of its subjects on real music in contrast to its elements being the main research content some decades ago. It has to avoid too long parts of musical whole due to timing constraints but anyway the change is visible. In contrast to that musicology has a valid experience of considering music perception in broad cultural context as well as having in mind its complexity and subtlety. The object itself — music — is a common ground for psychology and musicology encouraging them to create a certain unity. Niels Hansen, psychologist of music, is expressing his regret on the lack of their integration, being upset by the fact that psychological discourse is not in demand by the education of musicologists and performing musicians [2, p. 598]. Federico Lauria, is supporting his views from philosophical standpoint:

In the last decades, neuroscientific and psychological studies on musical emotions exploded [6–10]. Musical emotion is now a hot topic in psychology and neuroscience. Alas, despite the rich literature in philosophy and the empirical sciences, little attention has been paid to integrating these approaches. Philosophers have failed to consider empirical findings in detail, whereas psychologists and neuroscientists have not addressed major philosophical issues raised by affective responses to music. This review aims to redress this imbalance and establish a mutual dialogue between philosophy and the empirical sciences around the topic of musical emotions [3, p. 3].

In our context philosopher can be treated as the representative of musicological community; historians, art critics, and other scholars including musicologists are using methods of humanities being alien to experimental research based on statistical evidence.

Joint efforts of psychology and musicology are even more desirable considering the mysterious character of their object. Psychology of music is interpreting not only music perception, but also different aspects of music performance, music education, and composition. But only the listener's reaction is fairly called "the black box": in contrast to other musical activities, music perception doesn't leave any signs in the form of sounds in the air or scores on paper. Music perception is mute and closed for external surveillance remaining inside one's soul and conscience. Therefore, it's not surprising that psychology and neuropsychology of music being well developed areas of science are seeking common ground with musicology: opening "the black box" is really one of the most difficult tasks for scholarly research.

It might be desirable to integrate psychological and musicological approach to musical emotion, but different methodology of both fields of research could be an obstacle. The strong side of psychology is its experimentally confirmed evidence. Psychology of music is indeed science in the most realistic sense of the word: every hypothesis is becoming an undeniable fact with the help of statistical analysis. If it's too early to treat a hypothesis as fact, any psychologist is surely open about it declaring the difference between actual truth and supposition that needs further exploration. The strong side of musicology is its holistic approach having in mind cultural and historical details of the score, its creation

and circulation in society. Musicology and psychology also differ from one another from their textual exterior. The interpretation of a piece of music could do without too many references to the works of colleagues or any other scholars, if the score itself, supporting historical documents and author's musical experience are in action and definitely present. Experiment is an exclusively rare guest within musicological discourse.

Is it possible to harness a horse and a quivering doe to one cart? Is scholarly synthesis is going to happen relying on evidence and realism of psychological fact and at the same time subtlety and holistic view of music as cultural phenomenon that is in possession of musicology? Whether such possibility exists is a question of further investigation, but it's clear that psycho-musicological integration is up to date, and such attempts are worth trying for psychologists and musicologists as well.

Note vs Sound

Experimental research of musical emotion puts three major questions:

- are there musical universals triggering the listener's emotional feedback regardless of her origin, upbringing, and experience in that particular culture where the piece of music belongs;
- if musical universals exist what qualities of sound are responsible for major influence on human psyche;
- is it possible to confirm sustainable correlation between emotions imprinted in music and emotions aroused in a listener, in other words, could our musical response be totally arbitrary.

Being the center of psychologists' concern, these questions were discussed in lots of papers, both theoretical and experimental. Reviewing the results of his colleagues' experiments as well as his own (his Ss were to make choices among various reactions on different songs), Antonio Alaminos Fernandez

tends to confirm his peers' opinions: "There is a statistically significant empirical relationship between the musical qualities of the songs and their psychological effect as recognized by the interviewees" [4, p. 20]. Nevertheless, the author's findings are to some extent limited by the choice of Subjects and musical examples because all listeners have been Portuguese nationals totally familiar with fado genre used in the experiment. So, the author's classification of emotions naturally includes not only the most basic joy and sadness, but also more subtle categories such as "dancing, relaxing, animated, nostalgic, romantic and tense." Due to the listeners' familiarity with fado style the author's evidence looks even more convincing: "In summary, this research provides evidence for the validation of the connection between music and emotions, using empirical data through a test-retest design. It validates the importance of the musical phenomenon in the production of emotions" [4, p. 39].

If to consider basic emotions called by psychologists as "happy, sad, frightful and furious," those are universally correctly recognized regardless of one's musical background. Mafa tribe members in Northern Cameroon were excellent in defining joy, sadness, and fear in extracts of West European music; listeners from Europe didn't find any difficulties in understanding sadness, anger or joy in Indian raga, while Japanese Ss were equally successful in retrieving basic emotions from their national music as well as from Indian raga [3, p. 7]. Psychological data positions as a fact reliable connection between basic emotions and listeners' ability to read them. And more important is another fact stating the independence of this ability from one's musical background and experience.

Having said that it becomes natural to rise a question about musical "carriers" of basic emotions. Russian musicologist Vyacheslav Medushevsky is sure to consider such sound parameters as timbre, tempo, register, dynamics, accentuation, etc. as most crucial signs of expressivity in music. He calls them "the intonational form of music" that is inclined to right hemispheric localization and belongs to performer's realm. Left hemispheric localization is connected to pitch-and-rhythmic area of holistic sound impression. Pitch and rhythm structures influence our ability to memorize and recognize musical elements and themes but not so much the ability to be emotionally involved while music listening [5; 6]. There is certain piece of evidence

supporting Medushevsky's opinion when different groups of Ss, musicians and non-musicians, children and adults, were pairing as emotionally similar Western classical, jazz, and folk examples relying on non-notational features of sound [7].

The decisive role of most basic, "rough," and simple sides of music as triggers of our musical emotion was confirmed by the experiment of Patrick Juslin [8]. He has offered his Ss to listen to one and the same melody played by one and the same musician. The difference between the examples had been expressed via rough sound features when sad meant soft and slow and angry meant loud and actively accentuated. Rhythmic and pitch structures were unattended and remained the same in all renditions. The listeners had to point to basic emotions they felt in the music which they successfully managed to do.

The leading role of performance for the recognition of emotion has been confirmed again in the 21st century. The group of Canadian neuropsychologists were playing musical excerpts in mechanical and expressive regimes. The first one was played in a computer-like manner while the second one was performed by an artist-musician. The result of the experiment runs as follows:

Expressiveness not only amplifies the intended emotion conveyed by music structure, but also makes music more engaging and more emotionally intense. Numerous anecdotal evidences suggest that music performance is the key to the expressive power of music [9, p. 653].

Isn't it possible to suppose that any music professional thinks of such findings as purely naïve? Aren't such ideas something like obvious for anyone having some musical experience? Probably yes, these are seemingly too clear from everyday point of view. But if one is on the side of scholarly discourse nothing is obvious unless it boasts experimental evidence. That was exactly the purpose of three Canadian psychologists who nevertheless were cautious to insist on the performer's tools as the carriers of musical expressivity; so, they've preferred to speak positively of such possibility but still remained on hypothetical ground. Another group of scientists turned to be more confident in the leading role of non-notational features of sound for the recognition of musical emotion. Referring to the colleague's research who

analyzed 130 publications on psychological experiments with music, the group of Swedish scholars including Patrick Juslin writes:

...percussive, fast tempo, highly rhythmic and loud dynamic music was found to evoke increases in heart rate and muscle tension and thus regarded as high-arousing music, whereas melodic, slow tempo, legato style and soft dynamic music was found to evoke decreases in heart rate and muscle tension, as well as increases in skin temperature and skin resistance (i.e., decreased skin conductance), and thus regarded as low arousing music [10, p. 63].

Research examples just mentioned refer to lots of analogous experiments and publications which as a whole give the possibility to treat with enough confidence the basic role of non-notational features of music, i.e., its performing parameters, in arousing our emotional response. This is a broadly recognized fact. But at the same time, it's necessary to make a statement that psychologically confirmed mechanism of emotional response to music had been predicted and theoretically validated much before it happened to become fact. The concept of intonational form of music mainly referring to non-notational side of sound had been pronounced by Vyacheslav Medushevsky in 1980. He wrote:

If a melody is played by different instruments, in different registers, with different dynamics, articulation and phrasing, it is drastically changed in its meaning, but still remains constructively recognizable (naturally, such experiment could be undertaken not only with melody, but with the whole piece). On the contrary, if we do something totally opposite — we change pitch and rhythm, leaving untouched, for example, warm and vibrant violins' timbre, singing phrasing, middle register and moderate tempo — we preserve mild image of lyrical idiom, although the melody as such, the actual piece will be different [5, p. 86].

In other words, in the very end of the 20th century and in the beginning of the 21st psychological research confirmed the ideas that had been predicted in the role of subjective opinion or fiction much earlier. Musicologists hypothesized that musical expressivity owes its emotional power not to musical text as such but mainly to its interpretation by the performer. If a lullaby is played with articulation and accentuation of a march, it is recognized as march although it carries all pitch-

and-rhythmic signs of a lullaby. Actual intonation with its expressive impulse is being shaped by the performer. Urtext looks like a potential for her that she is free to build at her will.

Looking back, it's possible to say that the duet of two scientific fields, psychology and musicology, already exists. Musicology is formulating viable hypotheses while psychology is testing them in search of evidence. In the course of this search psychologists must not know all the details of musicological views on music perception. One doesn't need to know them when the ideas are "floating in the air": psychologists' music education and personal experience give them full access to musicological concepts, and it's not necessary to be consciously aware of the fact. Being more or less "dissolved around" musicological discourse is latently participating in psychological experimenting, even though psychologists might not refer to musicology when finally putting their results on paper.

Now it's possible to be sure that shrewd musicologists are very often right while constructing the imagined model of music perception and emotion. Psychological research is putting firm ground under these "fantasies" turning fiction into fact. Well, the answer to the first question is ready: yes, there exist musical universals that are clear to everyone regardless of upbringing and experience. Such universals refer to the ability of understanding basic emotions in music which are mostly connected to the performer's realm expressed through the formation of the roughest, non-notational features of musical whole — timbre, tempo, dynamics, register, and articulation. Their influence is undeniable and their interpretation undoubtable; there exists sustainable dependence between emotion inside music and its recognition by a listener. When identifying emotions in music we are not wandering in a random world of personal feeling, but this world is determined by the sound perceived.

Soul vs Body

The new arising question refers to the mechanism of music emotion's occurrence. It's more than possible that someone listening to sad music grows sad as well. But maybe not? Someone could just recognize sadness in music telling a sad story,

but her soul could remain untouched or touched incidentally. Are musical emotions cognitively recognized or really, even bodily induced? That was the problem for experimental research. Psychologists got interested in the structure and character of musical emotion, in its origin and subjective disposition.

The starting point for psychological research had to be its deep connection with communication that could foster musical emotion's truthful description. Ethnomusicology opened the door for looking at communication in the first place because music making in very ancient times had been a practically important process of intra-tribal communication delivering some important message to everyone. That is exactly the role of music in the days of national celebrations and troubles, when its motivating and inspiring force is in great demand.

Considering communication as one of the most vital musical functions and possibly, the most vital signaling function, psychologist Ian Cross is writing:

...music as a communicative—prospectively, pragmatic—medium (most clearly manifested in instances of participatory music-making) implies that cognitive science and neuroscience might most fruitfully address music in the context of the exploration of the social mind and brain, and in counterpoint with explorations of other communicative channels, particularly language [11, p. 674].

In the book review released by Oxford University Press and devoted to emotion in music Dylan van der Schyff is also putting an emphasis on the process of communication as well as on its bodily expression where the reviewer strongly supports the opinion of his colleague Stephen Davies stating that musical emotion was born out of “...emotional ‘contagion’ or ‘infection,’ through physiological mimicking behavior in the listener. The approach is interesting in that it draws less on representational syntactic-linguistic aspects of musical communication and more on movement and body related characteristics” [12, p. 250].

The key word here is mimicking, copying, having its roots in Aristotle's mimesis being the clue to all arts, in this or that manner referring to reality. Psychological publications willingly use the words mimic or mimicking, when authors are describing the mechanism of music's emotional power. Involuntary bodily reaction on music stands first among the explanations:

...the listener perceives the emotion expressed in the music and then internally mimics the expression, which through afferent physiological feedback leads to induction of the same emotion [10, p. 75].

Federico Lauria suggests a detailed description of the process:

Primitive contagion is the tendency to automatically mimic and synchronize with other people's facial, vocal, and bodily expressions, which results in feeling the same emotion. This process is typically unintentional, uncontrollable, and unconscious. It involves mimicry and physiological feedback. The infected subject unconsciously mimics the facial, vocal, and bodily expressions of the infectious subject's emotion (e.g., one's muscles tense and one's voice trembles in synchrony with one's friend's anxious posture and prosody). Physiological feedback from mimicry then unconsciously induces an emotional feeling in the infected subject (one feels anxious as one feels one's muscles tense) [3, p. 19].

In other words, mimesis is the translator of musical emotion. Music arises unconscious copying of intonations and movements embedded in it by parallel movements and voice reactions of the listener. These automated bodily reactions are in turn producing corresponding emotions; the process could be compared with theatrical philosophy of Vsevolod Meyerhold, an outstanding Russian theatre director. According to his system bodily movement and gesture are the basics; they cause adequate emotional reactions mirroring bodily movements. Such understanding coincides with popular psychological approach that is confirmed in one of summarizing publications:

Further studies show that not only does the brain interpret music through the motor systems, but it also activates a mirror neuron system which subconsciously encourages the listener to mimic the movement observed [13, p. 5].

Mark Reybrouck and Tuomas Eerola are joining Amelia Richards:

The empirical background provides evidence from several findings such as infant-directed speech, referential emotive vocalizations and separation calls in lower mammals, the distinction between the acoustic and vehicle mode of sound perception, and the bodily and physiological reactions to the sounds. It is argued, finally, that early affective processing reflects the way emotions make our bodies feel, which in turn reflects on the emotions expressed and decoded [1, p. 1].

So to say, psychological source of musical emotion is placed into bodily mimicking, and this opinion could be declared as one of the most authoritative. But there exist some cautious voices among scholars. The group of Canadian specialists with Isabelle Peretz among them, who is one of the leading neuroscientists interested in music, is expressing doubts in the physiological origin of induced musical emotions:

When one considers the relationship between the physiological indexes of emotional reactions and subjective feelings, very few correlations were found [9, p. 649].

Objections like that are not unique. If psychological group relying on physiological origin of musical emotion could be called emotivists, the alternative group that doesn't fully agree with them could be called cognitivists. Continuing theatrical associations, it's possible to interpret the latter group of scholars as followers of the director Konstantin Stanislavsky. He considered soul or purely psychological reaction to be the main source of our emotion, while bodily response had to be the result of internal feeling but not its trigger. Even more, cognitivists don't consider physiological reaction to music as inevitable; they'd rather call it rare and exceptional. The group of German psychologists puts it as follows:

In this study, we investigated the capacity of music to generally induce emotions. The results presented here give further evidence for the cognitivist position, which views music as a stimulus that cannot induce, but rather can express emotions. The suggestion that musical patterns do not generally induce emotions may be contra-intuitive and must be interpreted in the context of the experimental setting [14, p. 787].

Emotivists' and cognitivists' discussion reminds of any opposition of materialistic vs idealistic origin. One party suspects real, ready to touch matter to be the core factor that causes our reaction whereas the other party is inclined towards virtual and imaginative realm. Musicology is usually out of such discussion; German cognitivists were absolutely right to rely on neuropsychological experiment as the road to the truth, and musicology doesn't have access to purely scientific instruments. Purpose and context of some psychological experiments also don't need to deeply step into emotivists vs cognitivists discussion because the origin and mechanism of the Ss' emotion is not so important as far as Kirnarskaya and Winner's experiment is concerned [7]. Its authors built their work on Vyacheslav Medushevsky's concept of "intonational form of music,"

i.e., of performer's means of influence onto the listener's reaction — non-notational rough aspects of sound such as timbre, tempo, register, dynamics, and articulation. The authors are experimenting with so called expressive ear for music concentrated on the emotional message of music as opposed to "classical" musical ear for pitch. In this context only the ability to differentiate between emotional codes of musical communication is really important, but not the origin of the Ss' emotional reaction, be it physiological or not. According to the authors' position the basis of our ability to catch the emotional message of music is relying on communication archetypes expressing the attitude of the speaking person towards the listening one [7; 15].

To finish basic emotions discourse it's possible to mention two approaches to interpreting musical emotion that could be either induced or observed. Facts are those that had been already named facts: the most basic universal emotions, accessible and recognizable by all listeners and musical equivalent of these emotions being mostly non-notational performer's means of expression.

There is one more fact to be considered in musical emotion's research, and that is its empathic nature. Practically all psychologists could agree to such statement, looking at mimicking as its psychological foundation. As the Russian poet Fyodor Tutchev used to say, "and sympathy is given to us, just as grace is given to us." Music making is communication after all, be it externally visible or internal, which means that mimicking is anyway present. Empathy could be Meyerhold-like based on bodily reactions and gestures or it could be Stanislavsky-like based on purely virtual images of our soul. In both cases we are communicating with "someone," our emotion is a footprint of connection with "someone" who is speaking to us. Vyacheslav Medushevsky included this "someone" into his theory of music perception with great confidence [6]. Thus, musicology suggests something like Ariadna's thread for future research, pointing at the most prospective developments within psychological "menu" that could shed light at the essence of music perception — the nature and core features of musical emotion.

Emotion vs Feeling

Some time ago psychologists-emotivists have built a pattern for musical equivalents to emotions where emotions were really induced by music together with their physiological signs. Musical triggers in the suggested pattern called BRECVEMA were paired with emotions they used to induce [16]. Later the more large-scale research was constructed where the Ss were relying on their introspection giving answers about their musical emotions. Eight questions put to them were the reflection of pattern that the group of Swedish scholars was going to demonstrate. Those were eight possibilities of emotionally reacting to music; the authors' explanation runs as follows:

...eight questions, each targeting one of the mechanisms in the BRECVEMA framework: 1) Did the music feature an event that startled you? (Brain stem reflex); 2) Did the music have a strong and captivating rhythm? (Rhythmic entrainment); 3) Did the music evoke memories of events from your life? (Episodic memory); 4) Did the music induce emotions through an association? (Evaluative conditioning); 5) Did the music evoke inner images that influenced your emotions? (Visual imagery); 6) Were you "touched" by the emotional expression of the music? (Contagion); 7) Was it difficult to guess how the music (e.g., the melody) would develop over time? (Musical expectancy); 8) Did you find the music aesthetically valuable? (Aesthetic judgment) Listeners were asked to rate each item on a scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (a lot) [17, p. 61].

Authors' explanation and description preceded the method and results of their experiment [17, p. 57] and those explanations seemed to be a bit controversial in some points. Looking at their classification it's possible to notice the intersection of categories, a kind of fusion of them, when one is a special case of the other. Thus, paragraphs 1 and 7 relate to expectations and their violations, where paragraph 1 is a special case of paragraph 7. Paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 are also very close to each other and relate to the associations caused by music. To be more specific: the authors' remarks refer to listeners' judgement as reflecting positive or negative circumstances accompanying the previous rendition of the music (evaluative conditioning), whereas episodic memory awakes remembrances under the popular title "this is our song, darling." In such case paragraph 3 and 4 are to a certain extent intervened or blurred,

and listeners can hardly distinguish them from one another. On the other hand, some small inconsistencies cannot overshadow a very positive purpose of this research aimed at making connections between sound and emotion in the real act of listening to the real music. This is nothing but a big achievement aimed at opening up “the black box” of music perception.

In the course of this experiment rhythmic entrainment turned to be confirmed as the most important instrument challenging the listener’s response. The authors have predicted exactly that result as bigger part of musical examples belonged to rhythmically charged pop-music. On the contrary, musical expectancies and their violations being a core factor for musical cognition [18; 19], as well as contagion causing mimicking and physiological reactions — both of these basic processes of human interaction with music turned to be the least mentioned by Ss in the role of emotional triggers [17, p. 72]. On one hand, this result could be the proof of the depth of these factors reflecting purely unconscious nature of music perception — it only accentuates “iceberg effect” when the listener can’t really say what exactly is the lead for her emotions. On the other hand, the listeners’ “forgetfulness” of expectations/violations and contagion being so vital for music perception could be the sign of too big approximation that is characteristic for BRECVEMA concept. For example, rhythmic entrainment that is so popular among the Ss, is really one of the factors included into contagion where rhythm is one of the basics. In some cases, the listeners could very well interpret contagion and rhythmic entrainment as one similar joint factor, but in other cases as two separate factors. Such confusion could dramatically bring down the role of contagion as the trigger of the Ss’ emotional reaction to music. It’s not surprising that the authors of this publication have in fact predicted contagion’s poor role among other influential factors.

Emotivist position that treats listeners’ emotion realistically as induced and physiologically visible is being criticized because emotion doesn’t fit into the description of human reaction to music if it is interpreted rather strictly as a psychological term. Emotion in its core meaning is not valid for true understanding of artistic perception. If we have a look at the classical idea of emotion it reveals such components as:

- (a) a subjective experience (e.g., seeing a dog that is perceived as “dangerous”);
- (b) a physiological reaction (e.g., fear, manifested by increased heart rate and general sympathetic activation);
- (c) overt expression of the physiological state

(raised eyebrows and wide-open eyes); (d) a behavioral response (a chosen strategy to cope with the situation, such as a decision to freeze or flee) [20, p. 10].

Aleksey Nikolsky having musicological background and being a working psychologist reminds of psychological parameters of emotion that can be understood as an obstacle against emotion's inclusion into human response to music. He argues that it's better to replace the term "emotion" by another one — "feeling." From the author's point of view feeling as opposed to emotion is neither obligatory nor automatic: it is free, showing arbitrary and non-algorithmic character in its connection with different sound parameters: in some cases, they cause and, in some cases, they don't cause one's emotional reaction — listener's personality and the environment have their word here [20, p. 9]. If we imagine some supposed structural pattern or model of music perception, the interconnections of all its levels and components could be possibly not too definite and admitting mobility. These connections could be interpreted as tendencies and vectors, directed from sound to person, to her cognitive and subconscious reactions in their entirety. Any hypothetical model of perception, if and when it could be constructed, would be neither strictly deterministic nor automatic, which remains a constitutive element for emotion in its classical meaning.

The group of German scientists, already mentioned, are inclined to cognitivism and strongly doubt the reality of emotions induced by music. Here is what they say:

Most of the affective events we found in the second-per-second condition were subjective feeling reactions without a significant physiological arousal or motor reaction. According to Scherer's component process model, these reactions cannot be considered to be real emotions. Nevertheless, most participants do react in some affective way, which can also be shown by the overall ratings. However, if this reaction is not an emotion, what could it be called? [14, p. 787].

In a way this cognitivist group is in the same section with Aleksey Nikolsky and their suggestion is to replace the term "emotion" by the term "being moved." The listeners feel the emotion, encoded in music, but indirectly, without automatic and physiological reaction to it.

In the course of musical emotion's investigation Greek psychologists happened to notice a strongly pronounced positive correlation between the Ss' ability to emotionally respond to music, on one hand, and their ability to recognize emotions in visual images of human faces and pictures, on the other hand. They argued that the effect they've found owes its origin to the unity of brain mechanisms that are in charge of both processes, aural and visual alike [21, p. 10]. Nevertheless, they were not too optimistic about the possibility of full understanding musical emotions' psychological essence because "at the present stage, the unresolved questions clearly outnumber the satisfying answers, as such providing an attractive young field for interdisciplinary research" [21, p. 25].

Cognitivists and emotivists both agree on the empathy being the core response within musical emotion. It has to be "co-feeling" in its psychological contents that is pushing forward another question: who is it or what is it that is the purpose of such empathy? Here the main focus moves towards communication through sound; some scholars openly stress the presence of the encoded "other" who is the imagined persona addressing us from inside the music [19; 6; 22; 20; 23; 24]. Here are some opinions supporting the argument:

In this view, contagion bears important similarities with emotions felt in response to fiction (like when we feel sad for Anna Karenina). Both involve the imagination of personae and empathetic feelings [3, p. 16].

Instead of actual persons and emotions, perhaps we should consider imagined ones. In the case of works generating fictional worlds, such as novels and films, we engage imaginatively with characters inhabiting those worlds. Maybe music's expressiveness connects to fictional or make-believe experiences of emotion [25, p. 24].

Many musicians would agree that the meaning of a work of music is to create a "virtual person" as a protagonist in some "virtual reality" designated by "virtual time" (evident in rhythm, meter, tempo, articulation, and form) in conjunction with "virtual space" — a subjective impression from musical movement (interaction of rhythm, meter, tempo and articulation with melody, harmony and texture)... [20, p. 5].

In other words, any communication act, whether musical or not, is something like confirmation of the main character's confession from Andrey Tarkovsky's film *Solaris*: "human needs [only] human." Any communication act without the difference between modalities is interiorized by a human being as a sign of someone's presence, as someone's address to be decoded considering its emotional essence. Vyacheslav Medushevsky has been among the first to suggest the notion of "intonational character of style" (or of a piece). His idea is dealing with an imagined persona whom he included into the theory of music perception. Medushevsky's motto has been repeated many times in his writings about music looking at us "from inside the persona" and translating her musical message for the listeners [6].

"Co-feeling" with the intonational character or, better to say, "affect attunement" towards the imagined persona [23, p. 212] is creating the context of music perception as aesthetic and artistic. According to classical theory of aesthetics its key feature is being disinterested. But in spite of that this emotion is empathic. It's possible to come to a conclusion that artistic and aesthetic emotion does not suppose or even excludes direct emotion in its basic meaning. It's possible to compare this feeling to childish make-believe: any child listening to fairy tale is simultaneously believing and not believing into the events presented to her. She interprets these events as something that could have happened but did not happen anyway. Here we come across the difference between actual truth and imagined credibility that human cognition is sure to differentiate. In arts and music everything is happening within make-believe response that practically excludes really induced emotions. Many actors mentioned in their memoirs that they probably were unable to repeat or to really feel their characters' emotions according to the script; in that case they could die on the spot that fortunately didn't happen. Although any actor in the role of Othello is to strangle Desdemona, we all know that the two of them are going to appear bowing to the audience before the curtain. Thus, the arts create parallel imagined world which makes real emotions totally irrelevant just because they are "too real," i.e., not at all disinterested.

If irrelevance of musical emotions as real emotions could be experimentally confirmed, does it mean that emotivists are in a way defeated? Is it possible to insist that physiological response to music expressed through chills and tears is either

great exception or big exaggeration? Mostly not, it's hardly possible to deny the emotions' induction in music perception. Professional musicians as well as music lovers have personal experiences of that sort, which makes the negative attitude towards induced emotions very doubtful. Authors of popular books interpreting scholarly research carry stories about instinctive singing along and moving along the perceived music [25; 26]. Even though music could be very far from the realm of melody, our voice chords demonstrate tension due to "singing" together with music. Muscles imitate dancing while listening to any music, even to the one that could be far from marching or waltzing thus demonstrating unconscious rhythmic entrainment.

As opposed to other arts where we are mostly witnesses, music turns us into "co-performers," since we are co-singing and co-dancing with it. Of course, such intimate reaction to sound is absolutely capable of inducing some physiological response; we are very deeply involved into music being its co-performers. This kind of increased activity of music perception dates back to its very ancient roots, when passive listening didn't exist — everyone sang and danced, everyone participated in music making. Isn't it partial explanation of enormous popularity of music at all times? In this context music is not sophisticated Bach-Mahler-Schoenberg, but accessible art for everyone that is inseparable from the audience's interest and involvement. Let's consider co-performing position of listeners as something like peace-making platform between emotivists and cognitivists: musical feelings are more imagined than real — they are reflections of our empathy towards "intonational character," towards the feelings of imagined persona, but our response can include physiological reactions induced by music.

As was mentioned, the concept of imagined persona or "intonational character" looks like attractive and convincing hypothesis waiting to be turned into fact; at the moment it is still fiction suggested by philosophers and musicologists. Future experiments might change the status of this idea. Nevertheless, it is possible to conclude with facts that constitute psychological responses to music; those remain facts regardless of arguments that inevitably accompany scholarly discourse.

- empathic, co-feeling contents of musical emotion;
- the leading role of non-notational performing parameters of sound (timbre, tempo, register, dynamics, articulation) creating musical emotion;

- listener's mimicking of musical emotion;
- imagined persona's inclusion in the process of music perception, interpreting such persona as the participant in communication leading musical narrative;
- physiological reactions, such as chill, tears, increased heart rate, change of skin temperature, etc. can occur while listening to the music being induced emotions in the role of bodily response to sound.

Musicological participation in scientific debate on musical emotion can be also considered as fact. Hypotheses often run ahead of facts, sometimes directing research or correcting it. All information treated as fact or being the first in becoming fact in the nearest future is inspired by or based on musicological discourse. It can be not so scientific, sometimes looking like pure fiction, but experimental psychology of music could hardly exist without it. At least we could suppose that metaphysical “fantasies” — philosophy and musicology — make “the black box” of music perception not so black.

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