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A

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH'S SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH SYMPHONIES: PROBLEMS OF CONTEXT, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

by

JOSEPH E. DARBY

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Music
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York

1999

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Abstract

DMITRI SHOSTAKOVICH'S
SECOND, THIRD, AND FOURTH SYMPHONIES:
PROBLEMS OF CONTEXT, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

by

JOSEPH E. DARBY

Advisor: Professor Stephen Blum

For many years, Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-75) was portrayed as a dedicated communist and loyal supporter of the Soviet regime, but this long-accepted view of the composer has been vigorously challenged since his death. In this dissertation I place Shostakovich's Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies in close contact with wider cultural, intellectual, and political trends taking place in Soviet Russia during the 1920s and 1930s. Interpretations of musical meaning for each piece ultimately point to broader questions concerning the composer's relationship to the Soviet state and his attitudes toward music and politics. By providing a more complete assessment of crucial problems related to the intersection of music and cultural politics in Shostakovich's early career, my study strengthens our understanding of his music and broadens our knowledge of his views toward artistic expression.

I bring attention to a number of documents by Shostakovich--speeches, essays, and letters--that demonstrate how he both actively dissented from and willingly cooperated with the Soviet music establishment during the late 1920s and early 1930s.

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Though partially sympathetic in the 1920s with ideals of social justice promised by the Revolution, he became increasingly dissatisfied with the Soviet regime and emerged as one of the most outspoken members of the Soviet musical intelligentsia in the 1930s. Forced to abandon open dissent altogether following his public censure by the Communist Party in 1936, Shostakovich sometimes used his music as a platform for his political and artistic defiance. The Fourth Symphony (1935-36), for example, is a work that deliberately repudiated the Party's demand for socialist realist music--a boldly defiant gesture in the face of widespread state-sponsored repression against the Soviet intelligentsia during the mid to late 1930s.

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Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Chapter One: "I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory": To October, a symphonic dedication

Introduction 17
May Day and the October Revolution: public celebrations in Soviet Russia, 1918-1926 19
The October Jubilee in Leningrad, 1927: the tenth anniversary of the Revolution 22
The symphonic dedication To October: from commission to premiere 25
Recently-published documents from the composer's hand: reports and letters, 1927-1929 28
Favorable previews: Shostakovich as political and musical revolutionary 32
A descriptive analysis of the four episodes 35
Two types of "ultrapolyphony " 45
The October theme and the theme of October 58
Thematic transformation 67
Conclusion 73

Chapter Two: "The 'May symphony' expresses the mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction"

Introduction 77
Soft and hard lines on culture in early Soviet Russia 80
RAPM, Shostakovich, and the cultural politics of modern music 86
The composition history of The First of May symphony 90
"Linking" procedures and the principle of continuous variation 94
Stepwise motion and the principle of continuous variation 107
The three-note, stepwise figure and the principle of continuous variation 120
Repeated-note figures and the principle of continuous variation 123
Rhythmic "gallops" and the principle of continuous variation 125
Conclusion 132

Chapter Three: "*Detskaya bolezn levizny*": Leftism, formalism, and constructivism as terms of critical discourse

Introduction 135
Shostakovich's Second and Third Symphonies:

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a brief reception history in Soviet Russia 139
Russian formalism and the problem of "formalism" in Russia 148
The political positions of the early Soviet avant-garde
"severance" versus "revisionist" theories 150
"Leftism," "left art," and the Soviet avant-garde of the 1920s 153
The formation of a constructivist program, 1919-1923 160
Constructivist principles in theater, photography, and film 164
Conclusion: Shostakovich's To October and the idea of constructivist music 168

Chapter Four: Shostakovich documents: essays, letters, and speeches, 1927-1933

Introduction 172
"Autobiography," 1927 175
Shostakovich's reports to the Leningrad Conservatory, 1928 and 1929 176
"Diseases of music criticism," April 1929 180
Political cover: Shostakovich's role in the campaign
against light music, January 1931 182
Fed up with the situation:
"Declaration of a composer's responsibilities," November 1931 189
Shostakovich speaks out: "Plenum of the Union of All-Russian
Comedy and Drama Workers," December 1931 194
Mask of loyalty?: an interview with The New York Times, 20 December 1931 199
Stalin's cultural *perestroika*: the Central Committee resolution of 23 April 1932 202
Shostakovich responds publicly to the "historic" resolution, May 1932 203
"Leningrad composers--a year after the Central Committee resolution," April 1933 .. 205
"Soviet criticism is lagging," March 1933 206
Conclusion: battle lines are drawn 208

Chapter Five: *Diskussia o simfonizme*:
Dmitri Shostakovich and the problem of Soviet symphonism

Introduction 211
A brief Shostakovich biography, 1932-1935 213
Boris Asafiev and the idea of symphonism 219
The case of comrade Popov's symphony 223
A summary of the Union of Soviet Composers' *diskussia o simfonizme*:
Moscow, 4-6 February 1935 226
Soviet symphonism as a term of discourse 232
Soviet *tematika* (themes) and ideological *soderzhatelnost* (content) 233
Concrete ideas and philosophically generalized images 235
Soviet song symphonism 238

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"Other" symphonisms: folkloristic symphonies and pure symphonies 241
Soviet composers and the problem of western symphonism 245
Formalism and epigonism 247
Conclusion: the "results" of the *diskussia o simfonizme* 250

Chapter Six: The Lady Macbeth affair (1936): prelude to Terror

Introduction 254
Life, Terror, and *Yezhovshchina* 260
On the significance of the Lady Macbeth affair 268
Meetings, resolutions, condemnation, support 279
Conclusion 288

Chapter Seven: "The credo of my musical work": Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, 1935-1936

Introduction 292
An answer to unjust criticism 296
An unheroic approach to the march 301
Variation and transformational procedures in the first movement 314
Variation and transformational procedures in the second movement 321
An unheroic finale 325
The story of the withdrawal 333
Conclusion: the return from non-existence 341

Conclusion 349

Appendix 1a: Aleksandr Bezymensky's "Oktyabryu" 364

Appendix 1b: Aleksandr Bezymensky's "To October" (trans. Joseph Darby) 365

Appendix 2a: Semyon Kirsanov's "Pervomaiskaya" 366

Appendix 2b: Semyon Kirsanov's "The First of May" (trans. Joseph Darby) 367

Appendix 3: "Anketa 'Proletarskovo muzykanta' o 'legkom zhanre'" (Survey of 'Proletarian musician' about the light-music genre), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 3 (1930): 25. 368

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Appendix 4: Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6. 369

Appendix 5a: "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 162-64. 371

Appendix 5b: "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 171-72. 374

Appendix 6: Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet music criticism is lagging), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 120-21. 375

Appendix 7a: "Vystuplenie tov. Shostakovicha" (Comrade Shostakovich's speech), in "Diskussia o sovetskom simfonizme" (Discussion about Soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33. 377

Appendix 7b: "Vystuplenie tov. Shostakovicha" (Comrade Shostakovich's speech), in "Diskussia o sovetskom simfonizme" (Discussion about Soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33. (Trans. Joseph Darby) 380

Appendix 8: *Diskussia o simfonizme* (Moscow, 4-6 February 1935): roster of speakers 385

Sources Consulted 388

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List of abbreviations

ASM	*Assotsiatsia Sovremennoi Muzyki* Association of contemporary music
Glavlit	*Glavnaya Literaturnaya Kommissia* Main literary commission
Glavrepertkom	*Glavnaya Repertuarnaya Kommissia* Main repertory commission
Komsomol	*Kommunisticheskii Soyuz Molodezhi* Communist youth league
LEF	*Levyi Front Iskusstv* Left front of art
Narkompros	*Narodnyi Komissariat po Proveshcheniyu* People's commissariat of public enlightenment
NEP	*Novaya Ekonomicheskaya Politika* New economic policy
NKVD	*Narodnyi Komissariat Vnutrennykh Del* People's commissariat of internal affairs
ORKiMD	*Obedinenie Revolyutsionnykh Kompozitorov i Muzykalnykh Deyatelei* Association of revolutionary composers and musical workers
Prokoll	*Proizvodstvennovo Kollektiva Studentov Nauchno-Kompozitorskovo Fakulteta* Working collective of students of the science-composition faculty
Proletkult	*Proletarskaya Kultura* Proletarian culture
RAPM (APM, VAPM)	*Rossiiskaya Assotsiatsia Proletarskikh Muzykantov* Russian association of proletarian musicians

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RAPP (VAPP)	*Rossiiskaya Assotsiatsia Proletarskikh Pisatelov* Russian association of proletarian writers
Sovnarkom	*Sovet Narodnykh Komissarov* Council of people's commissars
TRAM	*Teatr Rabochei Molodezhi* Theater of working youth

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A Note on Spelling

My system for transliterating Russian words and names is given on the following page. Though I do not follow a standard transliteration table (e.g., those of the Library of Congress, or the U.S. Board on Geographic Names), my system is an attempt to make the text as friendly as possible for the reader. I have made exceptions for proper nouns whose names are familiar to readers in other spellings. Other exceptions fall into the following categories:

1) all first names and patronymics ending with ий are transliterated simply *i*, not *ii*
(i.e., Dmitri, not Dmitrii)

2) all last names ending with ий are transliterated simply *y*, not *ii*
(i.e., Lunacharsky, not Lunacharskii; Gorky, not Gorkii; Trotsky, not Trotskii)

3) all names containing the cluster ье are transliterated *ie*, not *e*
(i.e., Asafiev, not Asafyev; Prokofiev, not Prokofyev)

4) all nouns ending with ия are transliterated simply *ia*, not *iya*
(i.e.., polifonia, not polifoniya; diskussia, not diskussiya)

5) adjectival suffixes that would ordinarily be spelled *-ogo* or *-ego* are transliterated as *-ovo* and *-evo*

The reader may note, too, that for the sake of consistency, I do not capitalize most "isms," or adjectives derived from these words (e.g., leftism, leftist, constructivism, constructivist, marxism, marxist, bolshevism, bolshevik, leninism, leninist, stalinism, stalinist, formalism, formalist).

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Transliteration table

Cyrillic	Roman	Cyrillic	Roman
Аа	a	Хх	kh
Бб	b	Цц	ts
Вв	v	Чч	ch
Гг	g	Шш	sh
Дд	d	Щщ	shch
Ее	e	Ъъ	(not trans.)
Ёё	e	Ыы	y
Жж	zh	Ьь	(not trans.)
Зз	z	Ээ	e
Ии	i	Юю	yu
Йй	i	Яя	ya
Кк	k		
Лл	l		
Мм	m		
Нн	n		
Оо	o		
Пп	p		
Рр	r		
Сс	s		
Тт	t		
Уу	u		
Фф	f		

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Introduction

With the dramatic changes in the former Soviet Union since 1980--the ascendancy of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring), the end of the Communist Party's exclusive hold on power, and the breakup of the Union itself--the field of Soviet studies has undergone profound changes. New ideas have surfaced, new sources have been uncovered, and previously known sources are coming under reinterpretation in the light of new testimonies. Though music scholars have been working to clarify the historical position of Dmitri Shostakovich (1906-1975), Soviet Russia's greatest composer, the field of Shostakovich studies continues to be rife with contradictory and highly politicized perspectives. A number of issues continue to divide scholars, including the complex relationship between Shostakovich and the communist regime, the degree to which he dissented from or collaborated with Soviet political authority, the extent to which his music expressed politically dissident ideas, and the authenticity of Testimony: the Memoirs of Dmitri Shostakovich edited by Solomon Volkov. With this Introduction, I wish to familiarize the reader with the scope of my dissertation, draw attention to what I hope to accomplish with this project, summarize the contents of each chapter (drawing attention to original contributions I have made to the field of Shostakovich studies), comment briefly on recent controversies in Shostakovich scholarship, and place my work in the context of current Shostakovich research.

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Responding to a need for better documentation and a well-informed hermeneutic in the field of Shostakovich studies, I am offering new perspectives on three of his lesser-known symphonies: the "symphonic dedication" To October, op. 14 (Second Symphony, 1927), The First of May symphony, op. 20 (Third Symphony, 1929), and the Fourth Symphony, op. 43 (1935-36). The perspectives I am offering involve analysis of the music, a close reading of relevant articles from Russian music periodicals (both Soviet and post-Soviet), and recent studies by other scholars. By providing a more complete assessment of crucial problems related to the intersection of music and cultural politics in Shostakovich's career, my study will strengthen our understanding of his music, broaden our knowledge of his attitudes on music, and illuminate issues related to the discourse, attitudes, and motivations of Russian composers of the Soviet period.

My research also brings the composition and reception histories of the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies in close contact with wider cultural, intellectual, and political trends--no small task because the interpretation of documents related to Soviet culture, as many know, presents special challenges for the historian because of the unreliability of many sources. Certainly all historians must deal with the tricky problem of unreliable sources, but the situation is exacerbated in the field of Soviet studies because of the severity of political repression under the Soviet regime and the fact that Soviet citizens, especially those in the public eye, were compelled to limit their public points of view within the narrow confines of marxist-leninist ideology. These facts pose a most vexing problem: how does a historian go about assessing the value of evidence that, in one way or another, is a product of a coercive political environment? In this

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dissertation I have approached this problem by examining the public discourse among artists and placing that language within the context of broader social and political discourses within Soviet society--keeping in mind, of course, that the Communist Party and Soviet state strictly controlled the formulation, development, and meaning of public discourses. In this way I demonstrate ways in which Dmitri Shostakovich's music and public discourse both dissented from and cooperated with Soviet cultural policies during the 1920s and 1930s.

Though Shostakovich's First and Fifth symphonies brought him international acclaim and remain fixtures of the repertory of symphony orchestras to this day, no such immediate and enduring success awaited his Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies (though the Fourth has been increasingly performed and discussed since the composer's death). The Second and Third symphonies are single-movement, episodic works that end with a choral finale on an ideological theme (texts by Alexander Bezymensky and Semyon Kirsanov, respectively). Many scholars and musicians in the West dismiss these two symphonies as propaganda--and there is no denying their agitational function--but few have noticed that these works were used by Shostakovich's critics as a political weapon *against* him, largely because of the modern compositional techniques exhibited by both works. Many Russian writers on music, including the composer himself, criticized these two symphonies during periods of heightened repression for their alleged connection to "leftism," "formalism," and "constructivism"--terms of abuse in the Soviet lexicon. We see these terms used in the Soviet-era reception of these symphonies, and for that reason I examine the origins, meaning, and uses of these terms in Chapter Three.

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Upon closer examination of documents of the period, I find that the critical reaction to the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies in Soviet Russia was far more complex than generally assumed. The overall initial reception of the Second and Third, for example, appears to have been positive--but Stalin-era histories of music denigrate the works. The negative critical reception of these symphonies stems largely from ideological pressures placed on musicians and music critics--pressure that squelched open and free discussion of modernist practices of the 1920s. To this day, the Second and Third symphonies (the more common designation for these works) remain outcasts within Shostakovich's symphonic output--for both political and musical reasons. As a result, the number of studies and performances of the Second and Third lags far behind those of his more successful symphonies (the First, Fifth, Seventh, and Tenth, among others).

Unlike the Second and Third symphonies, which contained ideological content sympathetic to communism, the three-movement, purely instrumental Fourth Symphony did not satisfy the ideological rigors of party ideology. The Fourth conflicted sharply with the stalinist cultural order imposed on Soviet artists during the 1930s. From 1936 until 1939, millions of citizens--including the composer, his friends, family, and colleagues--suffered repression of some kind: personal harassment, public humiliation, political show trials, purges, charges of conspiracies and treason, illegal arrest, imprisonment, execution, murder, torture, assassination, forced labor, forced confessions, informing, fear of enemies, political witchhunts, and xenophobia. In early 1936, as part of the Party's renewed program of widespread harassment of artists and free-thinking

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intellectuals, Pravda published scathing reviews of Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk and ballet Bright Stream. In response, the Union of Soviet Composers conducted a series of meetings at which he was publicly vilified. A campaign of organized slander against the disgraced composer ensued in the press; public support came only from a few colleagues.

Despite Pravda's warning that all would end badly if he did not reform his ways, Shostakovich pressed ahead with a complex style for his Fourth Symphony, one that recalled the complex idiom of Lady Macbeth. But the symphony was seen by many in the arts community to be a direct challenge to his critics--rumors abounded concerning the work's content, disgruntled musicians found it nearly impossible to play, and rehearsals were plagued by problems. Fearing another scandal, officials pressured Shostakovich and State Academic Philharmonic Orchestra (Leningrad Philharmonic) to cancel the premiere, originally scheduled for 11 December 1936. The aborted premiere of the Fourth marks one of the most dangerous episodes in Shostakovich's life. As political cover, he "admitted" that the work needed to be revised and that he alone was responsible for its withdrawal. He publicly distanced himself from the symphony, but took great pride when it received its first performance in December 1961. In my analysis of the music in Chapter Seven, I show specifically *how* the Fourth Symphony conflicts with socialist realism and avoids principles of Soviet symphonism advocated by the party-directed Union of Soviet Composers.

Prior to 1936 Shostakovich's public statements on music, politics, and the creative process reveal his staunch opposition to the Party's encroachment on artistic freedom.

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But after the Lady Macbeth affair in 1936, political violence and the threat of political violence sharply reduced his ability to speak out in favor of creative autonomy for Soviet artists. After 1936, many of the public statements on music and politics attributed to him must be read with great caution, because evidence suggests that either he did not write them or he was forced to include statements he did not believe. Based on my research into his music and literary legacy from the ten-year span covering the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies (1927-1936), I have made the following conclusions about the composer, which are necessary to insert here because they frame my study as a whole and help the reader to understand my perspective on his life and work: 1) in the mid 1920s Shostakovich was a dedicated modernist and was partially sympathetic with the ideals of social justice promised by the Revolution; 2) by 1930, during the heightened repression of the First Five-Year Plan, he was compelled to moderate the level of modernism and to write music that directly expressed Soviet themes; 3) he was a staunch advocate of creative autonomy for Soviet artists and strongly opposed state control of artistic expression--censorship was a major issue in his growing dissatisfaction with the Soviet regime during the late 1920s and 1930s; 4) because he was a leading member of the musical intelligentsia, wrote complex music, and held outspoken positions, Shostakovich was forced to seek political cover on a number of occasions, especially during periods of greatest political repression; and 5) following his public censure and the campaign of slander against him in 1936, he abandoned open dissent altogether and again modified his compositional style--the "mask of loyalty" became a permanent fixture.

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The accomplishments of my dissertation fall into five main categories, which I detail in the next few pages: 1) In Chapters One and Two, I provide a detailed examination of compositional processes in the Second and Third symphonies--perhaps the most detailed examination by an English-language scholar; 2) In Chapters One, Two, and Seven, respectively, I provide new interpretations of the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies based on my own analyses of the music and recently published documents concerning the composer's motivations for writing the pieces; 3) In Chapter Three, I illuminate issues of public discourse about music in Soviet Russia, focusing on the critical reception of the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies; 4) using documents of the period in each chapter, including many by the composer which appear in English translation for the first time, I discuss Shostakovich's position within the culture debates of the early Stalin period--a subject that will continue to arouse controversies among scholars; and 5) by analyzing debates among Soviet composers and critics about Soviet symphonism in Chapter Five, surveying the Lady Macbeth affair and the broader antiformalism debates of 1936 in Chapter Six, and analyzing Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony in Chapter Seven, I demonstrate conclusively how, why, and in what ways the Fourth Symphony is a deliberate repudiation of the Communist Party's policies on artistic expression.

In Chapter One I examine historical and compositional issues related to Shostakovich's symphonic dedication To October (Second Symphony, 1927). Commissioned by the Propaganda Division of the State Publishing House (Agitodel) to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, To October is a single-

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movement symphonic cantata combining complex orchestral polyphony with a bombastic closing chorus on a poem by Aleksandr Bezymensky (he seems to have been motivated by material gain than by ideological principle in accepting the commission). Following an examination of the composition and early reception histories of To October, I provide an analysis of the music, touching on form and process, political content and musical substance, and the relationship between music and text. Despite the low quality of the text and the relatively low quality of the music in comparison to Shostakovich's other symphonies, numerous documents demonstrate the importance of To October in establishing his reputation as a professional composer, including letters he wrote (1927),[1] annual reports by the composer to the Leningrad Conservatory (1927-29),[2] articles in the music press about him and his work (1927),[3] and reviews of the premieres in Leningrad and Moscow (1927-28).[4]

---

[1] L.V. Shulgin, Statii, vospominania (Articles, reminiscences) (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1977), 59-61, quoted in editor's note to Dmitri Shostakovich, Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1 (Moscow: Muzyka: 1987). See also Dmitri Shostakovich, About Himself and His Times, ed. Lev G. Grigoryev and Yakov M. Platek, trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow: Progress Press, 1981), 13-14.

[2] Manashir Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi" (I attempted to depict the joy of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1986): 52-57.

[3] Representative examples include M. Grinberg, "Dmitri Shostakovich," Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 11 (1927): 15-20; V., "Simfonicheskoe posvyashchenie 'Oktyabryu'" (Symphonic dedication "To October"), Sovremennaya muzyka, no. 24 (1927): 32-35; and Yuri Vainkop, "Simfonicheskii novinki Oktyabryu" (New symphonic works for October), Zhizn iskusstva, no. 45 (1927): 8-9.

[4] A number of music journals reviewed the premieres of To October in Leningrad (5 and 6 November 1927) and Moscow (4 December 1927): Muzyka i byt, Muzyka i Oktyabr, Muzyka i revolyutsia, Muzykalnoye obrazovanie, Novii zritel, Persimfans, Rabochii i teatr, Sovremennaya muzyka, and Zhizn iskusstva.

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In Chapter Two I examine historical and compositional issues related to The First of May symphony (Third Symphony, 1929). Written as a graduation piece in fulfillment of his *aspirant* (postgraduate) degree from the Leningrad Conservatory, The First of May offers a kaleidoscope of numerous orchestral episodes followed by a choral finale on an ideological theme (text by Semyon Kirsanov). After a discussion of Stalin's consolidation of power and its immediate impact on intellectual and creative life during the "proletarian episode" in the arts (1928-32), this chapter turns to the composition history and early reception of The First of May. Though his music of this period was marked by a presence of Soviet themes, Shostakovich was often targeted for abuse in the press and his works were removed from the repertory. In the chapter I conclude that he wrote The First of May as an act of political cover, deflecting criticism of his music in the press . The second half of the chapter provides an analysis of the music, including an overview of form and a detailed examination of "continuous variation," a musical-dialectical principle of composition in which each episode synthesizes old and new material, thus creating an ever-evolving web of themes.

In Chapter Three I survey Soviet Russian artistic discourses and practices of the 1920s and trace the use of leftism, formalism, and constructivism as terms of abuse in the Soviet lexicon. Specifically, I analyze leftism, formalism, and constructivism as terms of critical discourse during the Soviet period, noting how and why the origins and meanings of these terms were distorted during the Stalin years, and why these terms were used to abuse the Soviet intelligentsia. This chapter touches on issues such as the complex relationship between Soviet communism and avant-garde artists of the 1920s, the

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Communist Party's shifting policies toward cultural production, the language of the Soviet state, and the fate of modernism under Soviet rule. My discussion of leftism, formalism, and constructivism further illuminates issues I raise in remaining chapters, including Shostakovich's position in the culture debates of the 1920s and 1930s, the reception of Shostakovich's music, and the broader ideological abuse of Soviet artists under Stalin's rule. As a conclusion, I discuss constructivist traits in Shostakovich's symphonic dedication To October, noting in particular its agitational-utilitarian function, use of montage-like episodes, and application of "systematic ultrapolyphony."

In Chapter Four I present previously published but often overlooked speeches, essays, and letters by Shostakovich during the period 1927-1933. This chapter marks an original contribution to the field of Shostakovich studies because research into early Soviet music periodicals establishes a clearer picture of Shostakovich's positions on music, politics, and the creative process. The materials I survey in this chapter attest to ways in which Shostakovich both entered into conflict and cooperated with the music establishment during the proletarian episode in music (1928-32) and the period of stalinist *perestroika* (1932-35). For that reason, I wish to familiarize the reader to these documents in some detail here.

During the proletarian episode, Shostakovich repeatedly expressed his frustration over the deplorable state of music criticism and contemporary composition in Soviet Russia, the upswing in bureaucratic interference, the lack of creative autonomy for composers, and the overall decline in musicians' morale. His outspokenness is first revealed in reports he submitted to the Leningrad Conservatory (1927-29) and in a letter

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he sent to the editors of the theater journal Rabochii i teatr.[5] By 1931 Shostakovich's frankness in the press and his ideologically-stained music forced him to seek a degree of political cover, which he satisfied by lending his name to a campaign to liquidate popular, "light music."[6]

The radical policies of the proletarian episode created great disunity among artists and critics; by the middle of 1931 a new reform movement started taking shape, with Shostakovich emerging as a key figure. His essay "Declaration of a Composer's Responsibilities" (20 November 1931) proves to be a scathing attack on the state of Soviet musical life, especially the limited opportunities for composers in the field of *prikladnovo muzyka* ("applied" or incidental music)--the only arena where accomplished composers could find work at the time.[7] A month after his declaration was published, Shostakovich again lashed out against his opponents in a speech delivered to a gathering of theater workers, venting his frustration at the repressive creative environment. In December 1931, however, he was forced to don a mask of loyalty for an interview with The New York Times, in which he tucked away his frustrations, spoke in glowing terms of Soviet achievements in music, quoted Lenin's theories on culture, and rejected the

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[5] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia" (Autobiography of 1927), rpt. in Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1966): 24-25; Manashir Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya," 52-57; Dmitri Shostakovich, "Bolezni muzykalnoi kritiki" (Diseases of music criticism), Rabochii i teatr, no. 14 (1929): 4.

[6] "Proletarskovoi muzykanta o 'legkom zhanre'" (Proletarian musicians on the "light genre"), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 3 (1930): 22-26. For Shostakovich's remarks, see p. 25.

[7] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitora" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6.

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modern techniques of his most recent work.[8]

In April 1932 the Central Committee of the Communist Party liquidated all artistic organizations (i.e., banned their existence), thus ending the proletarian episode and setting into motion another restructuring of Soviet cultural life. Though the April 1932 Central Committee resolution freed composers from the extreme demagoguery of the recent past, its action in reality solidified the Party's direct control over the field of music. In May 1932 Shostakovich wrote a brief article in which he obligingly thanked the Central Committee for its action, joined the call for the creation a Union of Soviet Composers, and continued his campaign for greater creative freedom.[9] The following year, he sounded a conciliatory note, asking the musical community not to seek further retribution against former members of the former proletarian music establishment.[10]

Though few composers and critics dared to test the limits of Stalin's cultural restructuring, Shostakovich openly challenged the new policies by criticizing new ideological demands placed on artists, resuming his public feud with music critics, continuing his advocacy of creative individuality, and calling for greater contact with

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[8] Rose Lee, "Dmitri Szostakovich: Young Russian Composer tells of Linking Politics with Creative Work," New York Times, 20 December 1931, sec. 8, p. 8.

[9] Dmitri Shostakovich et al., "Polnotsennymi proizvedeniami: otvechaem na postanovlenie TsK" (Valuable works: responses to the Central Committee resolution), Rabochii i teatr, no. 16 (1932): 5-6.

[10] "Leningradskie kompozitory v godovshchinu postanovlenia TsK." (Statements of Leningrad composers on the first anniversary of the Central Committee resolution), Rabochii i teatr, no. 11 (1933): 10-11.

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western European music.[11] With his statements to the press and his speeches at various events from 1933 to 1936, Shostakovich quickly emerged as one of the most outspoken members of the Union of Soviet Composers. This trend can be seen in his speech at a *diskussia o simfonizme* in Moscow (discussion on symphonism, 4-6 February 1935) sponsored by the musicology section of the Union of Soviet Composers.[12] I examine materials related to this conference in Chapter Five.

Though many critics and composers sided with the party line on Soviet symphonism at the *diskussia* (Soviet or nationalistic themes, program music, clear and accessible style), Shostakovich led a group of dissenting composers who decried the overemphasis on politically-inspired program music and called for greater creative freedom for composers in the field of symphonic music.[13] With his controversial speech, he continued his outspoken ways of past years by 1) directly challenging the positions of several influential members of the Union of Soviet Composers, 2) displaying a deep distrust of politically-charged slogans, 3) openly questioning the alleged successes of Soviet composers in the area of symphonic composition, and 4) praising the works of contemporary western composers. His outspokenness at this conference and in other public statements during the *perestroika* was certainly a contributing factor to his official

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[11] See, for example, Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet criticism is lagging), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 120-121.

[12] Materials connected with the *diskussia o simfonizme* were published in Sovetskaya muzyka, nos. 4-6 (1935).

[13] "Vystupleniye tov. Shostakovicha" (Speech of comrade Shostakovich), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33.

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censure in 1936 by the Communist Party--a fact largely overlooked by previous scholars.

In Chapter Six I examine historical issues related to the public rebuke by party officials in 1936 of Shostakovich's music and the ensuing campaign of organized slander waged against him during the early stages of the Great Terror (1936-38). Chapter Six is a necessary prelude to Chapter Seven, where I examine historical and musical issues related to the composition, withdrawal, and reception of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony. Despite dangerous and repressive conditions in 1936, he wrote a remarkably complex symphony that answered his critics and challenged the Party's position on socialist realism. The Fourth Symphony stands as a remarkable testament to Shostakovich's creative confidence--and his political over-confidence.

In my analysis of the Fourth I identify a number of ways in which Shostakovich disobeyed the Party's demand for socialist realist music, including his use of complex variation and transformational procedures (instead of simple melodies demanded by authorities), unheroic march themes (instead of heroic marches), "bourgeois" dance themes (instead of nationalistic, folk-like dance tunes), and the absence of an optimistic, heroic ending. Allusions to Gustav Mahler's music, especially in the unheroic finale, are crucial in the interpretation of this anti-socialist realist symphony. My discussion also points out many inconsistencies, contradictions, misconceptions, and falsehoods in testimonies concerning Shostakovich's decision to cancel the premiere in December 1936. Though evidence is contradictory and inconclusive, I am convinced that intense pressure from party activists, government agents, union officials, and administrators from the Philharmonic proved to be the deciding factor in his decision to withdraw the

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symphony.

The idea that the Fourth Symphony is a defiant gesture, of course, is not a new interpretation, though it is one that has been increasingly and convincingly put forward by scholars since the composer's death. Because the Fourth conflicts so overtly with the stalinist cultural aesthetic of the mid to late 1930s, it should not be surprising that scholars who disagree on many other aspects of Shostakovich's life and work largely agree on this interpretation. It is a piece of music which, because of its overtly dissident quality, unites otherwise rival factions in the current field of Shostakovich scholarship. Though I do not wish to rehearse in detail the numerous controversies that surround Shostakovich scholarship, particularly with respect to the publication of Testimony, it is necessary for me to comment on them here--very briefly.

For many years Shostakovich was portrayed in the Soviet Union and the West as a dedicated communist and a loyal supporter of the Soviet regime. This long-accepted view of the composer has changed radically in the past twenty years, beginning with the publication of Testimony in 1979. Though I have serious reservations about the authenticity of Solomon Volkov's book, I am in agreement with a number of scholars, including Volkov's most public detractors, that the general political tone of Testimony is largely correct: far from being a faithful and loyal member of the Communist party, Shostakovich chafed under the repression of Soviet rule and often filled his music with his references to the horrors of Soviet communism. Though not an open dissenter after 1936, he practiced a kind of internal exile, with his art serving to as a platform for his defiance. In our post-Soviet revisionism, it would be easy to conclude that every work is

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a repudiation of the regime--after all, his style was certainly out of step with the ideological demands of the Communist Party. But not all of Shostakovich's music, of course, can be read as a kind of defiant political gesture--that would be far too sweeping and could not be demonstrated in any meaningful way.

Shostakovich was an outspoken advocate of creative individuality throughout his life and opposed state controls on the arts--in this major way he did not conform to party ideology. He firmly believed that creative freedom, not government interference or party guidance, was the best way to improve the quality of Soviet music and criticism. This is a position he cultivated during the relatively liberal 1920s and held onto despite ideological pressure and radical reforms of the early Stalin period--this point is demonstrated by my analysis of his music and a study of his public statements on music. It is with some irony that I gained this perspective of his resistance to party authority not only from recent testimonies of the composer's family, friends, and colleagues, but also from public statements he gave prior to 1936 that were published in the Soviet press--a heavily censored institution that suppressed public dissent. My findings help to demonstrate that newspapers and journals of the Soviet press are valuable for the researcher interested in studying Soviet history and culture--despite the distorted view of reality they often projected.

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Chapter One
"I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory": To October, a symphonic dedication

Born on 25 September 1906, in Saint Petersburg (12 September, old style), Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich, the son of an engineer, displayed great musical talent at an astonishingly early age. In 1919 he entered the Petrograd (Leningrad) Conservatory, where he studied piano with Leonid Nikolaev until 1923 and composition with Alexsandr Glazunov and Maksimilian Steinberg until 1925. Just eleven years old at the time of the October Revolution, the bolshevik coup that brought communists to power in Russia, Shostakovich (and his family) endured great hardships during the late 1910s and 1920s. After his father's death in 1922, Shostakovich was forced, despite malnutrition and at times severe illness, to play the piano as an accompanist in local movie theaters. Composed as a graduation test piece, his First Symphony, op. 10 (1924-25), was well received by the press following its premiere by the State Academic Philharmonic (Leningrad, May 1926). The following year the symphony was championed by leading conductors in Russia and the West, making Shostakovich a bit of an international celebrity. After three of his recently-composed piano works were reviewed favorably by the press in 1926-27--Three Fantastic Dances, Piano Sonata No. 1, and Aphorisms--Shostakovich increasingly leaned toward a career in composition, rather than as a concert pianist. In January 1927 he received an honorable mention at the Chopin Competition in Warsaw and played in recitals in Berlin and Moscow shortly after the competition. Because of his successes as a composer and pianist, Shostakovich's activities were

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covered by both the specialized music press and mass-circulated newspapers in Russia. In 1927 he again entered the Leningrad Conservatory, this time as a postgraduate student in composition.

At the end of March 1927, the Propaganda Division of the State Publishing House - Music Section (hereafter Muzsektor) gave Shostakovich his first commission: to compose a symphonic work in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution.[1] In fulfilling the commission, he composed the To October (later renamed the Second Symphony), a symphonic cantata on a poem by Aleksandr Bezymensky, a self-described proletarian writer. This chapter provides an overview of the composition history, premiere, and early reception of To October, followed by an analysis of the music. In the first part of my analysis I demonstrate how Shostakovich, in his own words, "attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory" through the use of *ultra-polifonia* (ultrapolyphony), the simultaneous combination of many independent melodic lines.[2] Then I show how the ideas of struggle and victory are also expressed by the "coming-into-being" of the work's leading theme--the "October" theme. The October theme, struggling into existence during the orchestral portion of the symphony, is fully presented during the choral finale--a process that reverses the traditional statement-development formula common to symphonic music. With my analysis I further hope to

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[1] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia (1927)," Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1966): 24-25.

[2] Shostakovich made this comment in a report he submitted to the Leningrad Conservatory in 1929. See Manashir A. Yakubov, ""Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi'" (I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 10 (1986): 55.

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demonstrate that Shostakovich did not attempt in the symphony to draw a direct correspondence with Bezymensky's text, but rather to express the *general* themes of struggle and victory. The closing episode, a setting of Bezymensky's poem, assigns an overall meaning to the work--the achievements of Lenin and the October Revolution--that Shostakovich himself did not choose and did not intend in the music. Since I devote much of the dissertation to the cultural context surrounding To October and The First of May, works that were directly inspired by two important holidays of the Soviet calendar, I begin this chapter by surveying public celebrations of the May and October holidays during the first ten years of the Soviet state (1918-27).

May Day and the October Revolution: public celebrations in Soviet Russia, 1918-1926

As architect of the October Revolution and head of the Soviet state, Vladimir Ilich Lenin largely ignored the arts, delegating nearly all aspects of cultural policy to the People's Commissariat of Public Enlightenment (hereafter Narkompros). In keeping with the ideals of bolshevism, Lenin nonetheless insisted through official directives and personal conversations that art should serve the masses, not just the social elite. The Central Committee of the Communist Party resolution of 12 April 1918 ("On the monuments of the Republic"), for example, instituted a program of mass agitational art to improve literacy and disseminate propaganda on a wide range of issues. According to this resolution, public celebrations commemorating May Day and the anniversary of the October Revolution were viewed as important tools for displaying bolshevik concepts of *massovaya iskusstvo* (mass art), *partiinost* (party-ness or party spirit) and *pravilnost*

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(correctness).[3] During the late 1910s and early 1920s, Narkompros and regional cultural ministries recruited artists, students, and workers to decorate public spaces during the May Day and October Revolution holidays (public squares, buildings, train stations, gates, fortresses, monasteries, street corners, bridges, main roads). Musicians and actors, too, participated in the public celebrations for the May and October holidays by performing for workers and peasants in unconventional venues (streets, factories, farms, fields, and so forth). Though "the musical mass circuit became known, somewhat contemptuously, as '*khaltura*'--hackwork,"[4] many of those who took part in revolutionary celebrations did so out of a sense of patriotic duty and the promise of extra rations. Still others participated out of inner conviction and sympathies with bolshevism. (For a discussion of artists' political views in early Soviet Russia, see Chapter Three.)

From the late 1910s until the mid 1920s, Russian arts groups of various stripes participated in revolutionary celebrations: futurists, constructivists, suprematists, members of *Mir iskusstva* (The world of art, a leading arts organization), academicians, traditionalists, members of LEF (The Left Front of Arts), among others. The overall stylistic discontinuity of the decorations, however, came under heavy criticism from party activists, who pushed for a more unified presentation. The Moscow and Petrograd Soviets set up an increasingly bureaucratic process for allocating spaces, submitting

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[3] My discussion of artists' participation in revolutionary celebrations during the years 1918-27 is based on documents of the period published in Vladimir Tolstoy, et al., ed., Street Art of the Revolution (London: Thames and Hudson, 1990), 39-120.

[4] Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 1917-1981, enlarged ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 16.

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designs, creating budgets, and assigning other administrative tasks. Not surprisingly, as the level of bureaucratic interference increased, the amount of non-representational and experimental art in revolutionary celebrations decreased. After the Civil War ended in 1921, themes for the May and October celebrations concentrated on rebuilding the country through industrial modernization, increased productivity, electrification, trade, and agricultural reform. In connection with the theme of industrial production, the composer A.M. Avraamov was commissioned to compose a work employing factory whistles, steam whistles, ship horns, foghorns, airplanes, artillery, and the like. First performed in Baku for the fifth anniversary of the Revolution (7 November 1922), Avraamov's symphony was also performed by students of the Moscow Conservatory a year later for the sixth anniversary.[5] Pieces similar to Avraamov's composition were also performed in Petrograd, Kharkov, and Rostov-on-Don.

From 1925 until 1932 the theme of industrial production continued to dominate the May Day and October Revolution celebrations. The 1925 May Day festival in Leningrad, dubbed "a carnival to production," set the standard for subsequent public spectacles. Parade floats--smothered with slogans, industrial models, demonstrators, theatrical dramatizations, and mechanical figures--drifted past a route draped with red banners and portraits of revolutionary leaders.[6] Offering simple industrial designs, these floats expressed themes such as the growth in Soviet production, self-reliance, and the

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[5] Larry Sitsky, Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-garde, 1900-1929, (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1994), 3. See also Tolstoy, Street Art of the Revolution, 146-147.

[6] Tolstoy, Street Art of the Revolution, 151.

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importance of work in everyday life. Scenes from the Revolution and Civil War, too, were featured on floats and visual displays during the October celebrations. Political satire, a prominent feature of revolutionary celebrations during the 1920s and 1930s, mocked foreign and domestic opponents of the bolshevik regime. At night floodlights illuminated the exterior of prominent buildings, which were decorated with portraits of revolutionary leaders and political slogans extolling the virtues of Soviet socialism. During these formative years of bolshevik rule, the May Day and October Revolution holidays became an important means of rallying support for the regime among the general public. These celebrations also placed a significant number of Russian artists and intellectuals in the service of bolshevism, an important victory for a Party and government trying desperately to stem the exodus of the country's best and brightest.

The October Jubilee in Leningrad, 1927: the tenth anniversary of the Revolution

In early 1927 special committees were formed throughout the Soviet Union to organize and regulate all activities related to the 1927 October Jubilee, a three-day festival (4-6 November) commemorating the tenth anniversary of the Revolution--the most important propaganda event to date for the Soviet state.[7] The Jubilee proved to be an important event for the country's artists, too, since it resulted in a dramatic increase in state funding for the arts. Though new sources of income for Soviet artists were directly

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[7] Although bolsheviks seized power on 25 October 1917 (old style), the anniversary of the October Revolution occurred on 7 November (new style), thus reflecting the change in calendar following the Revolution. Documents from various Russian archives on the 1927 October Jubilee are published in Tolstoy, Street Art of the Revolution, 172-189.

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tied to agit-prop projects, they allowed many young artists, like Dmitri Shostakovich, a chance to participate more fully in the country's artistic life. Numerous works of art, music, theater, and literature were commissioned during the Jubilee year to celebrate themes of revolution, socialism, national defense, industrialization, cooperation between workers and peasants, women's rights, international affairs, trade unions, foreign trade, and economic reform. During the Jubilee itself, major landmarks in Leningrad, each symbolizing a specific revolutionary event or political theme, formed a kind of bolshevik stations-of-the-cross that citizens were encouraged to visit in a prescribed order: Kshesinskaya Palace (from imperialism to civil war), Field of the Victims of Revolution, Uritsky Square (storming of the Winter Palace, complemented by a screening of Sergei Eisenstein's film October on the square), Uprising Square (overthrowing the autocracy), Equality Bridge, Republic Bridge, Lt. Schmidt's Bridge (the Red Fleet), Liteiny Bridge, Stock Exchange (industrialization), Technology Institute Square (worldwide October Revolution), Narva Gates (the Red Guard), Moscow Gates (the Red Army), Volodarsky Monument, Smolny Square (All power to the Soviets), University Embankment (the union of labor and science), and Finland State Square (the apotheosis of October).[8]

The parade on the first day of the Jubilee in Leningrad resembled past October

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[8] Ibid., 177-179. The idea of traveling from site to site in a specific order creates a kind of theatrical montage, mixing historical events with political indoctrination, an approach common to the stages of experimental Russian theater of the 1920s. I am reminded, too, that Shostakovich's music for To October has a montage-like, episodic form, and for this reasons it may be easily compared to montage-like effects in Russian visual art, literature, and theater of the period. For a more detailed analysis of the cross-currents between Shostakovich's To October and Russian constructivism of the 1920s, see the conclusion of Chapter Three.

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celebrations. Large crowds jammed major thoroughfares of the city to view parade floats, colorful banners, bands, marchers, party and government officials, foreign delegations, and "physical culturists" (amateur athletes performing choreographed gymnastics in unison). Political slogans, like all other aspects of the parade, reflected themes officially approved by the Leningrad Regional October Commission: the achievements of the October Revolution, cooperation between town and country, the Red Army, the rise in employment, growth in wages, industrialization, peasant economy, medical care, education, and the satirical unmasking of enemies and saboteurs. The second day of the Jubilee had more of a theatrical flair, with the staging of works on social topics and historical events. The Jubilee culminated on the third day with a massive, daylong celebration. Nighttime events, as in past revolutionary holidays, emphasized the importance of electrification for the advancement of socialism. Major buildings, decorated with political slogans and portraits of Lenin, were illuminated with red and white floodlights. At night, too, cultural events--films, concerts (including mass sing-alongs), theatrical performances, and special radio broadcasts--were combined with political rallies, meetings, and speeches. Every major concert institution and organization performed music written for the occasion. On the second and third evenings of Leningrad's Jubilee (5-6 November), the State Academic Philharmonic (the leading symphony orchestra in Leningrad) and Academy Capella Choir, conducted by Nikolai Malko, presented a program of contemporary orchestral works dedicated to the October Revolution. The program included Dmitri Shostakovich's newly-composed symphonic dedication To October, one of many October-related symphonic cantatas

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commissioned by the state for the Jubilee.[9] Like the premiere of his First Symphony in early 1926, the premiere of To October proved to be an important event in his early career.

The symphonic dedication To October: from commission to premiere

During the 1920s Muzsektor commissioned numerous works that propagated in some way--via catchy title, politically inspired program, and/or ideologically correct text--an explicitly revolutionary, Soviet, or social theme. Many of these works were single-movement, cantata-like compositions known as *agitatsionno-prosvetitelnaya muzyka* (agitational-enlightening music). During the 1930s critics and composers used the term *pesenno-simfonicheskii zhanr* (song symphonic genre, or song symphony) to refer to a politically inspired Soviet symphony that incorporated vocal and instrumental resources. Shostakovich composed To October in June 1927 while convalescing at a state *dom uchonykh* (scholars' resort) outside of Leningrad and advertisements for the score began to appear in music journals almost immediately.[10] The July/August 1927 issue of Muzyka i revolyutsia carried the following announcement: "Shostakovich, one of the most talented pupils of the Leningrad Conservatory, wrote a symphonic dedication to October with closing chorus by Bezymensky, dedicated to the tenth anniversary. It will

[9] According to advertisements for the concert and numerous reviews in the press, the remainder of the program included Mikhail F. Gnesin's Symphonic Monument and Vladimir M. Deshevov's Suite from the ballet Red Tornado.

[10] See the back cover of Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 5-6 (1927).

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be published by the Music Section of the State Publishing House."[11] and the score itself was published in October. The front cover of the first edition reads, "To October: a symphonic dedication with closing chorus on words by A. Bezymensky for large symphony orchestra and mixed chorus."[12]

Though Shostakovich greatly benefitted from his period of convalescence during the summer of 1927, his family still suffered financial difficulties. Because Muzsektor was late in sending the commission fee (500 rubles), Shostakovich was again forced (reluctantly) to return to his job as a cinema accompanist by the end of the summer. In a letter to his friend Ivan Sollertinsky (dated 20 August 1927), Shostakovich expressed great frustration that Muzsektor had waited until "only yesterday" to send him the money. "Tomorrow I go to Moscow," he added, "Muzsektor sent me a telegram telling me to go for a demonstration of my revolutionary music."[13] Shortly thereafter, at the conductor

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[11] Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 7-8 (1927): 33. "Odin iz talantliveishikh pitomtsev Leningradskoi konservatorii D. Shostakovich napisal simfonicheskoe posveshchenie 'Oktyabryu' s zaklyuchitelnym khorom na slova Bezymenskovo, posvyashchennoe 10-letiyu. Dannoe proizvedenie prinyato Muzsektorom Gosizdata i uzhe pechataetsya."

[12] "OKTYABRYU simfonicheskoe posbyashchenie s zaklyuchitelnym khorom . . ." The cover is reproduced in Yakubov, ""Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi'," 54. The most detailed catalog of Shostakovich's music in English is Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). See pp. 33-35 for information on To October. The work currently bears the title Symphony No. 2 in B Major (subtitle: "To October - a Symphonic Dedication"). The autograph score is preserved at the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI). There have been six published editions, including Muzgiz, no. 7971, 1927 (the first edition of the full score); Edwin F. Kalmus, no. 1457, ca. 1970 (a reprint of the first edition); and Sobranie sochinenii (Collected works), vol. 1 (Moscow: Muzyka: 1987). In this chapter, the music examples are quoted from Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1.

[13] Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life of Dmitri Shostakovich, trans. Graham Hobbs and Charles Midgely (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich,

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Nikolai Malko's suggestion, Shostakovich entered To October in a contest for new symphonic works sponsored by the State Academic Philharmonic (the contest itself was another Jubilee-related event). Shostakovich played the symphony for the competition jury sometime in late September or early October.[14] Though no first prize was given in the contest, the Philharmonic awarded Shostakovich one of the two second prizes (300 rubles) and announced its intention to perform To October during the October Jubilee.[15] Following the work's premiere, Shostakovich received favorable press and support from the Moscow and Leningrad sections of the Association of Contemporary Music (hereafter ASM), the leading organization for modern music in 1920s Soviet Russia.[16] He also won grudging support from self-styled proletarian music groups (Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians and Production Collective, hereafter RAPM and Prokoll, respectively) who normally opposed complex music influenced by the latest trends of western composers. On 4 December 1927, To October received its first

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1980), 46.

[14] Nikolai Malko, A Certain Art, (New York: Morrow, 1966), 207.

[15] According to Malko, Shostakovich fully expected to receive the first prize and blamed Malko, the chairman of the competition committee, for his not receiving it. Malko, in turn, blamed Boris Asafiev for promoting another score over Shostakovich's work and criticized Shostakovich for his vanity. See A Certain Art, 207.

[16] During the ten-year anniversary celebrations in 1927, the ASM actively promoted "the living music of the USSR" by programming contemporary works that celebrated revolutionary themes. Shostakovich's First Piano Sonata was performed at one such concert sponsored by Leningrad ASM. The LASM concerts that year also featured works by Gnesin, Strelinikov, Shaporin, Deshevov, Belyi, Bogdanov-Berezovsky, Grigoriev, Zaranek, Kazantseva, Klements, Malakhovsky, Popov, Pushkov, and Grigori Rimsky-Korsakov (grandson of Nikolai).

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Moscow performance at a concert sponsored by the Moscow Association of Contemporary Music.[17] (For an examination of the reception history of To October in Soviet Russia, see Chapter Three.)

Recently-published documents from the composer's hand: reports and letters, 1927-1929

Shostakovich returned to the Leningrad Conservatory in 1927 to pursue postgraduate studies in composition. From 1927 through 1929, he submitted annual reports to the Conservatory administration. Though these reports are brief, they provide valuable information concerning his early life, education, musical training, and compositions. At the end of his 1927 report to the Conservatory, his *avtobiografia* of 1927 (undated, but probably written in the summer of 1927), he notes, "At the end of March I received a commission from Muzsektor to write a symphonic composition for the tenth anniversary of the October revolution. I composed the 'symphonic dedication To October.'"[18] In a report dated May 1928, written six months after the premiere of To October, he devotes a paragraph to the work:

> op.14 "To October." Symphonic dedication for orchestra and chorus. The words are by A. Bezymensky. Edition by Music Section of State Publishing. "To

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[17] The Moscow premiere of To October took place at the House of the Soviets Hall of Columns in a concert conducted by Konstantin Saradzhev. According to advertisements for the concert and reviews in the press, the remainder of the concert program included Aleksandr V. Mosolov's Suite from the ballet Steel, Leonid A. Polovinkin's Prologue, and Nikolai A. Roslavetz's cantata October.

[18] "V kontse marta poluchil zakaz ot Muzsektora napisat simfonicheskoe sochinenie k 10-letiyu Oktyabrskoi revolyutsii. Ya sochinil 'Simfonicheskoe posvyashchenie Oktyabryu'." Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia (1927)," 24-25.

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> October" was written in a symphonic form, with the second half performed by a chorus. In "To October" an orchestral device was used in which 22 instruments play simultaneously, each with its own line. It resulted in ultrapolyphony, brought forth in a polyphonic timbre [*v polifonicheskii timbr*]. The entire composition is mainly polyphonic. It applies canon and fugue. The chorus is set forth diatonically. The exposition of the entire composition is dialectically linear. "To October" was performed three times in Leningrad by the orchestra of the State Academic Philharmonic and the chorus of the State Academic Capella, under the direction of N.A. Malko. In Moscow - [the work was performed] once under the direction of [K.S.] Saradzhev.[19]

And in his 31 October 1929 report to the Conservatory, Shostakovich discusses the artistic and political significance of To October and The First of May symphony and compares the two pieces favorably to recent compositions by other Soviet composers:

> op. 14 - "To October" - symphonic dedication (edition Music Section of State Publishing) . . . In "To October" I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory [*ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi*]. Here I introduced it as an instrumental system of ultrapolyphony (27 simultaneously sounding lines). This sounds very dynamic. This device places "To October" on the side of the working public, convincing me that the path I selected is correct. The following thoughts always guided the composition: accessibility and intelligibility [*dostypnost i dokhodchivost*] for the mass listener, since the mass listener is the only genuine judge of music, and since music is one of the mass arts. With this in mind, I consider it to be my duty to struggle against the troubling stream of musical pornography flowing onto the head of the mass listener on the pretext of "intelligibility" and "clearness." I consider the struggle with "Red Poppy,"

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[19] "op. 14 'Oktyabryu.' Simfonicheskoe posvyashchenie dla orkestra i khora. Slova A. Bezymenskovo. Izdano Muzykalnym Sektorom Gosudarstvennovo izdatelstva. 'Oktyabryu' napisano v simfonicheskoi forme. So vtoroi poloviny vstupaet khor. V 'Oktyabryu' primenil odin orkestrovyi priem: 22 instrumenta igrayut odnovremenno, kazhdyi svoyu liniyu. Poluchilas ultra-polifonii, perekhodyashchaya v polifonicheskii tembr. Vse sochinenie preimushchestvenno polifonichno. Primenyayutsya kanon, fuga. Khor izlagaetsya diatonicheski. Izlozhenie vsego sochinenia dialekticheski-linearnoe. 'Oktyabryu' ispolnnyalos 3 raza v Leningrade orkestrom Gos. Ak. Filarmonii i khorom Gos. Ak. Kapelly, pod upravleniem N.A. Malko. V Moskve 1 raz pod upravleniem [K.S.] Saradzheva." Shostakovich's 1928 report to the Leningrad Conservatory was first published in Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi," 54-55.

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> "Gadfly," "Son of the Sun," "Small-edged Glass," and other musical pulp to be my basic duty as a musician-activist. . . . In the capacity of my diploma work I put forward the "May symphony." This composition is of an entirely different order than "To October." In "To October" struggle plays a self-sufficient role, while the "May symphony" expresses, as much as possible, the mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction. For an added influence on the listener I introduced a chorus at the end on words by the poet [Semyon] Kirsanov.[20]

Three letters sent by Shostakovich in 1927 to Lev Shulgin (composer of agit-prop music, head of Muzsektor and editor of the journal Muzyka i revolyutsia) give additional evidence concerning the composition, premiere, and early reception of To October. In a letter dated 6 June 1927, Shostakovich writes, "I am considering what I shall call my new work. I think 'symphonic poem' will about meet the case."[21] In a letter dated October 1927, Shostakovich sounds quite enthusiastic about the impending premiere, remarking that the work "sounded great" in the first rehearsal: "I have spoken to some of the singers

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[20] Ibid., 55-56. "op. 14 - 'Oktyabryu' - Simfonicheskoe posvyashchenie (izdano Muzsektorom Gosizdata). . . . V 'Oktyabryu' ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi. Tam ya vvel v instrumentovku sistemy ultra-polifonii (27 odnovremenno zvuchashikh linii). Zvuchit eto ochen dinamichno. Priem, okazyvaemyi 'Oktyabryu' so storony rabochei publiki, ubedil menya, chto namechennyi mnoi put pravilnyi, Sochinyayu vsegda rukovodstvuyas sleduyushchimi soobrazheniyami. Dostupnost i dokhodchivost do massovovo slushatelya, ibo tolko massovyi slushatel est edinstvennyi i nastoyashchii tsenitel muzyki, ibo muzyka est odno iz samykh massovykh iskusstv. Pri etom schitayu svoim dolgom borotsya protiv mutnovo potoka muzykalnoi pornografii, vylivaemobo na golovu massovovo slushatelya, pod predlogom 'dokhodchivosti' i 'ponyatnosti'. Borbu s 'Krasnymi Makami,' 'Ovodami,' Synami Solntsa,' 'Stakanchikami granenymi' i prochei muzykalnoi makylaturoi schitayu svoim osnovnym dolgom muzykanta-obshchestvennika. . . . V kachestve svoei diplomnoi [aspirantskoi] roboty ya predstavil 'Maiskuyu simfoniyu.' Eto prozvedenie sovsem inobo poryadka, nezheli 'Oktyabryu.' Poskolku v 'Oktyabryu samodovleyushchuyu rol igraet borba, to v 'Maiskoi simfonii,' esli mozhno tak vyrazitsya, nastroenie prazdnika mirnovo stroitelstva. V kontse dla usilivania vozdeistvia na slyshatelya mnoyu vvedei khor na slova poeta [S.] Kirsanova."

[21] Quoted in editor's note to Shostakovich, Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1, 3.

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and they said that the parts are easy and well-suited to their voices."[22] A letter dated 7 November 1927 is more revealing, since it provides details about the premiere of To October in Leningrad [I am quoting here the translation of A. and N. Roxburgh]:

> Yesterday and the day before [5 and 6 November] my symphonic dedication "To October" was performed at the Philharmonic. Let me describe it to you in detail. There were only six rehearsals. The first was a preliminary one and I was not even informed, but I attended all the others and gave Malko instructions. I didn't think I need mention the sound: everyone liked it, especially the beginning and middle sections. It turned out very well. The choir harmonized excellently. By the way, there is a short interlude in the choir part after the words " . . . the name of our fate was 'struggle.'" The strings categorically refused to play pizzicato. I would stake my life on the fact that the pizzicato was playable, but when a young composer writes something difficult the players always say it is impossible. I had to give way, and agreed to let them play it arco. It turned out fine. But I still hope that someday the passage will be played properly. . . . Both concerts were preceded by meetings. On the 5th the meeting began at 9 o'clock and finished at 11. My Symphony was not played until 11:45, by which time the orchestra--and the audience--were exhausted by having to wait so long. Despite all that, everything went splendidly. The choir, the orchestra, and the conductor all rose to the occasion. The success was quite considerable. I was called onto the stage four times, and even then they went on clapping, but I did not go up again. I was hoping that it would go even better on the 6th, but it turned out differently. After six rehearsals and two concerts the orchestra was dead beat. That evening the meeting started at 7 and finished at 9. They started playing my piece at 10:15. It came off considerably worse this time--one could feel the exhaustion of the performers, who put less into it than on the 5th. The audience, too, was tired after the meeting. It was fairly successful, but less so than the 5th. I took two bows.[23]

It appears, then, that the premiere pleased both the composer and his audience. Though his First Symphony gave Shostakovich international recognition as a composer, it was

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[22] Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitry Shostakovich: About Himself and His Times, ed. Lev G. Grigoryev and Yakov M. Platek, trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow: Progress Press, 1981), 13-14.

[23] Ibid., 14.

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really the symphonic dedication To October that launched Shostakovich's career as a professional composer. No longer did he have to play the piano in movie theaters. Both the money he received for To October and his conservatory stipend permitted him an opportunity to direct his creative energies toward finishing his first opera, The Nose, a work influenced greatly by Vsevolod Meyerhold, Russia's leading avant-garde theater director of the period. Meyerhold was himself impressed with Shostakovich and invited him to Moscow to serve as his musical director in early 1928. Though their working relationship was fairly short-lived, Shostakovich's support from Meyerhold led to more opportunities in the theater. (I will return in later chapters to the Shostakovich-Meyerhold relationship.)

Favorable previews: Shostakovich as political and musical revolutionary

After the State Academic Philharmonic announced in early fall 1927 that Shostakovich's symphonic dedication To October would be performed for its October Jubilee concerts, several articles appeared in the music press concerning the work and its composer. The most substantial of the preview articles appeared in Muzyka i revolyutsia.[24] Holding Shostakovich up as a model for other young composers to emulate, the reviewer M. Grinberg called To October "a reflection of the very idea of

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[24] M. Grinberg, "Dmitri Shostakovich," Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 23 (1927): 16-20. Published by Muzsektor, Muzyka i revolyutsia was the journal of the newly-formed Obyedinenie Revolyutsionnykh Kompozitorov i Muzykalnykh Deyateley (ORKiMD, Association of revolutionary composers and musical workers).

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revolution."[25] Grinberg's essay served both to promote Shostakovich's symphony in preparation for its premiere and to put forward a politically correct interpretation of Shostakovich's career, one in which revolutionary politics supposedly played a key role. Shostakovich is presented as a politically committed fellow traveler who writes modern music to express politically revolutionary ideals. Grinberg pointed to several youthful works on revolutionary topics (the so-called "Revolutionary Symphony" and "Funeral March for Victims of the Revolution," works without opus numbers) and commended recent works that fused revolutionary politics with revolutionary music. But Shostakovich's first ten published opuses had no real connection to revolutionary themes, a fact that Grinberg blamed on so-called "bourgeois" musical training in the conservatories, where musical and political experiments were discouraged. Grinberg nonetheless praised these early works for reflecting Russian musical traditions and avoiding Scriabinesque "digressions into erotica and mysticism."[26] With respect to the First Piano Sonata (originally titled "October") and the symphonic dedication To October, the reviewer extolled Shostakovich's new path: complex, modernist works that incorporate ideological content.

Other articles published in late 1927 were similar to Grinberg's essay, including those in Rabochii i teatr written by Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky, a lifelong friend and

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[25] Ibid., 19. "Eto prezhde svego otrazhenie samoi idei revolyutsii, . . ."

[26] Ibid., 18. "Ona ne znaet uklonov v bolnuyu erotiku i mistitsizm."

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supporter of Shostakovich.[27] In the journal Zhizn iskusstva (Life of art), Yuri Vainkop hailed To October as an original achievement of Soviet musical creativity, one in which "the spirit of October is felt as an inner necessity."[28] In his article, too, Vainkop criticized the overemphasis on program music among Soviet composers (a topic on which Shostakovich was outspoken in the 1930s, as we will see in later chapters). In addition, he accused many composers of writing works for the October Jubilee that have nothing in common with revolution except for an ideologically correct text, title, or program. Like Grinberg and Vainkop, too, the anonymous reviewer in Sovremennaya muzyka wrote a laudatory article on To October in the journal's special Jubilee issue.[29] The author focused on the compositionally progressive features of the work, such as the systematic "rhythmic construction" of the opening episode and the "complex fugato" of the third episode. The ideologically correct choral finale, on the other hand, received virtually no attention, nor did the political significance of the text's message. As the journal of the influential Association for Contemporary Music, Sovremennaya muzyka

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[27] V. M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "Shostakovich: Oktyabr." Rabochii i teatr, no. 41 (1927): 8. "V Ak-filarmonii" (At the Academic Philharmonic). Rabochii i teatr, no. 46 (1927): 14.

[28] Yuri Vainkop and Islamei, "Simfonicheskie novinki k Oktyabryu" (New symphonic works of October), Zhizn iskusstva, no. 45 (1927): 34-35. The quotation above is found on page 34: ". . . v kotorykh dukh Oktyabya oshchushchaetsya, imenno kak vnutrennyaya neobkhodimost, . . ." Zhizn iskusstva printed a similar, though slightly shorter article in preparation for the Moscow premiere of To October: Viktor Belyaev, "Oktyabr v simfonicheskoi muzyke" (October in symphonic music), Zhizn iskusstva, no. 51 (1927): 2-3.

[29] V, "Simfonicheskoe posvyashchenie 'Oktyabryu' Dm. Shostakovicha" (The symphonic dedication "To October"), Sovremennaya muzyka, no. 24 (1927): 32-36.

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concerned itself primarily with promoting contemporary works in Soviet Union and elsewhere. Thus, it is hardly surprising that the analysis in Sovremennaya muzyka concentrates on the work's modern and complex features at the expense of its political content.

A descriptive analysis of the four episodes

Shostakovich disliked Aleksandr Bezymensky's poem "To October," the text Muzsektor had given him to set, and he indicated his disapproval in personal correspondence and conversations (see Appendix 1 for the poem and its translation). Nikolai Malko, conductor of the work's premiere, remembers that the composer "did not quite take them [the verses] seriously, and showed no enthusiasm whatsoever."[30] In a letter to Lev Shulgin (dated 6 June 1927), Shostakovich showed his distaste of the text in a rather diplomatic fashion: "Just now I have started on the most difficult section--the entry of the chorus, and if you remember Bezymensky's words, you'll see that they don't lend themselves to musical interpretation easily."[31] In a letter to Tatyana Glivenko, Shostakovich called the poem "abominable," even though he admitted a degree of sympathy for the poem's overall message of social justice.[32] The letters he sent to Glivenko during the mid 1920s reveal his views on personal, musical, and political

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[30] Malko, A Certain Art, 204.

[31] Quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1, p. 3.

[32] Quoted in Ian MacDonald, "Recent Commentary on Symphonies 1-5," DSCH Journal 7 (1997): 9.

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issues. Despite showing some degree of contempt for the Soviet system, the Glivenko letters apparently show Shostakovich's loyalty to socialist ideals. Although these letters were purchased in late 1991 for safe-keeping by Maksim Shostakovich, the late composer's son, a few excerpts have recently surfaced.[33]

Though previous analyses of To October have largely focused on the work's episodic nature, analysts rarely agree on the number of episodes or on their precise location.[34] Several analysts, including Hugh Ottaway and Roy Blokker, group the symphony's episodes into two main sections, the orchestral prologue and the closing chorus.[35] Marina Sabinina, an authority on Shostakovich's symphonies, divides To October into five main episodes:[36] 1) Introduction: Largo, Allegro (beginning up to reh.

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[33] Excerpts of the Glivenko letters have been published in several sources, including Sotheby's, Fine Printed and Manuscript Music . . . 6 December 1991 (London: Sotheby's, 1991), 151; Stefan Weiss, "Text und Form in Schostakowitschs 2. Sinfonie op. 14." Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 51 (1994): 159-60; Ian MacDonald "Recent Commentary on Symphonies 1-5," DSCH Journal 7 (1997): 6-9. See also Glivenko's interview with Elizabeth Wilson in Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 82-88.

[34] In addition to the analyses discussed here, thoughtful observations about orchestration and the use of polyphony in To October are found in Edison Denisov, "Ob orkestrovke D. Shostakovicha" (On Shostakovich's orchestration) in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed. Lev Danilevich (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor), 439-99; and Alfred Schnittke: "Nekotorye osobennosti orkestrovovo golosovedenia v simfonicheskikh proizvedeniakh D.D. Shostakovicha" (Some peculiarities of orchestral counterpoint in Shostakovich's symphonic compositions) in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed., Lev Danilevich, 499-532.

[35] Hugh Ottaway, Shostakovich Symphonies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 13-16; Roy Blokker with Robert Dearling, The Music of Dmitri Shostakovich: the Symphonies (London: Tantivy, 1979), 47-50.

[36] Marina Sabinina, Shostakovich-simfonist: dramaturgia estetika, stil (Dramaturgy, aesthetics, style. Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 55-68. See especially p. 67.

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25); 2) "Speech of the tuba": Poco meno mosso (rehs. 25-28); 3) Fugato: Allegro (rehs. 29-52); 4) "Meeting": Allegro (rehs. 53-57); 5) "Dawn": Moderato (reh. 58-end). Derek Hulme and Eric Roseberry, too, see five continuous sections in To October, though they do not specify their exact location.[37] According to Roseberry, the piece exhibits a "five-in-one" form: Introduction-Allegro-Scherzo-Slow movement-Finale.[38] Pointing to the "radical negation of the traditional technique of thematic development," a problem that complicates the analysis of To October, Boris Schwarz see the potential for either a four- or five-fold division of the piece--though he does not specify where the main sections begin and end.[39]

A number of analysts view the symphony as a single-movement piece with four main episodes. Karen Kopp, for example, segments the work this way:[40] 1) Largo. Poco meno mosso. Allegro molto (beginning-reh. 29); 2) Fugato. Meno mosso. Moderato (rehs. 30-68); 3) Closing chorus (rehs. 69-94); 4) "Reprise": (reh. 95-end). Genrikh (Henry) Orlov and Hermann Danuser also see a four-fold division of the piece, but their

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See, too, Marina Sabinina, Simfonizm Shostakovicha - put k zrelosti (Path toward maturity) (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 32-46.

[37] Hulme, Catalogue, 33.

[38] Eric Roseberry, Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process in the Symphonies, Cello Concertos, and String Quartets of Shostakovich (New York: Garland, 1989), 126-29.

[39] Schwarz, Music and Musical Life, 82.

[40] Karen Kopp, Form und Gehalt der Symphonien des Dmitrij Schostakowitsch (Bonn: Verlag für Systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990), 137-144. See especially pp. 139-140.

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conclusions are quite different from Kopp's analysis: 1) beginning up to reh. 13; 2) rehs. 13-29; 3) rehs. 30-57; 4) reh. 56-end.[41]

In a recent article on To October, Stefan Weiss argues that Bezymensky's poem "To October" serves as a kind of prototype for the form of Shostakovich's music--i.e., the four strophes of the poem correspond directly to the four main episodes of the symphony: 1) "Chaos" (beginning up to reh. 13); 2) "Awakening" (rehs. 13-28); 3) "Struggle" (rehs. 29-55); 4) "Victory" (reh. 56-end).[42] In his analysis, Weiss also ascribes meaning to several recurring motivic-thematic ideas in the orchestral portion based on the words they accompany during the recapitulatory choral finale. Weiss's reading of the piece is serious, competent, and thorough--a rare exception in the western literature on this piece. Though Weiss's article informs my analysis of the work's musical content, I am not entirely convinced that Shostakovich's music presents the kind of direct correspondence with the text that Weiss alleges.

In my view, both Bezymensky's text and Shostakovich's music reflected a broader, more general archetype for art works created for the 1927 October Jubilee, one in which the progression from dark to light and the importance of political struggle were key sources of creative inspiration. Marina Sabinina writes that "the program of the

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[41] Hermann Danuser, "Dmitri Schostakowitschs musikalisch-poetisches Revolutionsverständnis (1926-1927): zur Ersten Klaviersonate und zur Zweiten Symphonie," Melos/Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, no. 1 (1978): 3-11; Genrikh Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm (Moscow: Muzyka, 1966), 61-67. In the chart above, I have converted measure numbers, which Danuser and Orlov give in their analyses, to rehearsal numbers, which I consistently use in this chapter.

[42] Stefan Weiss, "Text und Form in Schostakowitschs 2. Sinfonie op. 14." Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 51 (1994): 145-60. See especially pp. 148-51.

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symphony reproduces the typical subject line of theatrical mass celebrations and agitation spectacles in meetings: a dark chaos at the beginning, symbolized by the pitch-dark background, then the awakening of protests, the will to struggle, and finally the brotherhood of the proletarian's victory."[43] In a similar reading, Vladimir Karbusicky calls Bezymensky's text "a perfect example of the mythological archetype," with Shostakovich's music reflecting a four-act dramaturgical scheme.[44]

I divide To October into the same four-fold scheme as Orlov and Danuser, though I arrived at my conclusions independently. Here is a summary of the main musical events in the symphony:

Overview of form: To October (Second Symphony)

first episode: Largo - beginning up to reh. 13
- beginning - reh. 11: strings' systematic ultrapolyphony, creating a nontonal environment
- rehs. 6-9: atonal trumpet solo with "Happy Birthday" allusion and "interval series" theme; ultrapolyphony accompaniment
- reh. 10: atonal flute duet with "interval series" theme; ultrapolyphony accompaniment
- reh. 11: trumpets' fanfare, each statement ends on an E♭ triad; ultrapolyphony come to an end:
- reh. 12: tuba solo anchored on E♭ and A♭, low string accompaniment

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[43] Marina Sabinina, "Annotationen zu Schostakowitschs Symphonien Nr. 2, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13," in Dmitri Schostakowitsch. Internationales Festival 16. September 1984 - 15. März 1985. Programmbuch (Duisburg, 1985), 112. "Das Programm der Symphonie reproduziert die typische Sujetlinie von theatralisierten Massenfeierlichkeiten und Agitationsspektakeln auf Meetings wider: am Anfang ein dunkles Chaos, das die stockfinstere Vergangenheit symbolisiert, dann das Erwachsen des Protestes, des Willens zum Kampf und schließlich die Verherrlichung des Sieges des Proletariats."

[44] Vladimir Karbusicky, Empirische Musiksoziologie (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1975), 399-401.

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second episode: march episode - rehs. 13-29
- rehs. 13-14: march theme, a transformation of "interval series" theme; begins on G then quickly moves away to non-functional harmony
- reh. 15: transformation of trumpets' fanfare, statement ends on an F♯, with accompaniment hinting toward C major/minor
- reh. 16: reorchestrated march theme begins again on G then quickly moves away to non-functional harmony
- rehs. 17-24: thickening of texture with imitative counterpoint; first intimations of the "October" theme; quickly changing, non-functional, chromatic harmony; passage ends on G♭ triad
- rehs. 25-28: quickly-changing transition: allusions to "October" theme and ultrapolyphony; harmony anchored by pedals on F (reh. 25-26) and C (reh. 27) before moving to G♭ minor and E minor (reh. 28)

third episode: fugato and ultrapolyphony - rehs. 30-55
- rehs. 30-47: fugato exhibiting unsystematic ultrapolyphony; begins as violin solo with E pedal in low strings; moves to trio texture with non-functional, chromatic harmony (rehs. 32-37); gradual accumulation of melodic lines, creating a polytonal environment (reh. 38-47)
- rehs. 48-52: ultrapolyphony, combining systematic and unsystematic types; combination of chromatic lines creates polytonal effect
- rehs. 53-57: transition to final episode: harmonic motion moves down by half-step from F to C (reh. 53), then moves to G by passing chromatically through G♭ D♭, A, F, and F♯ (rehs. 54-55); viola soli accompanied by G pedal (rehs. 56-57)

fourth episode: transition and choral finale - reh. 58-end
- transition to the chorus: rehs. 58-68
  viola soli continues, accompanied by a chromatic bass line moving from D♭ up to A♭ (rehs. 58-59); woodwind melodies accompanied by chromatic bass line moving from A♭ down to D (rehs. 60-61); clarinet solo with "October" theme, accompaniment contains "October" theme and chromatic harmonies that move to c7 and D/A tremolo pedal (rehs. 62-66); diatonically ascending B♭ scale in solo violin accompanied by chromatically ascending trills moving from A♯/B to E/F (reh. 67-68)

- choral finale, stanza one: rehs. 69-75
  appearance of first key signature (one sharp) but the key is ambiguous G major / E minor; bass recitative with F♯ timpani pedal and stepwise motion in woodwinds (rehs. 69-71); F♯/G becomes an organic cell from which linear and vertical materials

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are constructed, all voices participate polyphonically with stepwise melodies, "October" theme used as accompaniment (rehs. 72-73); end of stanza passes through C major and E minor (reh. 74); orchestral transition to second stanza returns to G major / E minor ambiguity (reh. 75)

- choral finale, stanza two and orchestral interlude: rehs. 76-83
  paired imitation in chorus, "October" theme used as polyphonic accompaniment; harmony continues G/E ambiguity (reh. 76-77); key signature changes to no sharps or flats at reh. 78, then to A♭ major one bar before reh. 79; stanza two ends on B♮ ("Borba", struggle); orchestral accompaniment incorporates energetic, "galloping" rhythm and "October" theme fragments (reh. 78-80); key change at reh. 81 to four sharps, with key ambiguity C♯ minor / E major; orchestral interlude with imitative counterpoint incorporating "October" theme (rehs. 81-83); bass line ends with strong F♯-B cadence

- choral finale, stanza three and ultrapolyphony interlude: rehs. 84-89
  key signature of four sharps continues throughout; reh. 84 is in E major with a strong V pedal; reh. 85 is diatonic, focused on C♯, but harmonically ambiguous; stanza three ends in F♯ major; ultrapolyphony interlude is accompanied by F♯ triad (rehs. 87-89)

- choral finale, stanza four and codetta: reh. 90-96
  key signature changes to five sharps (B major, reh. 90) with imitative counterpoint accompanying the chorus; key signature changes to four flats (A♭, reh. 91), but a strong motion to B♭ is made almost immediately; key changes to no sharps and flats (C major, reh. 93) for reminiscence of ultrapolyphony and choral declamation; F♯ pedal (timpani, reh. 95) serves as dominant pedal leading to B major codetta (reh. 96)

The prerevolutionary darkness and oppression expressed in the first stanza of Bezymensky's poem, as Weiss and Sabinina argue, is suggested in the first episode (Largo) with the use of a compositional technique I call "systematic ultrapolyphony" (see my discussion of two types of ultrapolyphony below). The first episode, too, presents several motive-thematic ideas that are varied and transformed at a number of points in

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the remaining three episodes. The abrupt tempo change at reh. 13 (quarter note = m.m. 152), together with a march theme in the low strings, marks the beginning of the second episode. The march images and contrapuntal rigor of the second episode provides an energetic jolt that lifts the listener out of the brooding, churning quality of the Largo. The second episode contains several passages that transform thematic material from the Largo and provides the first intimations of the "October" theme, one of the symphony's leading themes. The transition to the third episode is such that the beginning of the fugato could be placed at either reh. 29 or reh. 30, but since a tempo change is marked on the first measure of reh. 30, I place the beginning of the third episode there.

The third episode, cast in three main sections, is highly polyphonic--or to paraphrase Shostakovich, "ultrapolyphonic": 1) a fugato employing "unsystematic ultrapolyphony," the gradual accumulation of numerous independent lines (rehs. 30-47); 2) a highly chromatic, highly dissonant, thickly scored passage of canonic writing--a kind of middle ground between systematic and unsystematic ultrapolyphony (rehs. 48-52); and 3) a brief transition that winds down the intense musical energy created by the previous two passages (rehs. 53-57). The beginning of the final episode, like the beginning of the third episode, is difficult to pinpoint exactly; the transition between the third and fourth episodes is written so as to create formal ambiguity. I place the beginning of the final episode at Moderato (reh. 59), the final tempo change of the composition, despite the fact that this beginning point actually comes in the middle of a lyrical viola soli.

Thus the final episode does not begin with the obvious formal articulation--the chorus's entrance at reh. 69--but with a passage that further slows the musical energy of

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the previous episode (rehs. 58-68). This lowering of tension is perhaps necessary to prepare the listener for the chorus's entrance. As I show later, there are important similarities between melodies in the orchestral interlude (rehs. 58-68) and melodies in the choral finale (reh. 59-end), further suggesting that these two sections are part of the same episode. The choral finale portion of the final episode (reh. 69-end) opens dramatically, with a blast from a factory whistle, followed by a simple, recitative-like passage for men's voices.[45] The choral portion of the closing episode is divided into four sub-sections, each corresponding to one complete stanza (see overview of form for descriptions of the closing chorus). The choral finale fulfills a recapitulatory function, as we see in the analysis that follows, bringing back a number of motivic-thematic ideas from previous episodes. When the themes return at the end, however, they are often heard in drastically transformed states, further masking the already tenuous connection between the orchestral episodes and the choral finale. The choral writing exhibits paired imitation at many points, with the orchestral accompaniment often adding additional

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[45] Shostakovich discusses the use of the factory whistle in a letter to Lev Shulgin (dated 6 June 1927), quoted in editor's note to Shostakovich, Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1, p. 2.

> I liked your idea [to include a factory whistle] very much and now I have come to the place where I should like to have a factory whistle. A few days ago I went to a factory and listened to the whistle to determine its range. The range of sounds is very low. I want one in F♯ and it is essential that a crescendo should be obtained on it from *ppp* to *fff*. In case a whistle cannot be constructed capable of crescendo and diminuendo, it should be not so loud as a real factory whistle. And then its pitch must be precise. . . . The whistles will be *ad libitum* as the saying goes, and if none can be got, they may be replaced by some orchestral instruments. [note: the optional instrumentation involves tuba, trombone, and muted French horns] . . . I should be wanting three or four whistles at the most. I'll specify their pitches later.

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layers of material. Still, the finale rarely achieves the same kind of dense, polyphonic overlapping that characterizes the orchestral episodes.

The orchestral portion of To October is marked by the almost complete absence of key, owing to the music's dense polyphony, linear counterpoint, and chord relations that lie outside the realm of functional tonality. The entry of the chorus is accompanied by the symphony's first key signature at reh. 69 (one sharp), but the key itself is ambiguous (G major / E minor). At end of stanza one, the harmonies pass through C major and E minor (reh. 74), before returning to the opening G major / E minor ambiguity (reh. 75). The key signature briefly changes to no sharps or flats for three bars (reh. 78) before switching to four flats (A♭ major, one bar before reh. 79) for the second part of the second stanza.

The brightly colored orchestral interlude that follows stanza two is set in E major, as is the beginning of stanza three, though the presence of E here is somewhat subverted by a strong F♯-B cadence at reh. 84 and the use of a long B pedal. The key becomes increasingly ambiguous in stanza three with the emphasis on C♯ (reh. 85) and the use of an F♯ pedal (reh. 86). The ultrapolyphony that follows the third stanza (rehs. 87-89) is set firmly in F♯ major, leading to B major at the beginning of the final stanza (articulated by a change to five sharps in the key signature). Following another brief move to A♭ major (rehs. 91-92), a strong motion to B♭ is made almost immediately before the key changes to no sharps and flats (reh. 93). Though the ultrapolyphony of rehs. 93-95 is set in C major, an F♯ in the timpani (reh. 95) serves as a dominant pedal, leading to a strong move to B major for the heroic sounding codetta:

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Key structure: closing chorus

stanza one	stanza two		(orchestral interlude)
G / e	G / e	A♭ major	E major
reh. 69	76	79	81

stanza three	(interlude)	stanza four		(ultrapolyphony)	(codetta)
E / c♯	F♯ major	B major	A♭ major	C major	B major
reh. 84	87	90	91	93	96

Two types of "ultrapolyphony"

In his 1928 report to the Leningrad Conservatory, Shostakovich described ultrapolyphony as an orchestral device "in which 22 instruments play simultaneously, each with its own line." The following year he revised the number of instrumental lines upward to 27, adding that ultrapolyphony was a means by which he "attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory" in To October.[46] In my view, there are two types of ultrapolyphony: systematic and unsystematic. Unsystematic ultrapolyphony, characteristic of the first half of episode three, results from superimposing many individual lines, but without the precise ordering of events found in systematic ultrapolyphony. Systematic ultrapolyphony, characteristic of episode one, may be described as a "mathematical" approach to polyphony in which a quasi-serial system of composition affects the musical structure. Note, for example, the rhythm and bowing patterns of Example 1.1.

The systematic ultrapolyphony of the first episode (Largo) contains the most

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[46] Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi," 54-56. When Shostakovich speaks of 22 or 27 individual lines in his device of ultrapolyphony, I believe he is referring to episode three; see especially rehs. 50-52.

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strikingly modern music of Shostakovich's symphonic output. After opening with an unpitched bass drum played almost inaudibly (*ppp*), he superimposes a set of rhythm and bowing patterns in the strings, creating a systematic network of sound. The dramatic effect of moving imperceptibly into the musical sound-world (with a large orchestra and chorus in full view of the audience) calls to mind the opening measures of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, a work that may have served as a model for Shostakovich and other composers of October Jubilee cantatas. Nicolas Slonimsky coined the term "polyrhythmic polytonality" to describe this opening passage, in which many layers of material are systematically combined to create a single sound-mass meant to be perceived as a unity.[47] The first phrase begins on the downbeat of m. 2: basses in quarter notes, with a low, ascending E-F-G-A♭. Each new entry appears in a unique part of the measure and systematically presents smaller note values, moving in increments from quarter notes to triplet sixteenth notes (basses, cellos, violas, and lower second violins slur in groups of four beats, while upper second violins and first violins slur in groups of five beats):[48]

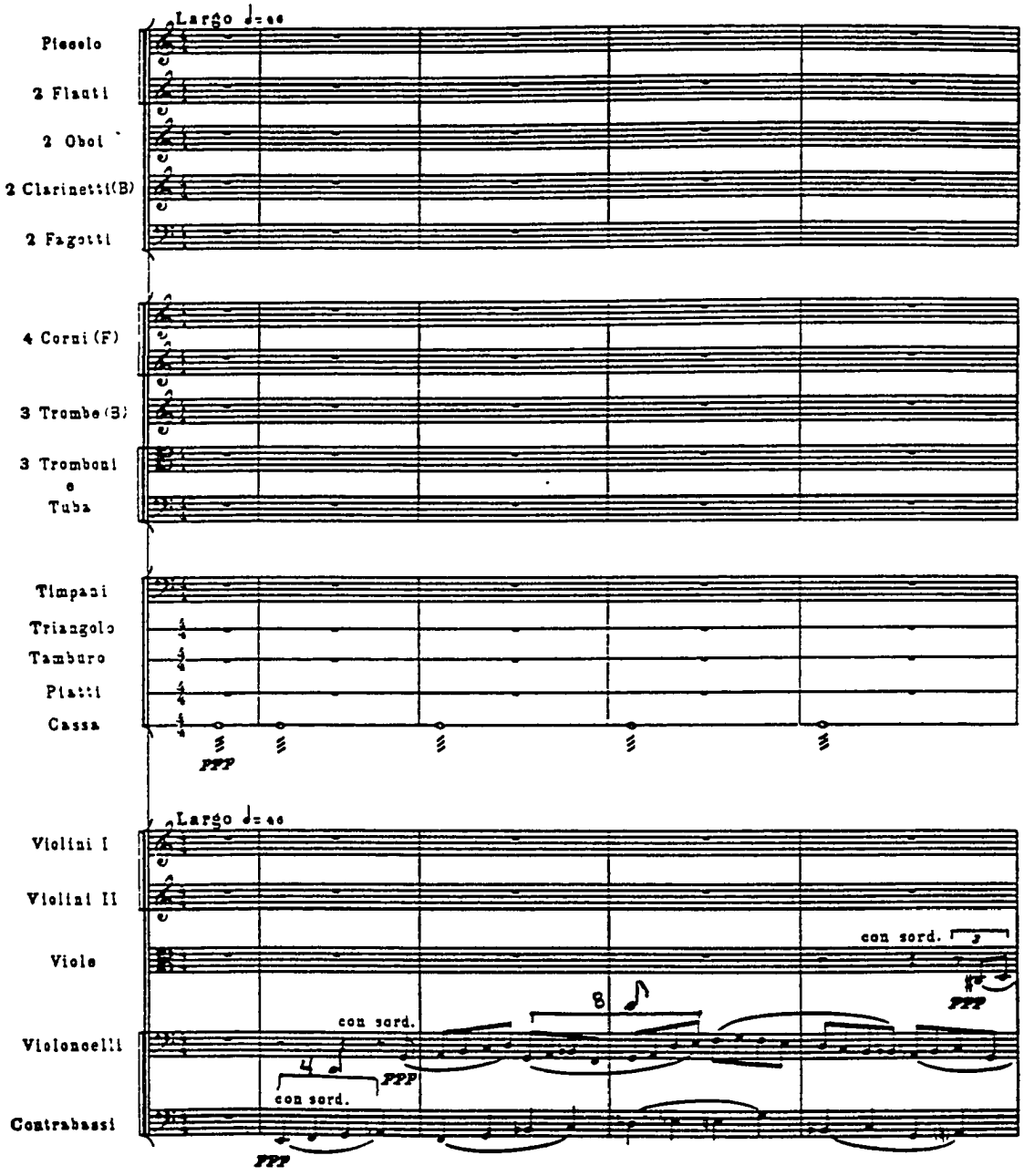
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[47] Nicolas Slonimsky, "Dmitri Dmitrievich Shostakovich," The Musical Quarterly 28 (1945): 423. The kind of systematic ordering of imitative entries seen here is similar to the percussion "Entr'acte" of Shostakovich's first opera The Nose (Act I, scene 2), composed in 1927-28. Though Shostakovich probably did not know Charles Ives's music at this time, the opening of To October also calls to mind the textural stratification in Ives's Second String Quartet, Fourth Symphony, and Three Places in New England (among other works).

[48] Basses: 4 quarter notes per bow; cellos: 8 eighth notes per bow; violas: 12 triplet eighth notes per bow; lower second violins: 16 sixteenth notes per bow; upper second violins: 25 notes per bow (three triplet sixteenths and two duple sixteenths); lower first violins: 25 notes per bow (two duple sixteenths and three triplet sixteenths, although the entry begins with the triplet sixteenth figure); and upper first violins: 30

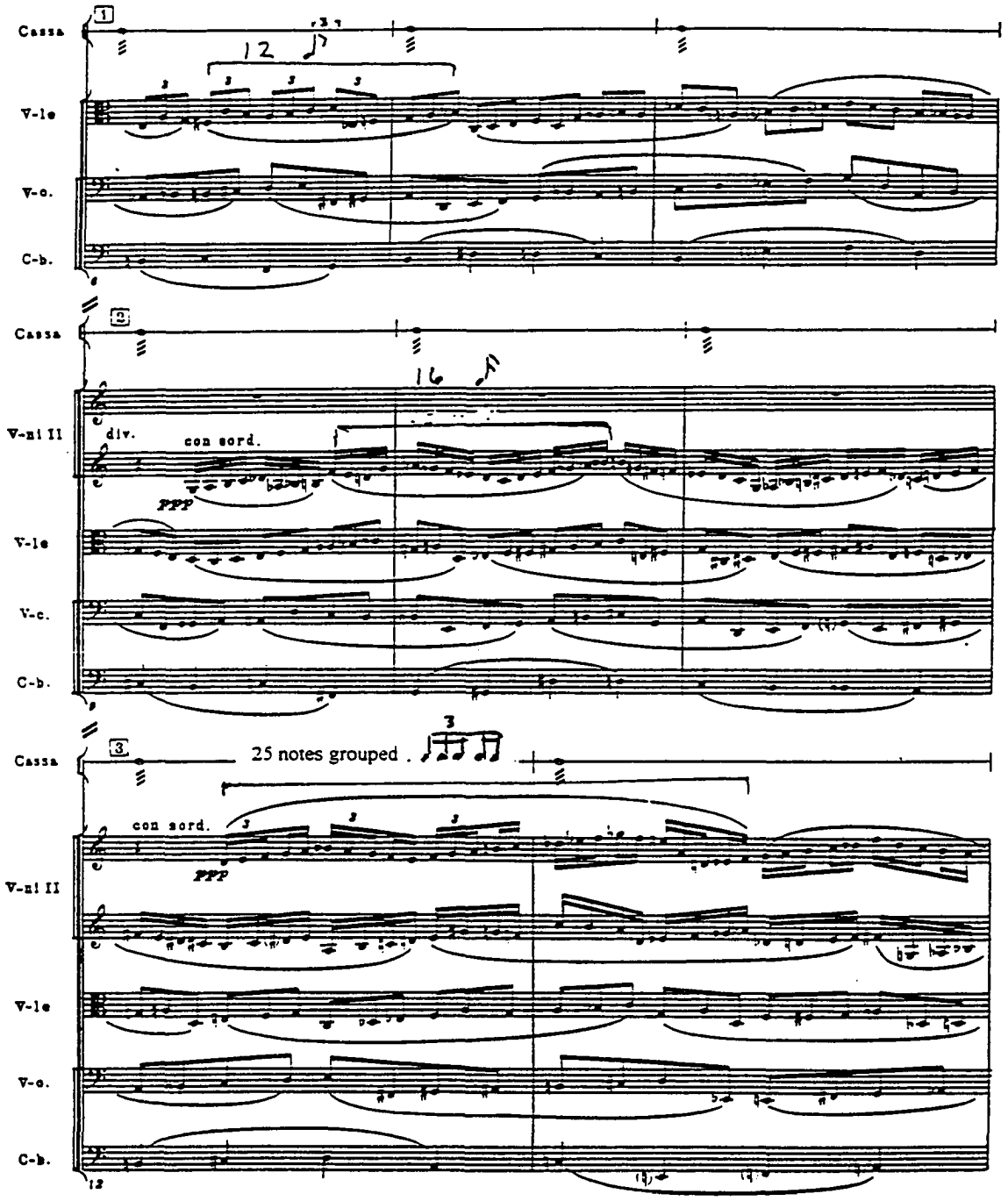
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Example 1.1: To October (Second Symphony), beginning-reh. 4, m. 2

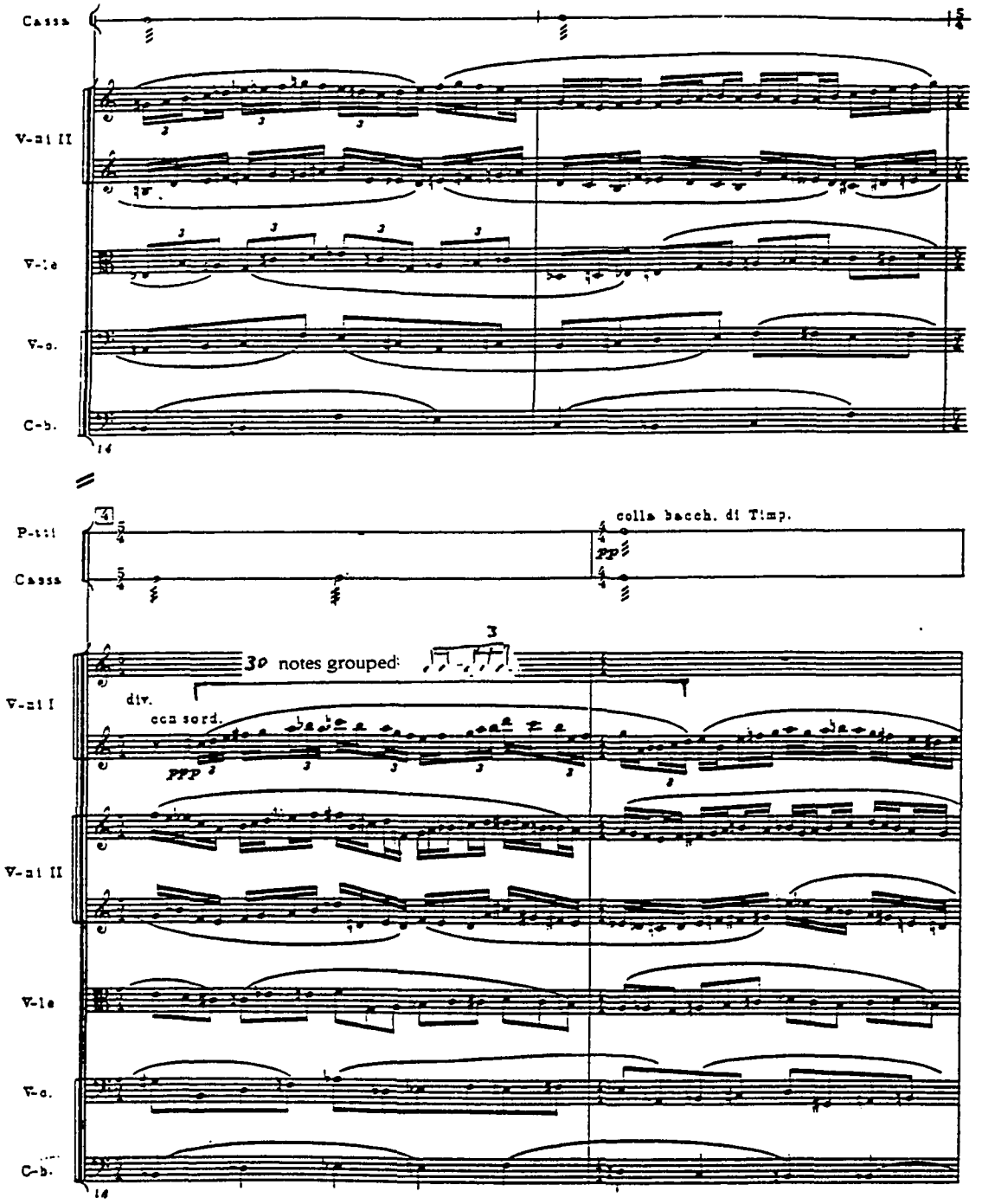


triplet sixteenths per bow (not shown in Example 1.1).

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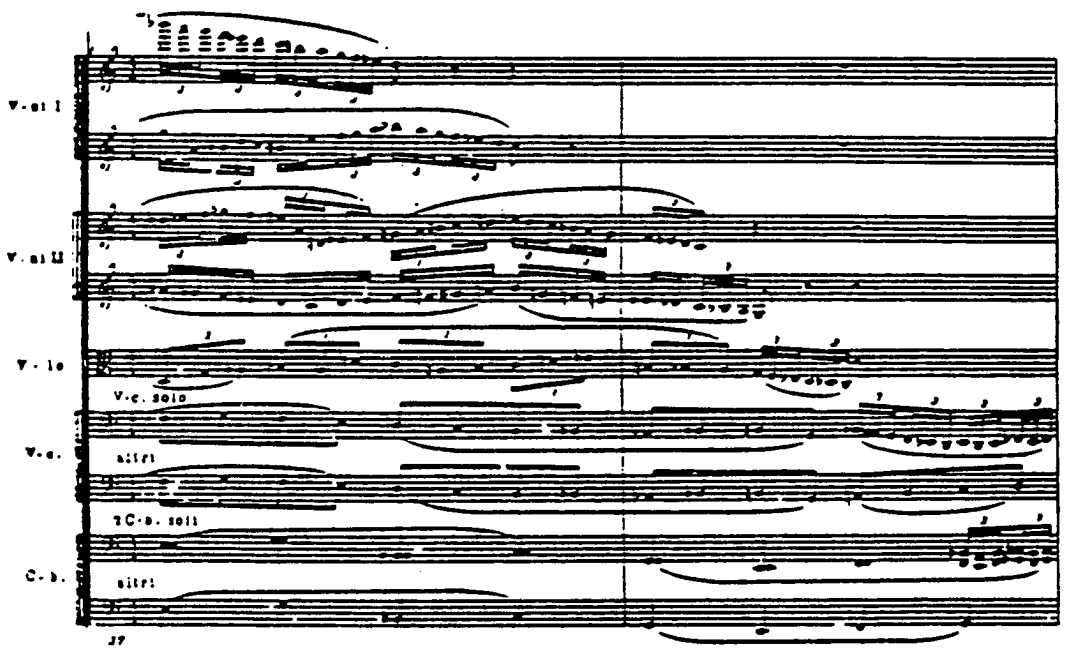
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The final strand enters the ultrapolyphonic texture at reh. 5 (upper *divisi* first violins), and the music at reh. 5 is systematically repeated five times in succession as rehs. 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10. At reh. 11 each instrumental line ends in the reverse order from its respective entry, thus creating a kind of orchestrational palindrome:

Example 1.2: End of systematic ultrapolyphony in episode one, strings, reh. 11, mm. 1-2



In the choral finale, Shostakovich makes reference to the ultrapolyphony of the opening episode on two occasions, but without the "systematic" approach to bowing and rhythm patterns shown above. In Example 1.3 we encounter one such reminiscence during the orchestral interlude between stanzas three and four:

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Example 1.3: Reminiscence of episode one in episode four, reh. 88



At rehs. 93 and 95, surrounding the choral declamation of the poem's final lines, Shostakovich again alludes to the opening ultrapolyphony. Here, however, the non-tonal construction of the opening--which expressed the darkness and oppression of prerevolutionary times--gives way to ultrapolyphony in C major, a key traditionally associated with light and purity (Example 1.4):

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Example 1.4: Reminiscence of episode one in episode four, reh. 95, mm. 1-3



Though Examples 1.3 and 1.4 recall the systematic ultrapolyphony of episode one, they represent the unsystematic type of ultrapolyphony, in which numerous independent lines are combined more or less freely (or unsystematically).

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The idea of unsystematic ultrapolyphony is demonstrated more forcefully in the fugato of episode three (rehs. 30-47). This passage is characterized by a gradual build up of individual lines leading to an exciting climax, a common device in other symphonies by Shostakovich (and one that is particularly evident in the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies). Each line in Example 1.5 (next page) is unique both melodically and rhythmically, though hints of imitation and shared melodic formulas are occasionally heard among the various lines. The unsystematic ultrapolyphony of the fugato begins with a violin solo (ending at reh. 38), followed by a trio (violin, clarinet, and bassoon) and a gradual build up of new themes: oboes, clarinet, bassoon, and violin I (reh. 38); flute and violin II (reh. 39), piccolo flute, flute, and violas (reh. 40); cellos (reh. 42); bass drum and snare drum (reh. 45). The lack of systematic patterning in the fugato results in a seemingly free combination of scales, arpeggios, and idiomatic effects.

The second part of the third episode (reh. 48-52), as suggested earlier, combines both systematic and unsystematic approaches to ultrapolyphony. Unlike the fugato, this is a highly ordered passage that uses a nine-voice canon at the unison (winds), a two-voice canon at the unison (violins), and canonic writing at the octave (violas and cellos move canonically except for the third, fourth and fifth bars of Example 1.6 (pages 55-56), where they move in parallel fourths.

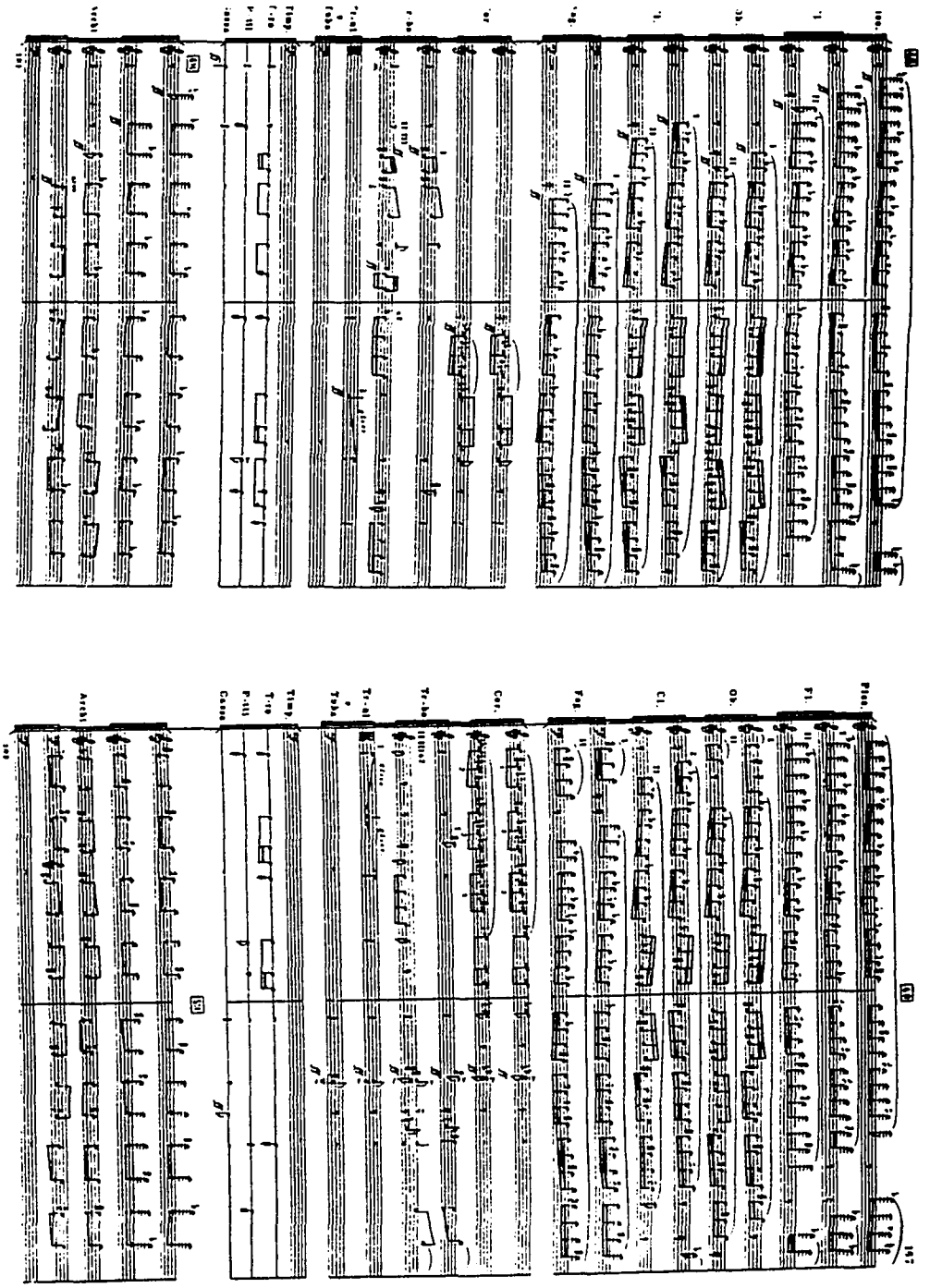
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Example 1 5: Unsystematic ultrapolyphony in episode three, rehs. 29-37

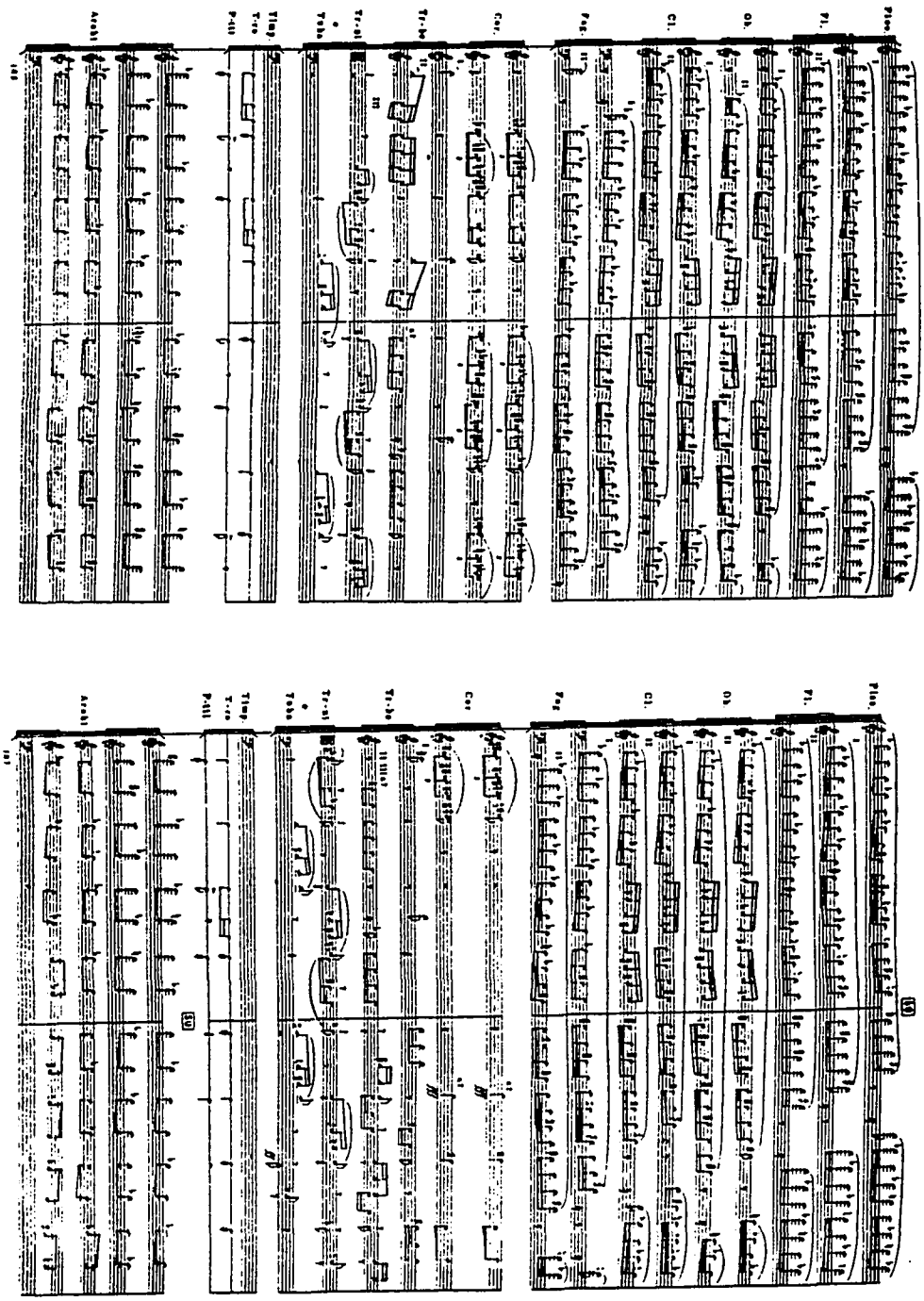


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Example 1.6: Combination of systematic and unsystematic ultrapolyphony, reh. 48-reh. 50, m. 1



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The rapid succession of entries, however, creates a wash of sound, completely obscuring the canonic workings of the passage. In this sense the ultrapolyphony here is different than earlier examples, where each instrumental line is perceptible as it enters. In the woodwind canon--a series of ascending and descending chromatic scales--all nine voices enter systematically, each separated by a single sixteenth note (the initial sequence of canonic entries is altered slightly at reh. 50, with the two bassoons switching their order).

The percussion section during the second part of episode three heightens the musical tension though its martial effects and unsystematic shuffling of rhythmic motives, accents, and trills. The brass section here is divided into three separate layers: French horns provide a barrage of linear and vertical minor seconds; trumpets move mostly by half steps after an ascending chromatic figure; and trombones play glissandi between B and F, followed by a sequencing half-step figure lying within the same B-F range. In rehs. 50-52 the brass layer is marked by a highly chromatic, non-tonal march in the French horns, with the trumpets and trombones engaged in interlocking systems of chromatic sequences. The ultrapolyphony of episode three stops abruptly one bar before reh. 53, leading to a transition (rehs. 53-55) that sharply reduces the level of polyphonic complexity. It is perhaps significant that the third episode prominently features the device of ultrapolyphony, since the third stanza of Bezymensky's text focuses on the idea of struggle. As shown above, struggle turns to victory in the choral finale, where the systematic ultrapolyphony of the first episode--a churning, polytonal sound-mass symbolizing the darkness and chaos of prerevolutionary Russia--is transformed into a series of uplifting gestures that ornament the heroic ending. In the next section, I show

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how Shostakovich complements the struggle-victory archetype by the way he treats the work's leading theme--the "October" theme.

The October theme and the theme of October:

Though the absence of traditional thematic development is a key feature of To October, it would be incorrect to conclude from listening to the symphony that Shostakovich avoids thematicism altogether. The variation and transformation of thematic material in To October, like the use of ultrapolyphony, musically expresses the ideas of struggle and victory found in Bezymensky's text. The October theme, heard for the first time in its entirety in the choral finale (Example 1.7), consists of two phrases:

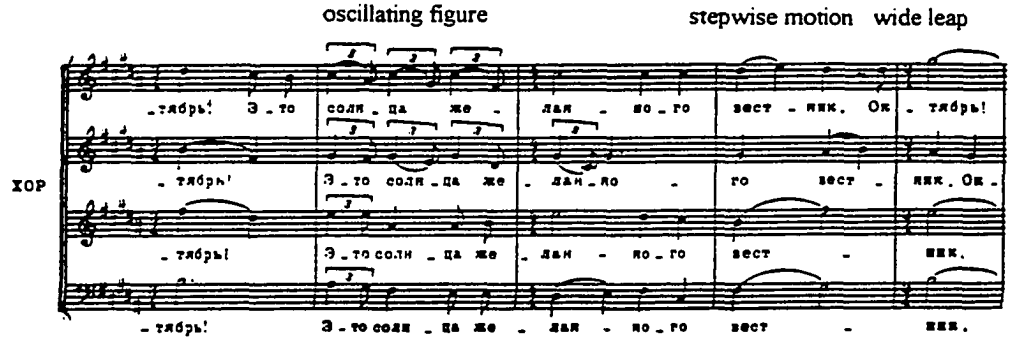
Example 1.7: The October theme, flutes, reh. 76



The October theme is heard prominently at a number of points during the choral finale, including the 20-bar orchestral interlude following the word "Borba!" (struggle), where it is placed in imitative counterpoint (brass and low strings, see Example 1.12). In Shostakovich's setting of stanza four (Example 1.8), a glorification of "Oktyabr!", the upper voices take up the October theme:

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Example 1.8: The October theme, chorus, reh. 90



The idea of struggle, as Shostakovich tells us in 1929, is expressed via the device of ultrapolyphony. In my view, the idea of struggle is also expressed by his treatment of the October theme, a kind of "foredevelopment" in which components of the theme are varied before it is presented in full--reversing the traditional statement-development formula common to symphonic music. The October theme, as it were, struggles into being during the second and fourth episodes before being stated in full during the chorus. The October theme is not a single melody. It exists as a series of melodic variants, a kind of cantus firmus that divorces its referential intervallic patterns (oscillating figure, stepwise motion, leap upward) from specific rhythmic manifestations. The first motivic intimation of the October theme is given in episode two (Example 1.9), where the oscillating figure of the October theme is first presented simply as a motivic fragment that alternates simply between a fixed tone (F) and its lower neighbor (E):

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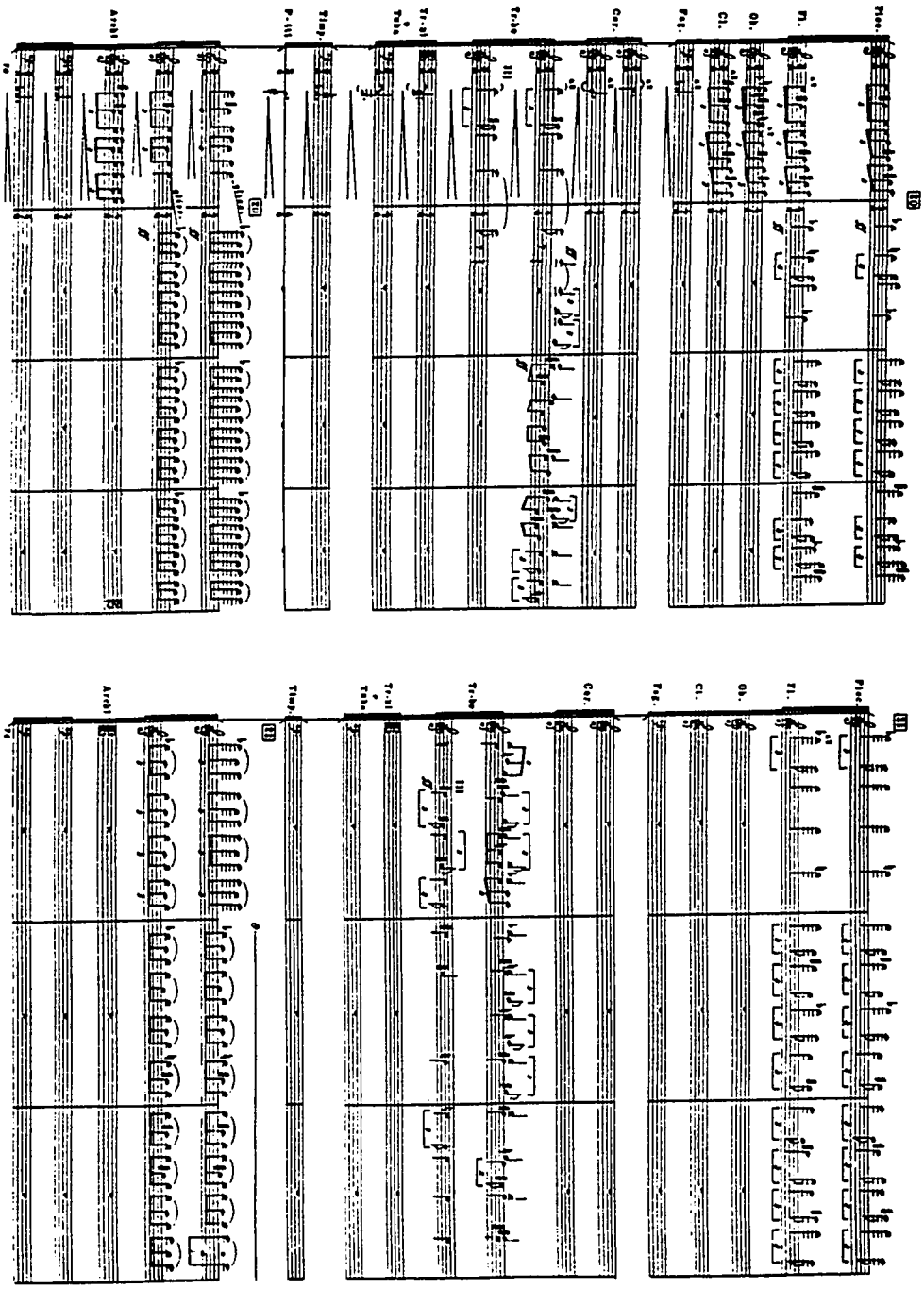
Example 1.9: French horns, reh. 18, mm. 2-reh. 19, m. 1 (written at pitch)



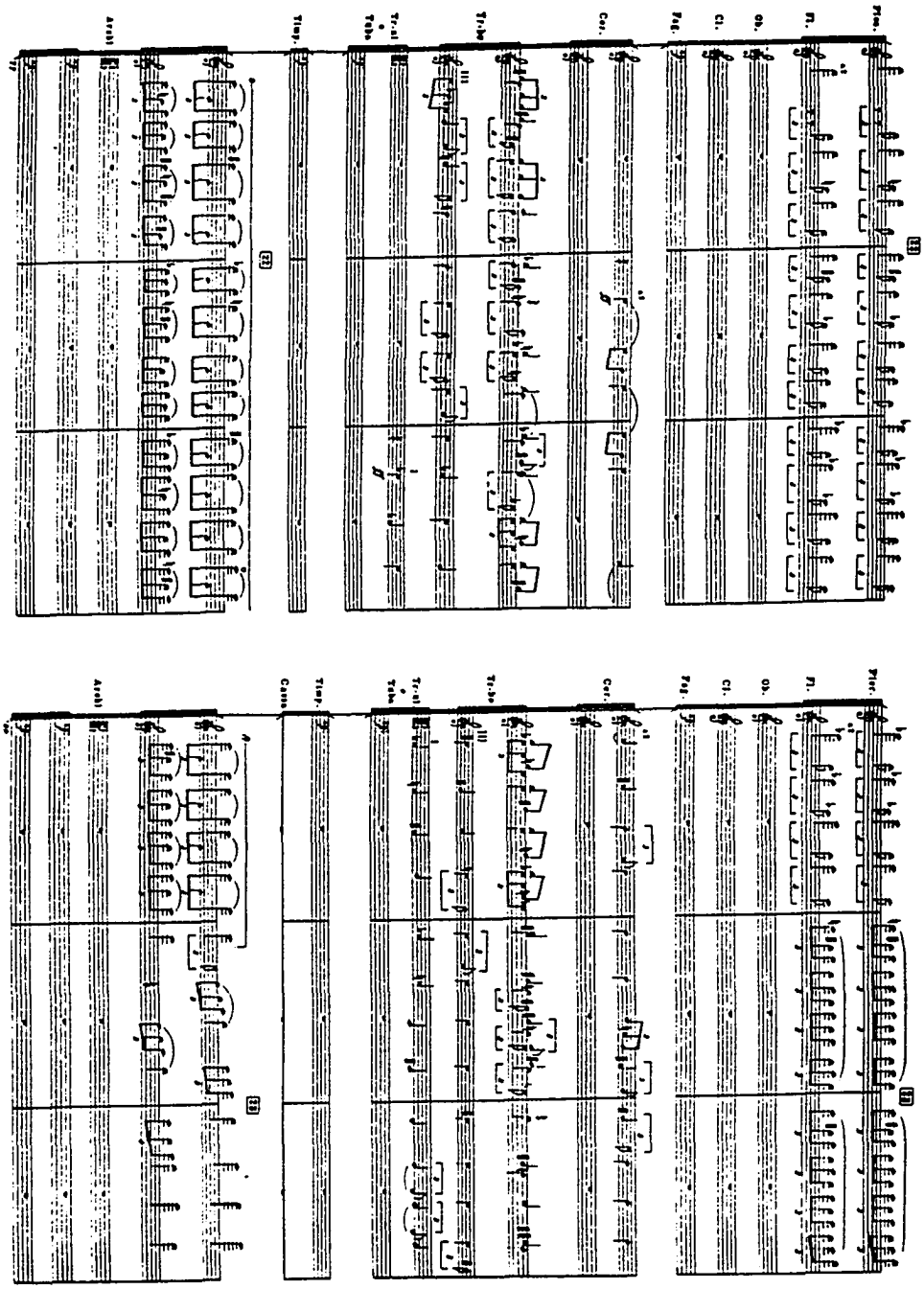
The oscillating figure begins to undergo variation almost immediately. At reh. 20 the number of tones alternating with the fixed tone becomes greater as melodic and rhythmic variants are heard in the winds and brass. In Example 1.10 various manifestations of the oscillating figure form a major part of the polyphonic interplay. Occurring at a variety of intervals, the oscillating figure in rehs. 20-23 is treated sequentially, with chromatic variants, in canon, and in inversion. Exaggerated by the extreme registers (violin 1 and piccolo), the seemingly chaotic sound here is complicated by canonic imitation of oscillating figures in the brass: trumpet 1 (starting pitch B♭, reh. 20, m. 1), trumpet 3 (starting pitch B♮, reh. 21, m. 1), and horns 1 and 2 (starting pitch F, reh. 22, m. 1). The horns begin their statement in prolonged rhythmic values for the first two bars and then break the canon on the second beat of reh. 23, m. 1; trumpet 3 breaks the canon after the second bar of reh. 22.

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Example 1.10: Continuous variation of the October theme, episode two, winds and brass, reh. 20-reh. 23, m. 1



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Several more references to the October theme are heard in fragments at reh. 23, including a chromatically inflected version in the flutes. In addition to these examples, the oscillating figure of the October theme appears briefly two more times in the second episode: reh. 25, mm. 3-5 (tuba), and one bar before reh. 28 (upper strings).

The October theme returns in episode four, just prior to the chorus' entrance. The oscillating portion of the October theme is heard prominently in the plaintive clarinet melody at rehs. 61-64. The range of the oscillation here reaches its widest interval--a perfect twelfth. Here, too, we hear the first intimations, a kind of coming-into-being, of the second half of the October theme. The contour of the first two phrases in Examples 1.11a and 1.11b sounds remarkably similar to the second half of the October theme (stepwise motion and wide leap upward) as well as the men's recitative that opens the chorus (Example 1.11c). These melodies may be seen as variants of the October theme, again reflecting a kind of continuous variation of the theme.

Example 1.11: Continuous variation of the October theme, episode four

a) clarinet, reh. 61 (written at pitch)
b) clarinet, reh. 62, m. 3-reh. 64 (written at pitch)
c) basses, reh. 69



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The choral finale is filled with references to the October theme. Though the theme is normally heard in the orchestra as accompaniment to the chorus's part, it takes on a leading role at times. As shown earlier, both halves of the October theme are presented together for the first time at the start of stanza two (see Example 1.7). During the settings of stanzas three and four, the October theme dominates the musical fabric: From reh. 81 until the end, Shostakovich alternates passages of ultrapolyphony with passages that feature the October theme, thus confirming the connection between these two musical ideas and the literary images of struggle (the crux of stanza three) and victory (the crux of stanza four) in Bezymensky's text. The October theme, as mentioned earlier, is featured prominently in the twenty-measure orchestral interlude between stanzas two and three, following the choral outburst on "Borba!" (struggle). In Example 1.12, the orchestra breaks into an elaborate, four-part stratified texture that includes the full October theme in the French horns (reh. 81, mm. 1ff), with the trumpets following in canon (reh. 81, mm. 3ff). At reh. 82, the theme is heard in a slower version, with elongated rhythmic values (low strings and brass). In addition to the October theme, two other melodies are featured in this decorative interlude. The first, marked Y, is treated canonically. This three-part melody consists of a leap downward of an octave, an ascending sixteenth-note run, and passagework with many melodic fourths and fifths. Melody Z, a heroic-sounding fanfare, is also characterized by a wide leap and melodic fourths. It, too, is treated canonically (French horn, reh. 81, m. 6- reh. 83, m. 1; trumpet,

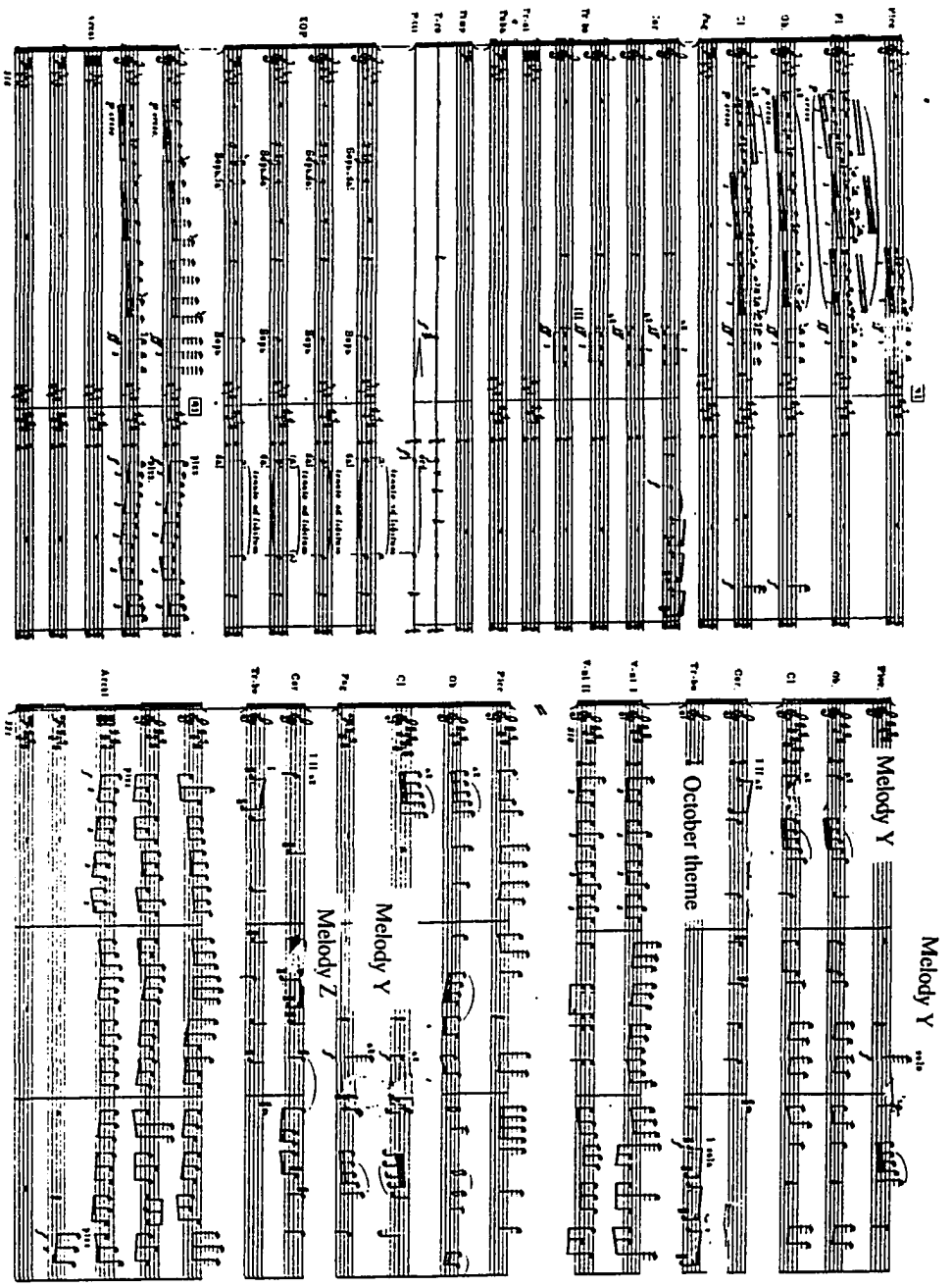
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reh. 82, m. 2- reh. 83, m. 4) and combined with variants (basses and tubas, reh. 83, mm. 2-4).

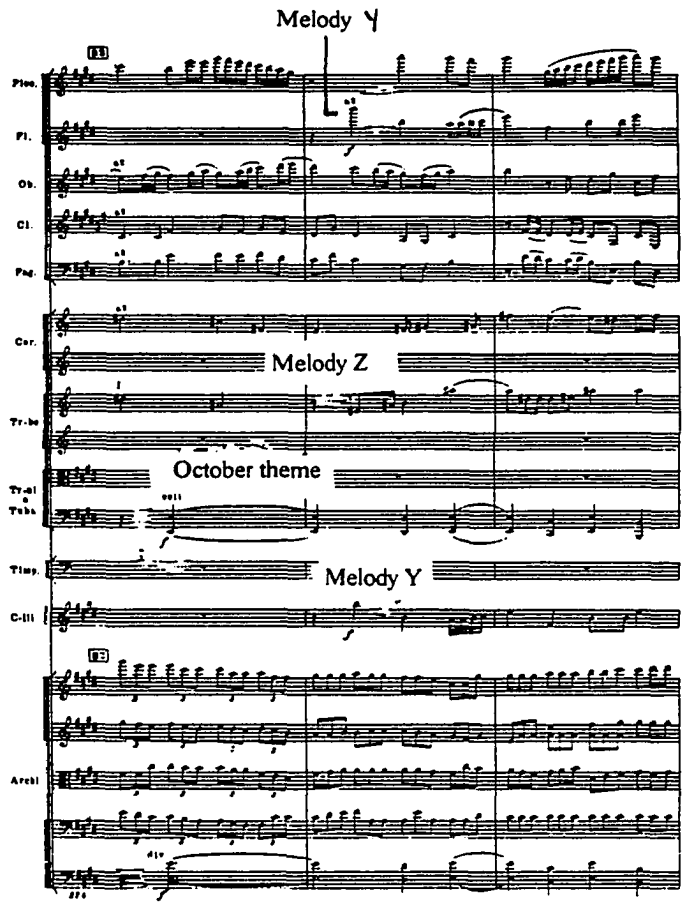
Following the orchestral interlude, the setting of the first half of stanza three (rehs. 84-85) is marked by four items: outbursts on "Borba!", paraphrased imitative entries in each vocal line, a forceful statement of the October theme (flutes, glockenspiel, and violins), and a pedal point on B♮. The second half of stanza three (reh. 86) is characterized by chordal writing that climaxes on the word "Oktyabr" (*fff*, reh. 87, F♯ Major) and sets into motion a passage of ultrapolyphony (rehs. 88-89). With the theme of October dominating the political and artistic landscapes in Soviet Russia during the year 1927, it should be no surprise that the loudest climax occurs on the word "Oktyabr!" Following the final stanza (choral recitation to suggest a workers' chorus), the symphony ends with a final reminiscence of the opening ultrapolyphony and a brief, heroic sounding coda in B major. To summarize Shostakovich's treatment of the October theme: 1) like ultrapolyphony, the variations of the theme in the orchestral episodes, together with its heroic presentation in the choral finale, express the general ideas of struggle and victory in Bezymensky's text; 2) the foredevelopment, or continuous variation of components of the theme before it is fully presented, reverses the traditional statement-development approach associated with symphonic writing; and 3) it demonstrates that he does not eschew thematicism altogether in To October, but rather incorporates it in innovative ways. As we see in the next chapter, the principle of continuous variation becomes the primary means of generating musical structure in The First of May symphony.

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Example 1.12: Variants of the October theme, one bar before reh. 81-reh. 82, m. 3



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October theme

Thematic transformation

In addition to the October theme, transformation is applied to several other motivic-thematic ideas in To October.[49] Two such cases--the trumpet melody at reh. 7, and the trumpet fanfare at reh. 11--show how Shostakovich transforms these ideas over

[49] There are cases of transformation other than the ones I discuss in this section. Compare, for example, the opening measures of the cello/bass recitative at reh. 25 with the clarinets' theme at reh. 60. Also, compare the ascending trumpet figure in the first bar of reh. 48 with a similar figure in the trumpet solo one bar before reh. 57 and trumpet soli one bar before reh. 78.

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the course of the composition. Like the October theme, these themes are always in a state of flux; each statement is a transformation of the other. Quite unlike the October theme, however, these themes do not "struggle into existence" through a process of continuous variation. They are first presented in episode one and then transformed in subsequent episodes.

The first perceivable melody in To October, set in relief against the swirling sound-mass of systematic ultrapolyphony in the strings, is the trumpet melody shown in Example 1.13. Here Shostakovich presents two ideas: 1) a surprise quotation of "Happy Birthday to You," an irreverent reference to the tenth anniversary of the Revolution, found in alien chromatic surroundings; and 2) an interval series that is transformed at a number of points during the first and second episodes:

Example 1.13: "Happy Birthday" quotation and interval series, trumpet, reh. 6-reh. 8, m. 2 (written at pitch)

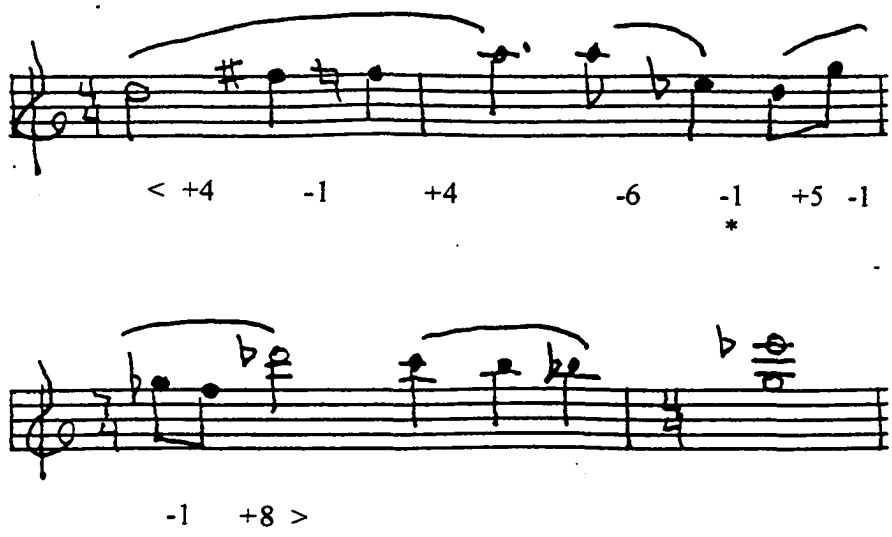


Three bars after reh. 8, the trumpet melody continues the interval series in inversion, with A♭ as the starting pitch. Though the interval pattern is abandoned altogether in the

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first bar of reh. 9, the trumpet preserves interval cells derived from the pitch series (melodic seconds and thirds) until reh. 10. The end of the trumpet's solo in Example 1.14 elides with a variant of the interval series:

Example 1.14: Variant of the interval series, flutes, reh. 10



In Example 1.14 the interval pattern is preserved, but the line is transposed up a perfect fifth in pitch and the rhythms differ from Example 1.13. Still, the effect is the same as the trumpet's version at reh. 7: an upper register melody set against set against dissonant chords in the brass and ultrapolyphony in the strings.

The dreamy, non-tonal quality of these two statements contrasts greatly with the sharply etched, vigorous march at the beginning of episode two. This march theme (Example 1.15), a transformation of the interval series from reh. 7, is then restated in the winds at reh. 16:

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Example 1.15: Variant of the interval series, episode two, cello and bass, reh. 13, mm. 1-2



The transformation of the interval series into a march-like theme in the second episode is perhaps a reflection of the changes that take place in the first half of Bezymensky's poem: the first stanza depicts the darkness and chaos of prerevolutionary times, but the second stanza awakens to a resolute marshalling of will. Unlike Shostakovich's use of the October theme, the pitch series from reh. 7 does not become a major feature of the symphony. He simply presents the idea, repeats it in a modified form, transforms its character in the second episode, and drops it from the remainder of the composition. The interval series never reappears.

The trumpet fanfare at reh. 11 (Example 1.16), the second thematic idea I wish to examine, emerges from a chromatic chord progression in the brass that begins at reh. 6. The progression cadences at reh. 11 on a long-held E♭-major triad pedal, whereupon three trumpets play a distant fanfare:

Example 1.16: Trumpet fanfare, reh. 11 (actual pitch)



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Transformations of this trumpet fanfare are found at several points in the remaining episodes. In Example 1.17, following the energetic march theme at the beginning of the second episode, we hear a chromatic flourish in the trumpets and horns--a transformation of the earlier fanfare. Here the fanfare is altered rhythmically and cadentially:

Example 1.17: Transformation of the trumpet fanfare, episode two, trumpet and horn, reh. 15, mm. 2-3 (actual pitch)



At the end of the third episode, trumpets again recall the fanfare (Example 1.18). As a single layer in a three-part texture, however, the fanfare is not featured as prominently as it was before. Though the fanfare takes on the same rhythmic shape as previous examples, it is transposed down a major second:

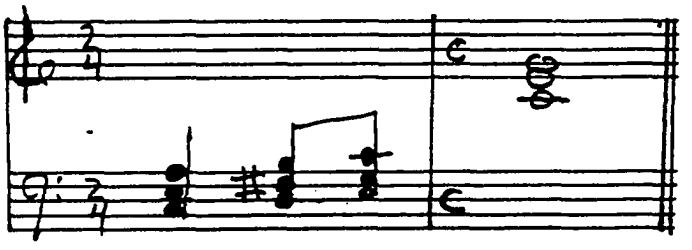
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Example 1.18: Transformation of the trumpet fanfare, episode three, trumpets, reh. 54, mm. 1-2



Finally, in the choral finale, Shostakovich uses the fanfare one bar before reh. 74 (Example 1.19), at the end of stanza one:[50]

Example 1.19: Transformation of the trumpet fanfare, choral finale, French horns, one bar before reh. 74-reh. 74, m. 1 (actual pitch)



Coming just prior to the words "Molchanie. Stradanie. Gnet" (silent, suffering, oppressed), Example 1.19 marks the last time the fanfare is heard in the composition. For this reason, Stefan Weiss has suggested that the fanfare is to be interpreted as a sign of silence, suffering, and oppression.[51] Though this is an intriguing notion, and one that

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[50] The score in Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 1 is incorrect here. At reh. 74 (page 185) the score is missing the final chord of the fanfare (whole notes, at pitch, C-E-G). The Kalmus edition (page 53) is correct to include this chord.

[51] Weiss, "Text und Form," 153.

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could be justified in the examples found in the first and fourth episodes, he fails to adequately explain the fanfare's use in the second and third episode, where it appears at seemingly random points. In my view the fanfare does not carry the kind of "extra-musical" significance that the October theme conveys, but rather presents the listener with generalized images commonly associated with fanfares, some of which include pageantry, heroism, call to battle, and signal of victory.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined both the cultural context and compositional procedures of Dmitri Shostakovich's symphonic dedication To October (Second Symphony), a work composed on commission from Agitodel in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Largely indifferent to the task at hand--composing a politically inspired cantata on a bad text--he nevertheless wrote a compelling work that "attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory" (from his 1929 report to the Leningrad Conservatory). My analysis demonstrates how Shostakovich depicted "struggle" and "victory" with the use of two kinds of ultrapolyphony and the "foredevelopment" of the work's leading theme--the October theme. With its dense overlapping of polyphonic lines, ultrapolyphony represented the ideas of prerevolutionary oppression and struggle in the first and third episodes, respectively. In the final episode, however, ultrapolyphony returns at the very end in the key of C major, the key of light and purity, to underscore the heroic victory of "October!" The two-part October theme, meanwhile, literally struggles into existence during the

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second and fourth episodes through a process of foredevelopment--i.e., components of the theme are varied before the theme itself is presented in full. When the entire October theme is finally heard during the closing chorus, it is presented as a heroic anthem, heralding the arrival of a victorious October. Nearly three and a half decades after composing To October, Shostakovich used the October theme again, this time as the main theme in the final movement of the Twelfth Symphony (Example 1.20):

Example 1.20: The October theme in Shostakovich's Twelfth Symphony, fourth movement, horns, reh. 93, mm. 1-3 (written at pitch)



As before, the October theme is used here in a piece that has a revolutionary subtext. The Twelfth Symphony, subtitled "The Year 1917," is a socialist realist symphonic portrait of revolutionary Russia in four movements. The final movement, titled "The Dawn of Humanity," expresses the hopes of mankind, supposedly brought about by the victory of the October Revolution. Though Shostakovich seems to have been simply "playing a role" in the composition of his Second and Twelfth symphonies--to fulfill a commission in the first case and to curry favor with the Party in the second--he clearly forged a direct association in both works between the October theme (a musical idea) and the theme of October (a political ideal).

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Premiered in early November 1927 during Leningrad's October Jubilee, To October received favorable attention from the modernist press, but was viewed with skepticism by members of influential proletarian arts groups (RAPM, Prokoll) who completely opposed western-influenced modern music--even in the service of agitational propaganda. Quite unlike the modernists, who championed Shostakovich as a politically committed fellow-traveler, leading "proletarian" critics questioned his sincerity in writing a composition with a revolutionary theme.[52] During the proletarian episode in music (1928-32)--a time of communist orthodoxy, harsh censorship, antimodernism, and organized harassment of the intelligentsia--To October fell even further out of favor, despite its overt political content. After the stalinist restructuring of the arts in April 1932, which made artistic life slightly less repressive until 1936, critics called To October an important work in the early history of Soviet symphonic music.[53] Though regarded by Soviet critics as a leading "song symphony" (one that incorporates orchestral and vocal resources) To October received few performances in Soviet Russia--and even fewer outside the country.[54]

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[52] Typical are the comments in M. Ivanov-Boretsky, "Simfonicheskii kontsert Assotsiatsii Sovremennoi Muzyki v oznamenovanie desyaletetia Oktyabr (4 Dekabrya, 1927)" (Symphonic concert of the ASM: 10-years after October) Muzykalnoe obrazovanie, no. 1 (1928): 72.

[53] In Chapter Five, see the comments of Ostretsov and Ryzhkin at the 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme* (discussion on symphonism) sponsored by the Union of Soviet Composers.

[54] Boris Schwarz reminds us that hostility toward this politically agitational symphony limited the number of performances in western Europe and the United States, and shaped the reception among western critics. Orchestras in Philadelphia (1932) and London (1962) even went so far as to omit the choral finale altogether! See Schwarz,

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Perhaps to distance himself from the "leftist" sounding title To October, and to reconfigure the work's status as a symphony, Shostakovich renamed it his Second Symphony sometime in the early 1930s (as early as 1931, or as late as 1934: the evidence, as we see later, is inconclusive). Following the official censure of Shostakovich by the Communist Party in 1936, the Second Symphony lay largely unperformed until the 1960s. During the antiformalist campaign of the late 1940s, another terribly repressive phase for Soviet artists and intellectuals, he was charged with being the leading formalist among Soviet composers. Hard-line officials in the Communist Party and Composers' Union pointed directly to the Second Symphony as an example of formalist music, sealing the work's fate until 1958, when formerly banned works of the past were rehabilitated. (In Chapter Three I examine leftism, formalism, and constructivism as terms of critical discourse in the reception history of To October.) Although the critical appraisal of To October changed for the better in the 1960s, Shostakovich remained guarded about his attitudes toward the piece. Perhaps embarrassed by the political content and youthful modernism of both To October and The First of May symphony, he dissuaded conductors, including his son Maksim, from conducting them.[55]

Music and Musical Life, 80.

[55] Ibid., 646.

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Chapter Two
"The 'May symphony' expresses the mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction"

From 1927 until 1930 Dmitri Shostakovich was a postgraduate student in composition at the Leningrad Conservatory. Like all educational and cultural institutions across the Soviet Union, the Conservatory enacted radical reforms during this period: students and teachers were removed if they did not withstand ideological scrutiny (i.e., if they were members of the intelligentsia), classes were abolished in favor of workshops that stressed collective work and collaboration, traditional methods of pedagogy and composition were eliminated, and ideological demands were placed on all creative work.[1] The period from 1928 until 1932 marks one of the most repressive episodes of Soviet music history--the proletarian episode in music.[2] By enforcing new censorship regulations, proletarian music groups, led by RAPM (Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians), attempted to transform Soviet music into a milieu of utilitarian music and patriotic marches. Nearly all the works Shostakovich composed during the proletarian episode are connected in some way to the theater (opera, ballet, incidental music, film) and reflect some kind of overt political message; this is largely a result of the new

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[1] For a discussion of reforms at the Moscow and Leningrad conservatories, see Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, enlarged ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 101-03.

[2] The phrase paraphrases the title of a book devoted to literature of this period: Edward J. Brown, The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature, 1928-32 (New York: Octagon, 1970).

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demands placed on Soviet composers.[3] Quite unlike previous years, Shostakovich wrote only two independently circulated pieces (i.e., works not connected to the theater) from 1928 until 1932: The First of May symphony, op. 20 (1929), and Six Romances on Texts of Japanese Poets for tenor and orchestra, op. 21 (1928-32).

This chapter examines the repressive political and musical environment in Soviet Russia during the proletarian episode and provides an interpretation of how these factors shaped the composition of Shostakovich's The First of May symphony (1929), later renamed the Third Symphony. In addition, I offer an analysis of the continuous variation of themes in the symphony, illustrating how the process, in Shostakovich's words, "expresses the mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction."[4] Composed as a graduation piece in partial fulfillment of the *aspirant* (postgraduate) diploma from the Leningrad Conservatory, The First of May served as political cover, shielding Shostakovich from mounting criticism in the press that his music, especially his first opera The Nose, did not contribute to the goals of socialist construction. Because of its complex style and lack of overt ideological content, all but a few critics treated the opera with great contempt.

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[3] Opera: The Nose, op. 14 (1927-28). Ballet: The Golden Age, op. 22 (1929-30); and Bolt, op. 27 (1931). Incidental music: The Bedbug, op. 19 (1929); The Shot, op. 24 (1929); Virgin Soil, op. 25 (1930); Rule, Britannia!, op. 28 (1931); Hypothetically Murdered, op. 31 (1931); and Hamlet, op. 32 (1931). Film: New Babylon, op. 18 (1928-29); Alone, op. 26 (1930-31); Golden Mountains, op. 30 (1931); and The Counterplan, op. 33 (1932).

[4] Quoted in Manashir A. Yakubov, "'Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi'" (I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 10 (1986): 56. ". . . v 'Maiskoi simfonii,' esli mozhno tak vyrazitsya, nastroenie prazdnika mirnovo stroitelstva."

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In mid 1929, after a concert performance of The Nose was roundly criticized in the press, Shostakovich left Leningrad for a summer in the Crimea, where he wrote The First of May symphony, a single-movement symphonic cantata with a choral finale on an ideological theme. The work's descriptive title, vocal resources, and political text were all obligatory if he wished to graduate from a conservatory now ruled by supporters of the proletarian line. Knowing that an ideologically correct piece would satisfy the demands of the newly-installed proletarian music establishment, he may have hoped, too, that performances of The First of May would deflect criticism from his intention to present a fully staged version of The Nose in early 1930. It is no coincidence, I believe, that this symphony received its first performance just two days after the premiere of The Nose--a kind of preemptive strike to head off what was sure to be a firestorm in the press over the controversial opera. Even though he wrote The First of May largely for political reasons, it is an inventive and complex symphony that completely avoids thematic recurrence--perhaps a first in the history of symphonic music. For his part, Shostakovich seemed pleased by the results, as shown by comments he made in late November 1931:

> Out of all these works [written in the past three years], the only one which, to my mind, can lay claim to a place in the history of Soviet music is the May Day Symphony, despite all its imperfections. In saying this I do not wish to imply that all the other works mentioned above are worthless, but simply that, being written for the theater, they should not be considered as independent works.[5]

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[5] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitora" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6. "Edinstvenno, chto mozhet, po moemu mneniyu, pretendovat na 'zanyatie mesta' v razvitii sovetskoi muzykalnoi kultury--eto tolko 'Pervomaiskaya simfonia,' nesmotrya na ryad nedostatkov etovo sochinenia. Ya ne khochu skazat, chto vse ostalnoe, mnoyu napisannoe, nikuda ne goditsya. No vse ostalnoe svyazano s teatrom i ne imeet samostoyatelnovo khozhdenia."

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Later in life, as mentioned in Chapter One, he expressed ambivalence over the political and musical content of The First of May and its companion, the symphonic dedication To October.

Soft and hard lines on culture in early Soviet Russia

By expelling the Left Opposition from the Communist Party at the Fifteenth Party Congress (December 1927), Josef Stalin engineered sweeping policy changes in all phases of Soviet life and culture.[6] Paradoxically, he incorporated many oppositionist ideas into the First Five-Year Plan (1928-31/32), a state-directed program of industrialization and agricultural collectivization. The radical shift in economic direction--from the quasi-capitalist New Economic Policy (NEP) to a rigidly state-directed Five-Year Plan--yielded disastrous results and was halted a year earlier than expected. Living standards plummeted for workers, and many parts of the Soviet Union were transformed into a vast, deadly labor camp. Millions perished in the widespread famine of the early 1930s, especially in Ukraine. To control opposition to the radical industrialization and collectivization policies, the Communist Party encouraged state-

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[6] Leading studies published recently in English on First Five-Year Plan culture include Sheila Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992); Boris Groys, The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-garde, Dictatorship, and Beyond, trans. Charles Rougle. (Princeton: Princeton University, 1992); Matthew C. Bown, Art Under Stalin (Oxford: Phaidon Press, 1991). A. Kemp-Welch, Stalin and the Literary Intelligentsia, 1928-1932 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1991); Hans Gunther, ed., The Culture of the Stalin Period (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990); and Philip Pomper, Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin: the Intelligentsia and Power (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990).

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sponsored political intimidation of "socially alien" classes (bourgeois, the middle class, kulaks, and the intelligentsia)--in sharp contrast to the Party's conciliatory attitude of the late New Economic Policy period. The first indication of a change in policy toward the intelligentsia came on 28 March 1928, when Pravda charged that engineers and technicians from the Shakhty area of the Donbass region had conspired to commit sabotage. The resulting Shakhty trial put into question the loyalty of the country's intelligentsia and led to a series of show-trials and purges over the next three years. Accusations of sabotage were frequently leveled against the technical intelligentsia (engineers, technicians, and managers in the field of industry) and so-called kulaks (middle-class and prosperous peasants). Meanwhile, the creative intelligentsia (artists of all types) were marshalled in the direction of strict ideological orthodoxy.

The First Five-Year Plan has been aptly described by Sheila Fitzpatrick (among others) as Stalin's cultural revolution.[7] The party leadership replaced the existing soft line on culture--characterized by non-interference, tolerance of modernism, conciliation with "bourgeois specialists" and "fellow travelers"--with a hard line. During this period, the administration of Soviet cultural life was placed almost exclusively in the hands of proletarian arts groups that advocated a hard line on culture--characterized by

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[7] Fitzpatrick writes in The Cultural Front (p. 115): "In the First Five Year Plan period, the term 'cultural revolution' was used in a special sense, different from earlier or later Soviet usages. It described a political confrontation of 'proletarian' Communists and the 'bourgeois' intelligentsia, in which the Communists sought to overthrow the cultural authorities inherited from the old regime. The aim of the Cultural Revolution was to create a new 'proletarian intelligentsia.' Its method was class war."

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bureaucratic interference, ideological orthodoxy, and censorship.[8] Other manifestations of the hard line included discrimination against the creative intelligentsia, coercion against political opponents, and contempt for established tradition. A decade before Stalin's cultural revolution, such hard-line attitudes were dismissed by the party leadership, as shown by Lenin's purge of left-wing communists from the cultural ministries in the years 1920-21. After their dismissal from posts in Proletkult and Narkompros, ultraleft artists and critics reorganized in 1923 to form RAPP, RAPM, and other organizations dedicated to establishing a proletarian hegemony in the arts. Though they were openly rejected by both the party leadership and the Left Opposition during the early to mid 1920s, proletarian arts groups enjoyed broad support from radicalized students, lower ranks of the Party, the Komsomol (Communist Youth League), and ad hoc vigilante groups. With the imposition of a hard line on culture in 1928, the Party now turned to RAPP, RAPM, Komsomol, and agit-prop commissions in the government to intimidate the intelligentsia and reshape Soviet artistic life.

The return to class warfare during the proletarian episode capitalized on existing tensions among Soviet workers, many of whom deeply resented the intelligentsia's privileged position during NEP.[9] Many citizens bitterly opposed the socio-economic inequality offered by NEP and considered the state's support of private enterprise to be a betrayal of the Revolution. Earlier in the decade, working-class resentment of NEP led

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[8] Ibid., 91-114.

[9] For a summary of the origins and manifestations of class warfare during the First Five-Year Plan period, see Chapters Five and Six of Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front, 91-148.

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to the formation of a Left Opposition which openly challenged the party leadership in 1923-24 and led to widespread social purges in housing, education, and the workplace. By 1925 the effects of social purging had proved to be counterproductive: morale suffered among the country's elite, emigration increased, educational standards dropped, and economic ministries warned of catastrophe. In response, the Party passed a series of resolutions in 1925 that enacted relatively liberal policies in the fields of trade, industry, education, and culture. The Central Committee resolution of 1 July 1925 ("On the policy of the Party in the field of literature") endorsed a soft line on culture that vowed accommodation with "fellow travellers" (bourgeois intellectuals who expressed sympathies with the Revolution), pledged the Party's non-interference in cultural affairs, and encouraged artists of opposing camps to work together in building a future proletarian culture.[10] In practice, the Central Committee resolution relaxed restrictions on the formation of arts organizations, gave artists slightly more freedom to experiment, expanded arts subsidies, and financed a host of new specialized arts journals.

Despite the relative liberalism of the late NEP period, the state still relied on monopolies, censorship, internal security, and other forms of coercion to prevent free expression in public, in the press, and in publishing. The noose tightened greatly, however, starting in 1928. Protests against the ascendancy of "social aliens" in the professional ranks during NEP turned to retribution in the late 1920s, with the reinstitution of class warfare and social purges. Purges were first carried out in 1928

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[10] For a translation of the 1 July 1925 resolution, see Edward Brown, The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature, 235-40.

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without direct Party approval, prompting the Central Committee to criticize the zealousness of ad hoc purge committees who claimed to speak on behalf of the Party.[11] But in the spring of 1929, the Sixteenth Party Congress adopted resolutions openly calling for a purge of the entire governmental bureaucracy.[12] Over the next two and a half years, party activists conducted social and ideological purges in the workplace, education, culture, government, and housing. In the field of education, Komsomol and local party committees carried out purges that resulted in thousands of faculty and students being expelled at all levels of the Soviet system.[13] The purges reached Shostakovich on 15 April 1929, when he was dismissed from a minor teaching position at the Leningrad Choreographic Technical College for being a "social alien."[14]

The cultural purges of 1929-31 were part of a broad program to combat the so-called "right deviation" (i.e., adherence to NEP) in the Party, government, and society.[15] Party activists, agitprop commissions, and Komsomol members supervised *kultpokhoda* (cultural campaigns, read: purges) against "rightism" in government, education, industry, agriculture, and culture. According to Sheila Fitzpatrick:

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[11] Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front, 131.

[12] Ibid., 135.

[13] Larry E. Holmes, "Purges and Projects, 1929-1930," in The Kremlin and the Schoolhouse (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 118-26.

[14] Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 71.

[15] For excerpts of documents relating to the Right Opposition, led in the Politburo by Bukharin and Rykov, see Robert V. Daniels, ed., A Documentary History of Communism in Russia (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993), 162-173.

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> The Cultural Revolution carried the message that conciliators of the peasantry, conciliators of the intelligentsia (the press represented Narkompros as the archetypal "bureaucratic" commissariat), Nepmen, kulaks, café-haunting literati, wreckers, expropriated capitalists, and foreign spies were all on the same side in the political struggle and collectively represented the "rightist danger" to the party.[16]

The Central Committee took a giant step toward enforcing a hard line against the creative intelligentsia with its resolution of 28 December 1928 ("On the serving of the mass reader with literature"). The resolution instituted new policies that promoted mass education, transferred publishing control to proletarian arts groups, and consolidated the publishing industry.[17] By the summer of 1929, former bastions of the soft line were radicalized (State Publishing House, Narkompros, the specialized press) and governmental censorship commissions (Glavlit and Glavrepertkom) were controlled by hard-line ideologues. In this repressive environment, many writers, visual artists, musicians, and dramatists lost outlets in which to publish, create, and perform.

Though the 29 December 1928 resolution directly addressed the state of mass literature, its implications were felt in all fields of cultural activity, including the liquidation of leading specialized publications in the arts. During late NEP, under soft-line policies enacted by the Central Committee resolution of 1 July 1925, there were no fewer than ten specialized music journals in Leningrad and Moscow:

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[16] Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front, 125.

[17] For a translation of the 28 December 1928 Central Committee resolution, see Edward Brown, The Proletarian Episode, 241-42.

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De musica (Leningrad, 1925-28)
Muzyka i byt (Leningrad, 1927)
Muzyka i revolyutsia (Moscow, 1925-29)
Muzykalnoye obrazovanie (Moscow, 1926-30)
Novaya muzyka (Leningrad, 1926-28)
Novyi zritel (Moscow, 1924-29)
Persimfans (Moscow, 1926-29)
Sovetskaya filarmonia (Moscow, 1928-29)
Sovremennaya muzyka (Moscow, 1924-29)
Zhizn iskusstva (Leningrad, 1923-29)

Under the new policy, however, all periodicals that did not hold up to the ideological scrutiny of party activists were banned. In the field of music, journals that held editorial policies consistent with the ideological platform of RAPM were merged by decree, while those that catered to the intelligentsia or were sympathetic to modern music were completely eliminated. By 1930 there were only three music journals in Soviet Russia--all were devoted to mass musical education and proletarian music: Muzykalnoye obrazovanie (Moscow, 1926-30), Proletarskii muzykant (Moscow, 1929-32), Za proletarskuyu muzyku (Moscow, 1930-32). Remarkably, the only periodical to cover musical life in Leningrad on a regular basis from 1929 until 1933 was a theater journal, Rabochii i teatr (Worker and Theater), a publication that frequently documented Shostakovich's activities. In Rabochii i teatr, as elsewhere, critics that supported RAPM's attitudes toward music and musical life made Shostakovich a main target of their abuse.

RAPM, Shostakovich, and the cultural politics of modern music

Founded in 1923, RAPM was largely a fringe group during NEP. Its members were young, aspiring composers and critics whose influence was largely confined to the

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Leningrad and Moscow conservatories. RAPM supported open admissions for working-class students at the conservatories, opposed traditional approaches to music pedagogy, and criticized traditional and modern approaches to composition. Like advocates of revolutionary activities of any kind, RAPM adopted a militaristic tone to its rhetoric: traditional cultural "fortresses" were to be stormed, cultural "fronts" were to be defended against "counterrevolutionary" activities, and cultural foes were to be liquidated with the aid of a "cultural army."[18] With the Party's switch to a hard line on culture in 1928, RAPM members gradually gained control of key music posts in arts administration. In accordance with the Central Committee resolution of 28 December 1928, RAPM published a new ideological platform in early 1929--its blueprint for a "proletarian music" revolution.[19] RAPM's control of the censorship organs, publishing houses, and professional press severely disrupted Russian musical life from 1929 until mid 1932. Among the radical changes during RAPM's tenure: modernist works were banned from performance and publication, ideologically "unsuitable" works were removed from the repertory, most operas and musical theater works were banned or drastically altered to suit revolutionary tastes, the mission of the state philharmonic orchestras and state academic theaters changed in favor of mass education, and conservatories were reorganized in favor of working-class students and teachers. In a thoroughly unpopular move, RAPM also attempted (albeit unsuccessfully) to enforce the Central Committee's

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[18] Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front, 117, 133.

[19] "The Ideological Platform of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians," trans. Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 5th rev. ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 1353-57.

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ban on the publication and performance of popular light music.[20]

The proletarian episode in music naturally had a dramatic impact on the music Shostakovich wrote, the public statements he made, and the reception of his music in the press. He detested the idea of so-called proletarian music and clashed openly with RAPM supporters. Pavel Maranchik, one of the founders of the Leningrad Theater of Young Workers (TRAM), recounts the following episode:

> Dmitri Dmitriyevich used to come to our meetings often. . . . I remember one occasion when some representatives came to see us. A fierce argument arose over the various ways in which Soviet musical culture should be developed. Shostakovich proved that in itself the term "proletarian composer" was absolutely meaningless, that an enormous amount of work lies ahead in the assimilation of our cultural heritage, and that many proletarian composers write noisy declarations and very mediocre music.[21]

The changing political and artistic climate of the period forced Shostakovich to retreat from the modernism displayed in To October and The Nose. Following the successful premiere of To October in late 1927, Shostakovich turned his creative attention toward finishing The Nose (begun in July 1927), an ambitious, but ill-timed attempt to convince the musical establishment that modernist opera had a rightful place in Soviet theater.[22]

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[20] The *legkii zhanr* (light music genre, later called *estradnaya muzyka*, variety music) refers to such popular styles as syncopated dance music, urban romances, stylized gypsy music, and music hall songs.

[21] Quoted in Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, 78-79.

[22] For a discussion of the composition, performance, and reception history of The Nose, see Laurel E. Fay, "The Punch in Shostakovich's Nose," in Russian and Soviet Music: Essays for Boris Schwarz, ed. Malcolm Hamrick Brown (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), 229-43.

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He finished The Nose in early summer 1928, and the opera was quickly accepted for performance by the Leningrad Malyi (Small) Theater. But the increasingly hostile political atmosphere toward modern music delayed its premiere until early 1930.

In the press, Shostakovich passionately defended his right to stage The Nose and repeatedly justified his choice of libretto, modernist idiom, and constructivist staging.[23] To drum up support for his embattled opera, Shostakovich composed an orchestral suite of excerpts, which Nikolai Malko first conducted on 25 November 1928. The suite was again performed the following January (along with additional excerpts) at a concert sponsored by the Leningrad section of a Society of Dramatists and Composers. The Nose received a concert performance at the Malyi Theater in conjunction with the First All-Russian Musical Conference (May 1929), the conference at which RAPM exercised its newly-bestowed administrative authority. Without the benefit of a full production, the music was lambasted by Shostakovich's critics.[24] Despite the controversies swirling around the work, rehearsals continued on The Nose for the remainder of the year, and the production was finally ready by the beginning of 1930. To counter his opponents' claim that experimental opera was alien to a workers' state, Shostakovich successfully

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[23] See Shostakovich's 1928 and 1929 reports to the Leningrad Conservatory quoted in Yakubov, "'Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi'," 54-56. See also the following articles by the composer: "K premere 'Nosa'" (Toward the premiere of "The Nose"), Rabochii i teatr, no. 24 (1929): 12.; "'Nos', beseda s kompozitorom D. Shostakovichem" ("The Nose": A conversation with the composer D. Shostakovich), Novyi zritel, no. 35 (1929): 14; and "Pochemu 'Nos'?" (Why "The Nose"?), Rabochii i teatr, no. 3 (1930): 11.

[24] See, for example, Daniil Zhitomirsky, "'Nos' - opera D. Shostakovicha," Proletarskii muzykant, no. 7-8 (1929): 39.

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organized a performance of excerpts for factory workers at the Moscow-Narva House of Culture in Leningrad (14 January 1930). Four days later, the official premiere of The Nose took place at the Malyi Theater in Leningrad. The Arts Political Council, however, closed the production after only fifteen performances, due in large part to strong criticism by RAPM and other party activists.[25] The Nose was not performed again in the Soviet Union until 1975.

The composition history of The First of May symphony

With purges taking place in the conservatories, large concert works being excluded from concert programs at the state philharmonics, and the number of performing outlets sharply reduced, composers were forced to seek employment during the proletarian episode by writing music for theater, film, and ballet. Shostakovich composed incidental music for productions at the Leningrad TRAM, a critically-acclaimed and politically active troupe of young professionals and amateurs.[26] After the debacle at the May 1929 All-Russian Musical Conference, however, he need additional political cover if he expected to receive his diploma and obtain permission to stage The Nose. In July 1929 he composed The First of May symphony while spending a working

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[25] Critics' reviews of The Nose include S. Gres, "Ruchnaya bomba anarkhista" (Hand bomb of an anarchist), Rabochii i teatr, no. 10 (1930): 6; M. Yankovsky, "Nos' v Malom opernom teatre" ("The Nose" at the Small Opera Theater), Rabochii i teatr, no. 5 (1930): 6-7; and S. Gres, "Sovetskaya opera" (Soviet opera), Leningrad, no. 7-8 (1930): 155-158.

[26] The Shot, op. 24 (1929); Virgin Soil, op. 25 (1930); Rule, Britannia!, op. 28 (1931).

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holiday in the Crimea.[27] In a report submitted to the Leningrad Conservatory (dated 31 October 1929), Shostakovich briefly made reference to his new symphony, drawing a connection between it and the political values it expressed:

> In the capacity of my diploma work I composed "May symphony." This composition is of an entirely different order than "To October." Whereas in "To October" struggle plays a self-sufficient role [*samodovleyushuyu rol*],[28] the "May symphony" expresses the mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction, if I may put it that way. For an added influence on the listener I introduce a chorus at the end on the words of the poet Kirsanov.[29]

In a short article published on the eve of its 22 January 1930 premiere, Shostakovich again relates the symphony's content to the ideals of socialist construction:

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[27] For information on sources and editions for The First of May, see Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: a Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography, 2nd rev. ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 45-46. The autograph score of The First of May symphony (now called the Third Symphony) is currently housed at the Russian State Archive of Literature and Art (RGALI, formerly TsGALI). Muzgiz (No. 13064) published the first edition in 1932. The first western edition was published in New York by Leeds Music in 1946. The Russian state publishing house Muzyka (Muzyka, No. 9000) published a new edition of the full score in 1975, and published it again (Muzyka, No. 10778) as volume 2 of Sobranie sochinenii (Collected works) in 1982. The composer's own vocal score of the choral section is published as an appendix to volume 9 of Sobranie sochinenii in 1984 (Muzyka, No. 11688). In this chapter, the music examples are quoted from Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2.

[28] Shostakovich's use of the phrase "self-sufficient" implies that the idea of struggle could be communicated to the listener *without* the external assistance of the work's descriptive title and text.

[29] Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi," 56. "V kachestve svoei diplomnoi [aspirantskoi] roboty ya predstavil 'Maiskuyu simfoniyu.' Eto prozvedenie sovsem inobo poryadka, nezheli 'Oktyabryu.' Poskolku v 'Oktyabryu samodovleyushchuyu rol igraet borba, to v 'Maiskoi simfonii,' esli mozhno tak vyrazitsya, nastroenie prazdnika mirnovo stroitelstva. V kontse dla usilivania vozdeistvia na slyshatelya mnoyu vvedei khor na slova poeta [S.] Kirsanova."

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> I tried to convey only the general mood of the International Workers' Day festival. I wished to portray peaceful construction in the USSR. I would point out that the element of struggle, energy and ceaseless work runs through the whole symphony like a red thread.[30]

Such highly politicized statements were crucial in order for Shostakovich to keep his conservatory stipend, guarantee his graduation, and ensure his continued participation in musical life. The degree to which these statements may be viewed solely as political cover, and the degree to which they accurately reflected his feelings about art and politics, is difficult to ascertain. As I show in later chapters, however, Shostakovich did not embrace the policies of the stalinist regime, but rather spoke forcefully in the press during the late 1920s and 1930s in favor of creativity autonomy for artists and against state controls on artistic production.

The First of May symphony was first performed by the Leningrad State Philharmonic Orchestra and Academy Capella, conducted by Aleksandr Gauk (21 January 1930, Moscow-Narva House of Culture in Leningrad). Dedicated to Komsomol's *kultpokhod*, the concert also featured two politically inspired works by the controversial left-modernist Nikolai Roslavetz (Komsomol and Black City). According to Rabochii i teatr, the concert was sold out.[31] The early reception history of the piece remains an open

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[30] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskie simfonisty" (Soviet symphonists), Smena, 21 January 1930, quoted in Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitry Shostakovich: About Himself and His Times, ed. L. Grigoryev and Ya. Platek. trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow: Progress Press, 1980). 28.

[31] See the supplement section of Rabochii i teatr, no. 4 (1930): 6. The program was repeated the following night in the Large Hall of the Philharmonic for an audience of students and Komsomolists. The same forces also performed The First of May over a

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question, because the press, dominated by proletarian interests, largely ignored the concert. Sofia Khentova claims that The First of May was received favorably at first, and certainly a number of influential musicians had high praise for the piece.[32] Boris Asafiev, one of the leading figures in the promotion of modern music during the 1920s, said that The First of May "is perhaps the first attempt to create symphonism from the dynamics, atmosphere, and intonations of revolutionary oratory."[33] Although an early advocate of the communist state and a leading marxist scholar on music, Asafiev suffered a downfall during the proletarian episode in music, due mostly to his association with modernist causes in Leningrad. His assessment of The First of May symphony is typical of the marxist interpretations that dominated music criticism during the late 1920s and early 1930s. In a non-marxist vein, the conductor Malko had positive things to say about The First of May in an article published before the work's premiere.[34]

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year later in Leningrad (7 November 1931) on a program devoted to the Fourteenth Anniversary of the October Revolution.

[32] Sofia Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde i Leningrade (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1979), 51.

[33] "'Pervomaiskaya simfonia'--eto edva li ne edinichnaya popytka rozhdenia simfonizma iz dinamiki revolyutsionnovo oratorstva, oratorskoi atmosfery, oratorskikh intonatsii." Asafiev's statement is well-known, but its original source has yet to be found. See G. Sviridov and Yu. Shaporin, "Muzyka revolyutsii: muzyka sotsialisticheskovo realisma" (Music of revolution, music of socialist realism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 10 (1976): 6. Shostakovich's complex relationship with Asafiev--a matter of great debate--will not be explored here. Despite coolness in their relationship following the Lady Macbeth affair (see Chapter Six), they shared mutual respect until that time. Shostakovich sought Asafiev's advice and support during the composition of The Nose, and returned the favor by dedicating the opera to him.

[34] Nikolai Malko, "Nad chem rabotaet D. Shostakovich." (What Shostakovich is working on), Zhizn iskusstva, no. 34 (1929): 14.

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"Linking" procedures and the principle of continuous variation

In the previous chapter, I discussed how the diverse sections of To October can be grouped together into four main episodes that reflect the "struggle to victory" archetype of art works commissioned for the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. The overall form of Shostakovich's The First of May symphony is a kind of "hyper-episodic" structure that defies convenient division. Except for the Allegro at rehs. 26-43, which may be subdivided into three distinct episodes, and the multi-episodic choral finale, which is uniformly marked Moderato, each major tempo change in the piece marks the beginning of an episode. Each episode contains a set of unique themes, with each new theme's arrival often articulated by a new rehearsal number. The episodes largely flow without break into the next, though larger groups of episodes are formed by either an interruption in the continuous flow of music or by some other sudden change in the musical energy (episode groups A, D, and F have just one episode each):

The First of May symphony: Formal outline

Episode Group A
episode one: Allegretto - beginning-reh. 4 (quarter = 100)

Episode Group B
episode two: Più mosso - rehs. 5-7
episode three: Allegro - rehs. 8-16 (half = 104)

Episode Group C
episode four: Più mosso - rehs. 17-22
episode five: Meno mosso - rehs. 23-25 (half = 80)
episode six: Allegro - Fugato - rehs. 26-31 (half = 92)
episode seven: (Allegro continues) Ultrapolyphony and atonal march - rehs. 32-36

Episode Group D

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episode eight: (Allegro continues) Parade episode, jaunty marches - rehs. 37-43

Episode Group E
episode nine: Andante - rehs. 44-46 (quarter = 138; quarter = 116 at reh. 45a)
episode ten: Meno mosso - rehs. 47-48 (quarter = 108)
episode eleven: Lento - rehs. 49-51

Episode Group F
episode twelve: Allegro - rehs. 52-74 (dotted half = 76; half = 126 at reh. 63)

Episode Group G
episode thirteen: Poco meno mosso - rehs. 75-78
episode fourteen: Allegro molto - rehs. 79-80 (half = 160)
episode fifteen: Meno mosso - rehs. 81-87 (half = 108)

Episode Group H
episode sixteen: Andante - reh. 88 (half = 84)
episode seventeen: Largo - rehs. 89-97 (quarter = 96)

Episode Group I
episode eighteen (Chorus): Moderato - reh. 98-end
Stanza 1 - rehs. 98-100 (quarter = 88; quarter = 100 at 1 bar before reh. 100)
Stanza 2 - reh. 101
Stanza 3 - reh. 102
Stanza 4 - reh. 103 (quarter = 116 at 1 bar before reh. 103)
Stanza 5 - rehs. 104-105
Stanza 6 - reh. 106
Stanza 7 - reh. 107
Stanza 8 - reh. 108
Stanza 9 - rehs. 109-110 (quarter = 132 at 3 bars before reh. 109)
Stanza 10 - rehs. 111-112
Stanza 11 - reh. 113 (quarter = 108 at 1 bar before reh. 113; quarter = 132 at 3 bars after reh. 113)
closing section - reh. 114 (quarter = 100)

My analytical discussion focuses on the process of composition exhibited in The First of May.[35] Key and mode are two issues that lie outside the scope of my analysis of

[35] There are even fewer analytic studies of The First of May than of To October. Here is a representative list: Karen Kopp, Form und Gehalt der Symphonien des Dmitrij Schostakowitsch (Bonn: Verlag für Systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990), 145-152;

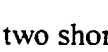
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The First of May.[36] In short, Shostakovich creates a network of motivically related themes according to a principle of continuous variation--a dialectical approach to composition that perpetually synthesizes new and old material to generate new themes. The constant variation of rhythmic and melodic shapes creates a constantly evolving musical landscape in which virtually no theme is ever repeated. The wealth of thematic material in The First of May, often presented in rapidly changing environments, mirrors the diversity of sights and sounds associated with a large public festival. Like the tempo of a parade, too, the rate of musical change in the symphony constantly speeds up and slows down. The general mood of a large public festival--one in which sights and sounds are ever changing--is captured through the symphony's highly episodic form, absence of thematic recurrence, and kaleidoscopic expanse of sounds. The First of May, like its companion To October, ends with a choral finale on a politically inspired text.

Roy Blokker with Robert Dearling, The Music of Dmitri Shostakovich: the Symphonies (London: Tantivy, 1979), 51-55; Hugh Ottaway, Shostakovich Symphonies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 16-18; Marina Sabinina, Shostakovich-simfonist: dramaturgia estetika, stil (Dramaturgy, aesthetics, style. Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 55-68; Genrikh Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm (Moscow: Muzyka, 1966), 65-67; and Marina Sabinina, Simfonizm Shostakovicha - put k zrelosti (Path toward maturity) (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 46-62.

[36] Like To October, written two years before, harmonic considerations in The First of May are largely secondary to the emphasis on linear counterpoint that eschews functional harmony. The modally mixed melodic language of The First of May further obscures a sense of tonal center in most passages; more precisely, the polyphonic interplay of modally mixed melodic lines creates a sense of unstable, ever-changing tonal centers. The constantly shifting tonal centers in the piece creates a sense of continuous action, serving to complement the linear processes taking place--i.e., constant introduction of new themes and the continuous variation of themes. The entire symphony is written without a key signature, though the harmonic language is diatonically based in some passages, especially the closing chorus (which ends in E♭ major).

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Reflecting on The First of May, the composer Vissarion Shebalin commented, "Dmitri Dmitrievich once remarked that 'it would be interesting to write a symphony in which no theme is ever repeated.'"[37] In my view, Shostakovich did exactly that--create a work that deliberately avoids thematic recurrence. Even so, many themes are closely related through a network of common melodic references: triadic marches, stepwise motion (including a three-note stepwise figure that stands at the beginning of a number of themes), rhythmic-melodic motives, repeated-note figures, and what I call the "rhythmic gallop" (or simply gallop--an energetic, repeating rhythmic pattern containing two short notes followed by a long, ). The music proceeds along an evolutionary, dialectical path in which themes gradually change to create new themes.

The principle of continuous variation in Shostakovich's symphony makes a connection, too, with Semyon Kirsanov's poem "The First of May"--the text of the choral finale. In short, the gradual unfolding of events in the poem is matched by the continuous unfolding of melodic events in Shostakovich's music. Note the "linking" of events between adjacent stanzas in the text (see Appendix 2): the forest image at the end of stanza 1 and the beginning of stanza 2, the "noises and voices" at the end of stanza 2 and in stanza 3, the tsar's palace in stanzas 4 and 5, banners and sails in stanzas 5 and 6,

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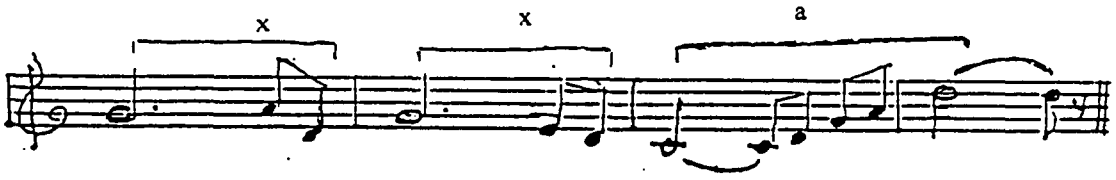
[37] Vissarion Shebalin. Literaturnoe nasledie: vospominania, perepiska, stati, vystuplenia (Literary legacy: recollections, letters, articles, speeches) (Moscow, 1975): 41, quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2 (Moscow: Muzyka. 1982). A lifelong friend of Shostakovich, Shebalin was one of the few distinguished musicians who bravely defended Shostakovich during difficult times. In 1936, when Pravda's strong criticism of Shostakovich led to a series of indignities, Shebalin publicly and unapologetically supported Shostakovich. In 1948 Shebalin was again unrepentant in defending Shostakovich during the Party-directed condemnation of leading composers.

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the "corps" in stanzas 6 and 7, the images of fire and the sun in stanzas 9 and 10, and the image of steps in stanzas 10 and 11. Like the structural "linking" effect in Kirsanov's poem, in which adjacent stanzas share common images, Shostakovich's principle of continuous variation provides a kind of "linking" effect, in which themes of adjacent passages are directly related, but possess unique characteristics. In the section that follows, I illustrate how Shostakovich applies the principle of continuous variation to the work's opening themes. I then turn to other themes in the symphony, noting how Shostakovich creates them by constantly varying several common melodic and rhythmic shapes: stepwise motion, three-note stepwise melodic figures, repeated-note figures, and rhythmic gallops.

After the slow, pastoral introduction (beginning-reh. 4, see my discussion of this passage below), each new theme in the energetic Più mosso episode (reh. 5ff) varies melodic and rhythmic characteristics of previous themes. The opening march in Example 2.1, for example, is continually varied to create a network of related themes:

Example 2.1: trumpet, reh. 5, m. 3-reh. 6, m. 1 (actual pitch)

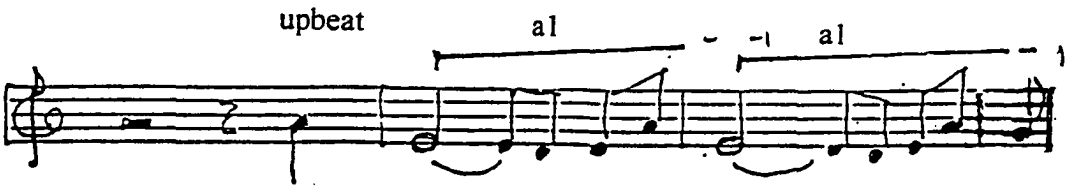


The rhythm marked *a* is restated with a different melodic contour in the horn soli two measures later (*a*1). Though *a* and *a*1 exhibit ascending motion, contrast exists in how

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the ascending motion is configured. The ascending motion of the trumpet's *a* in Example 2.1 fills in the ascending ninth C to D'; the horns' *a*1 in Example 2.2 is stationary, embellishing E before rising a minor third:

Example 2.2: Variant of *a*, French horns, reh. 6, m. 3-reh. 7, m. 1 (written at pitch)



There are other thematic parallels between the first two examples, too. Notice that the trumpet in Example 2.1 works by repetition of *x*--literal repetition of rhythm, but variation of intervals--followed by *a*. In the French horn theme of Example 2.2, the two-fold repetition of *a*1, this time with a literal repetition of pitch and rhythm, mirrors the two-fold repetition of *x* shown in Example 2.1. In Example 2.3, *a* appears again, but the pattern is obscured with the use of both an accented neighbor (vln I) and separate bow strokes (vlns I and II), thus creating a new rhythmic variant (marked *a*2). In addition, the ascending pattern of eighth notes that characterized *a* and *a*1 in Examples 2.1-2.2 is varied in Example 2.3; now the eighth notes are executed in an ascending stepwise fashion. The four repeated notes at the end of the phrase, too, create a new variant in the expanding, evolving web of themes:

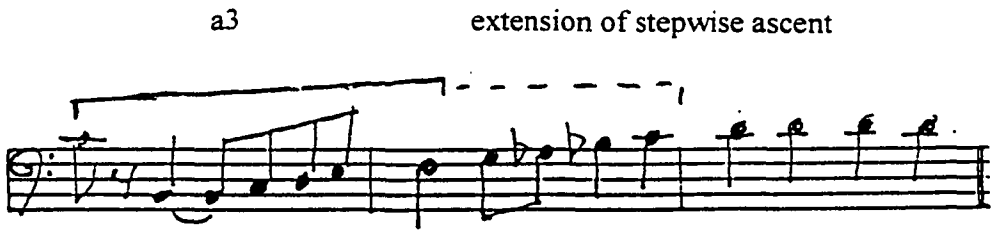
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Example 2.3: Variants of *a*, violins, reh. 7, mm. 1-3



Soon after (Allegro, Example 2.4), the bass line extends the range of stepwise ascending motion (marked *a* 3) introduced in the previous example. In Example 2.4 several other changes have been made to the structure of *a*2 from Example 2.3: 1) octave displacement of C♮ to B♮ motion; and 2) slight alteration of the rhythmic profile. Example 2.4, when compared to Example 2.3, illustrates how Shostakovich constantly varies his material; or put another way, perpetually synthesizes old and new material to create the work's musical structure:

Example 2.4: Variant of *a*, bassoon, trombone, low strings, reh. 8, mm. 1-3

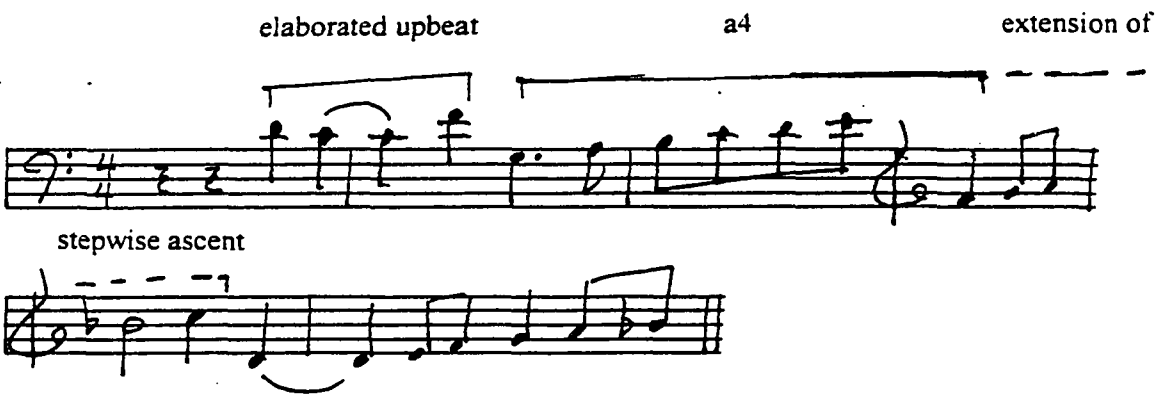


Note, too, the duration of the B♮ in Example 2.4--quarter note tied to an eighth note. This durational value becomes an important part of the rhythmic language in the next several themes. Example 2.5 contains a new variant of *a* (*a*4). By this point, however, features associated with *a* have been varied and incorporated into new themes so as to

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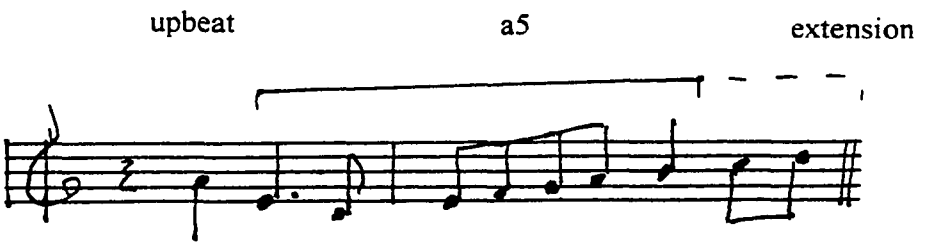
permanently wipe away its original state. The *a*4 idea in Example 2.5 arrives in the middle of the theme, not at the beginning as in previous examples. The range of the melodic ascent is expanded, too, thus continuing the process of continuing variation:

Example 2.5: Variant of *a*, viola, cello, reh. 9, mm. 1-5



Example 2.6 generates another variant of *a* and varies other features of the previous examples (dotted quarter note, downward leap, and scalar motion):

Example 2.6: Variant of *a*, trumpet, reh. 10, mm. 4-5 (actual pitch)

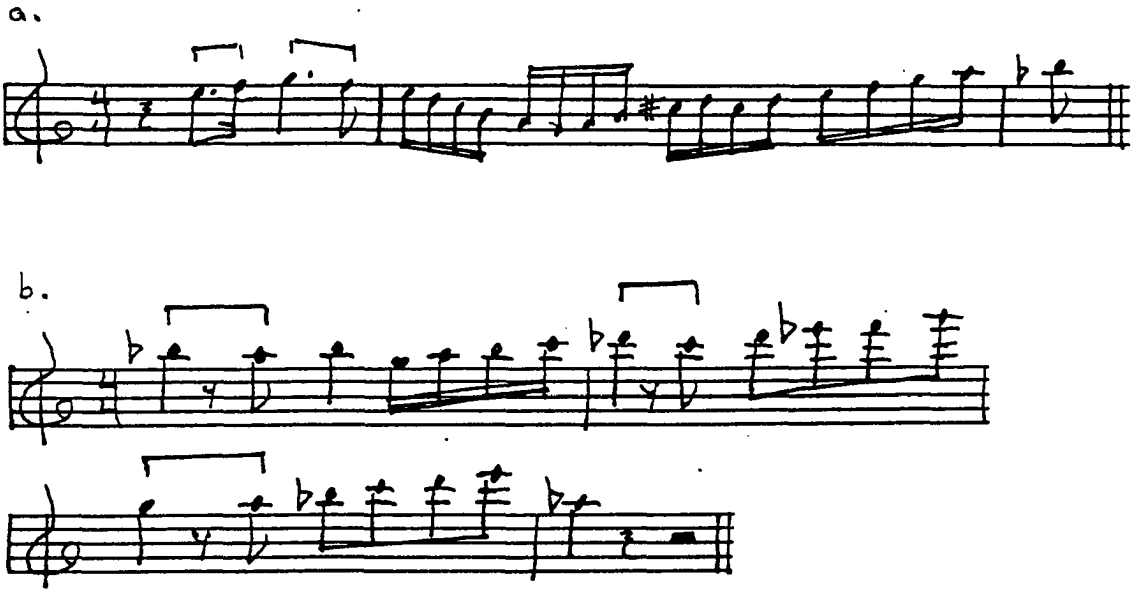


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A series of themes follows the trumpet melody at reh. 10 that employ a variety of dotted figures. The dotted quarter figure is transferred to the violins (see Example 2.7a), but not before a new dotted figure (♩. ♪) is introduced as a kind of structural upbeat. A new rhythmic variant is created (Example 2.7b) by both interpolating an eighth-note rest within the characteristic dotted figure and using sixteenth notes in ascending stepwise motion. The cello/bass line, in Example 2.7c, exhibits a two-octave span that combines ascending stepwise motion and dotted rhythms. The dotted quarter note assumes a new identity within a highly syncopated bass line at reh. 12 (Example 2.9). This melody is not a theme *per se* but rather a single layer within an increasingly polyphonic environment.

Example 2.7: Continuous variation of dotted rhythmic figures -

a) violin I, reh. 10, mm. 6-7
b) flute, bassoon, violin I, cello, reh. 11, mm. 1-4



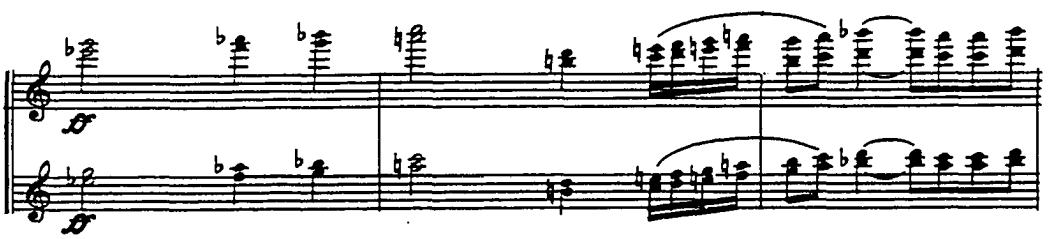
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c) cello, bass, reh. 11, mm. 5-9
d) bassoon, cello, bass, reh. 12, mm. 1-5



The web of variants continues in the upper strings and winds at reh. 13, but without any dotted figures. The ascending stepwise motion and skip of a seventh downward in Example 2.8 calls to mind similar ideas in earlier themes (see Examples 2.7a-c):

Example 2.8: upper strings and winds, reh. 13, mm. 1-3



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The dotted figure returns at reh. 15 (Example 2.9), along with descending stepwise motion (interrupted by octave displacement), thus inverting the strong thrusts upward exhibited by previous themes:

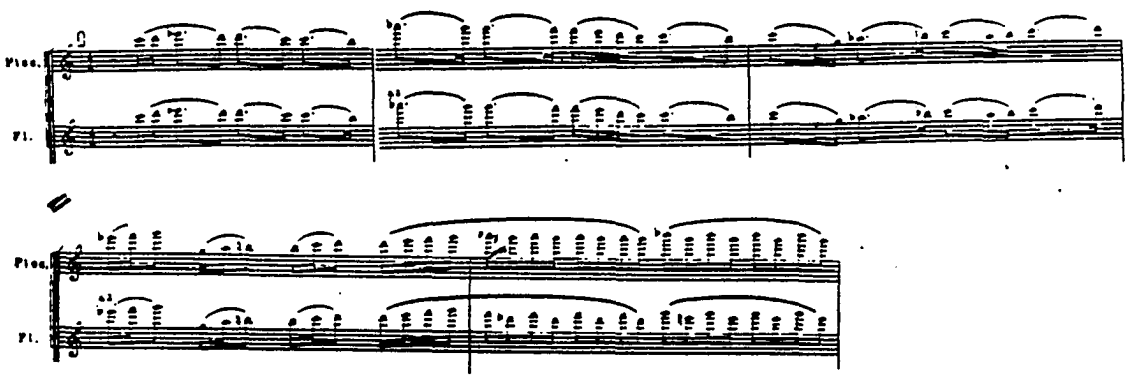
Example 2.9: winds, reh. 15, mm. 1-5



The melodic motion of the woodwinds at reh. 15 is similar to woodwind passages heard later in Example 2.10:

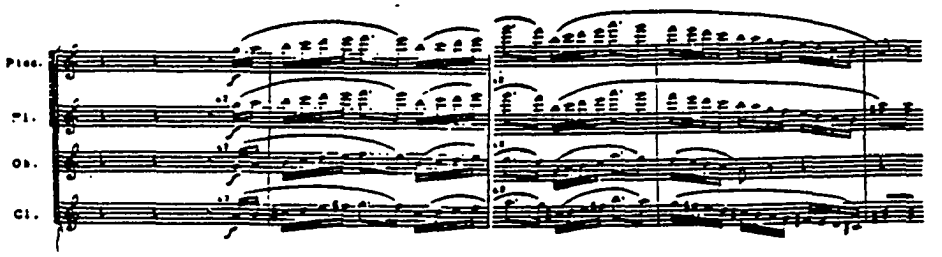
Example 2.10: Variants of reh. 15

a) flutes, reh. 31, mm. 1-5



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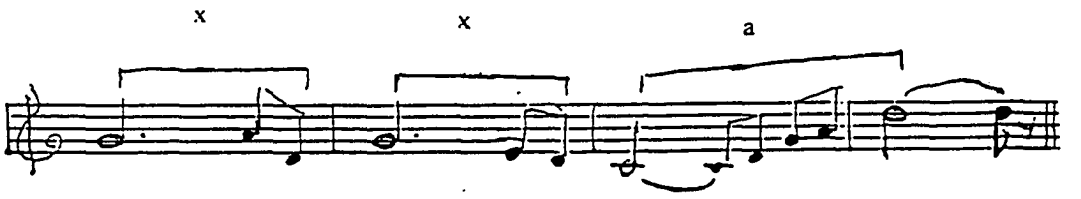
b) winds, reh. 56, mm. 1-3



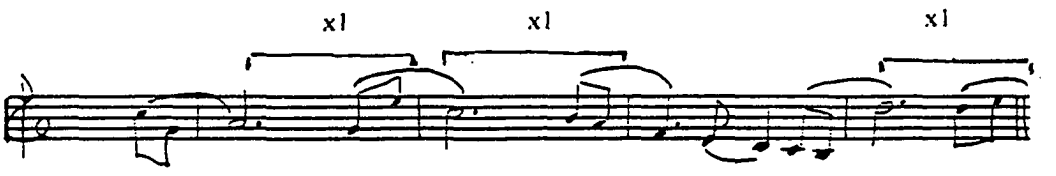
Examples 2.9 and 2.10 illustrate the fact that many themes in The First of May are in some way derived from material of the opening Allegro. Demonstrating this point further, note how the rhythmic structure of the song-like march at reh. 23 (Example 2.11b) is related to the opening march from reh. 5:

Example 2.11: Opening march and its variant

a) trumpet, reh. 5, mm. 3-6 (actual pitch)



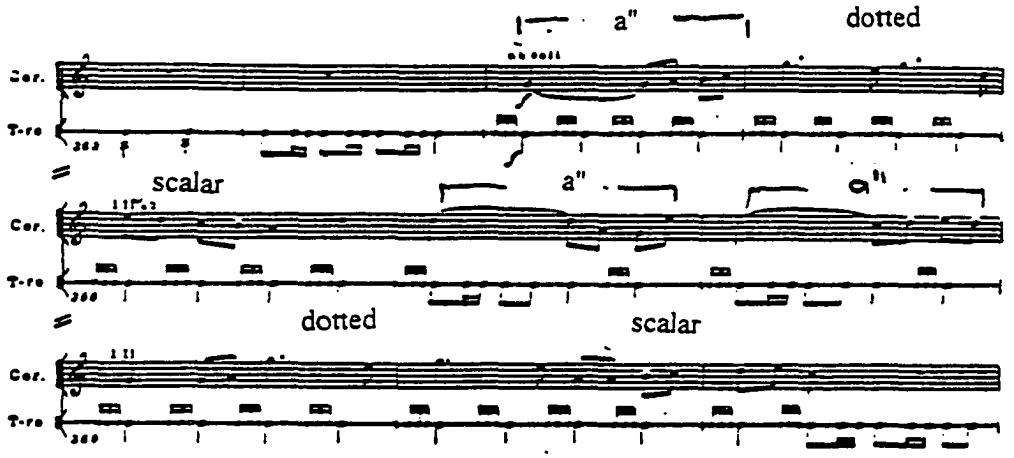
b) violins, reh. 23, mm. 2-6



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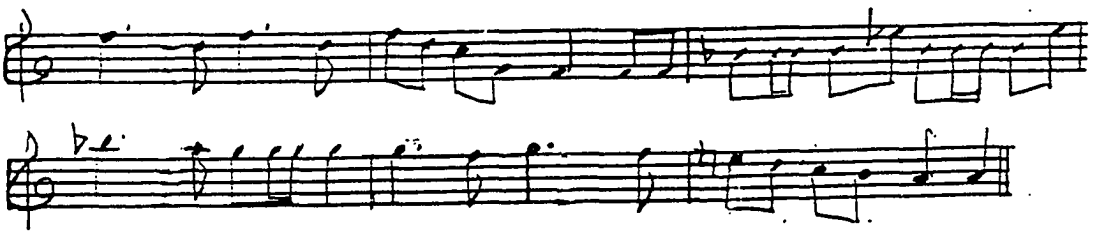
Later, the jocular march of rehs. 37-38 (horn soli) extends and varies ideas from previous examples. The horns here vary the characteristic rhythm *a* along with a dotted quarter note figure and stepwise melodic motion (compare Example 2.12 with Example 2.2):

Example 2.12: Jocular march with *a*, French horn soli (in F), reh. 37, mm. 3-12



The dotted quarter notes and descending scales of Example 2.12 are then combined with a gallop rhythm in Example 2.13:

Example 2.13: trumpet, reh. 41, mm. 1-6 (written at pitch)



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Up to this point, I have presented numerous instances of the linking technique among themes in the orchestral part of The First of May symphony. As mentioned earlier, the gradual unfolding of musical events (or "linking") is found in the choral finale, too.[38]

Stepwise motion and the principle of continuous variation

It is obvious by looking at the examples in the previous discussion that many themes in The First of May contain stepwise melodic motion. By merely glancing at the score, one can see that stepwise motion functions in a number of ways: in main themes, motives, accompaniment patterns, ostinati, strongly-directed bass lines, and other melodic lines. The continuous variation of stepwise melodies creates an evolving network in which mode, range, and duration are constantly varied.[39] These melodies are varied through a variety of means, including localized chromatic inflection, modal mixture, inversion, retrograde, rhythmic transformation, and octave displacement. Examples 2.14a-c show the first instances of stepwise motion in The First of May; these examples illustrate how Shostakovich varies the ascending minor sixth, D-B♭, of the opening clarinet melody. Note, for example, how the descending variants in Example

---

[38] See, for example, how Shostakovich varies the triplet rhythm at reh. 102 to create a web of unique, "triplet-related" themes: chorus, reh. 102, mm. 2-5; chorus and woodwinds, reh. 107, mm. 3-4; chorus and woodwinds, reh. 108, m. 1; chorus and brass, reh. 109, mm. 1-2; chorus and brass, reh. 113, mm. 1-7.

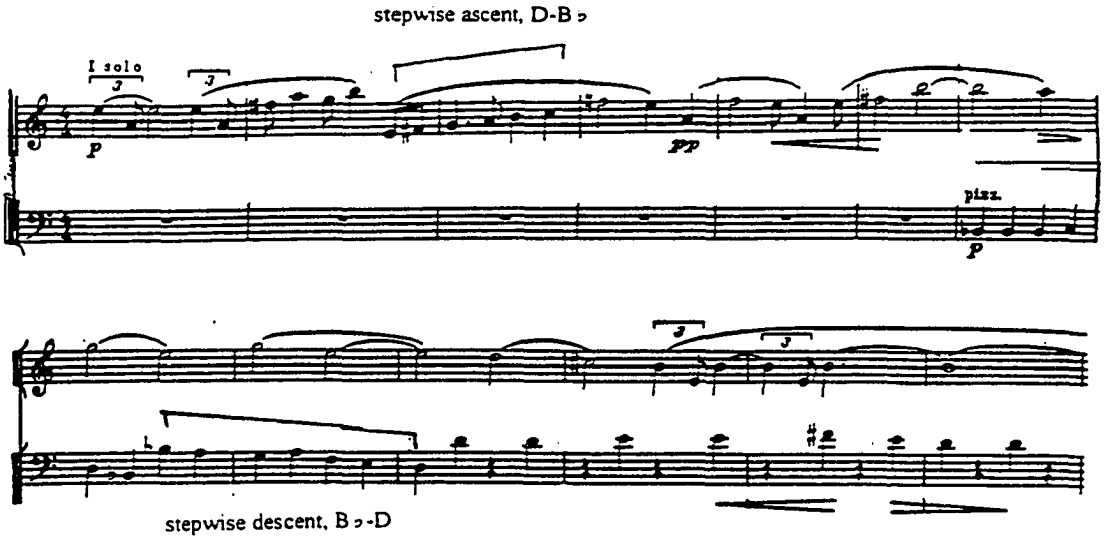
[39] The subject of mode in Shostakovich's music is a complex affair, and extends beyond the scope of this analysis. For a summary of several approaches to this topic, see Ellon D. Carpenter, "Russian theorists on modality in Shostakovich's music," in Shostakovich Studies, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 76-112.

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2.14 exhibit what I call "broken" stepwise motion, meaning that the descent is not exact, but rather incorporates a touch of ascending motion. In the case of Figure 2.14b (top line), the stepwise descent is incomplete, skipping a note, and is interrupted by E-G-E-G motion. Variants of stepwise motion spanning a minor sixth appear five measures later, then in the clarinet duet at reh. 2 (with B ♮ at the top of the span instead of the original B ♭), and again at reh. 3 (transposed). The initial stepwise motion is immediately varied; note the use of "broken" stepwise motion, meaning :

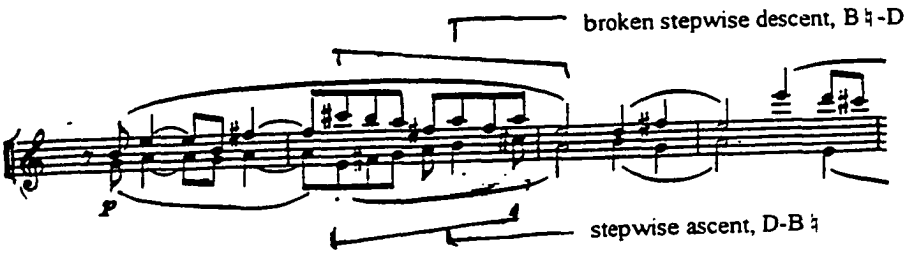
Example 2.14: Variants of stepwise motion, opening measures

a) clarinet (in B ♭), low strings, beginning-reh. 1, m. 4

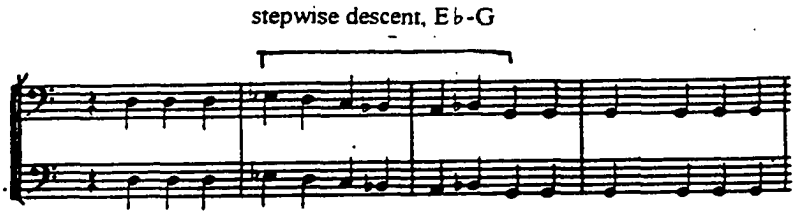


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b) clarinets (in B♭), reh. 2, mm. 1-4



c) cello, bass, reh. 3, mm. 1-4



Longer conjunct spans, both ascending and descending, are gradually varied in the introductory clarinet duet (rehs. 2-4), where they are presented with embellishments and placed in counterpoint. Stepwise motion of varying lengths continues to play a crucial role at the Più Mosso (rehs. 5-8, see Example 2.15, next two pages), with ranges up to an octave in the decorative woodwind part at reh. 6, and up to two octaves at reh. 7. The theme at reh. 8, meanwhile, is a stepwise melody exceeding an octave in range. Stepwise motion dominates the melodic construction from reh. 9 through reh. 15, as shown earlier in Examples 2.5-2.9. The bass line in this passage is characterized by an almost exclusive use of stepwise melodies (mostly ascending) with moments of octave displacement. The bass line here functions variously as main thematic material,

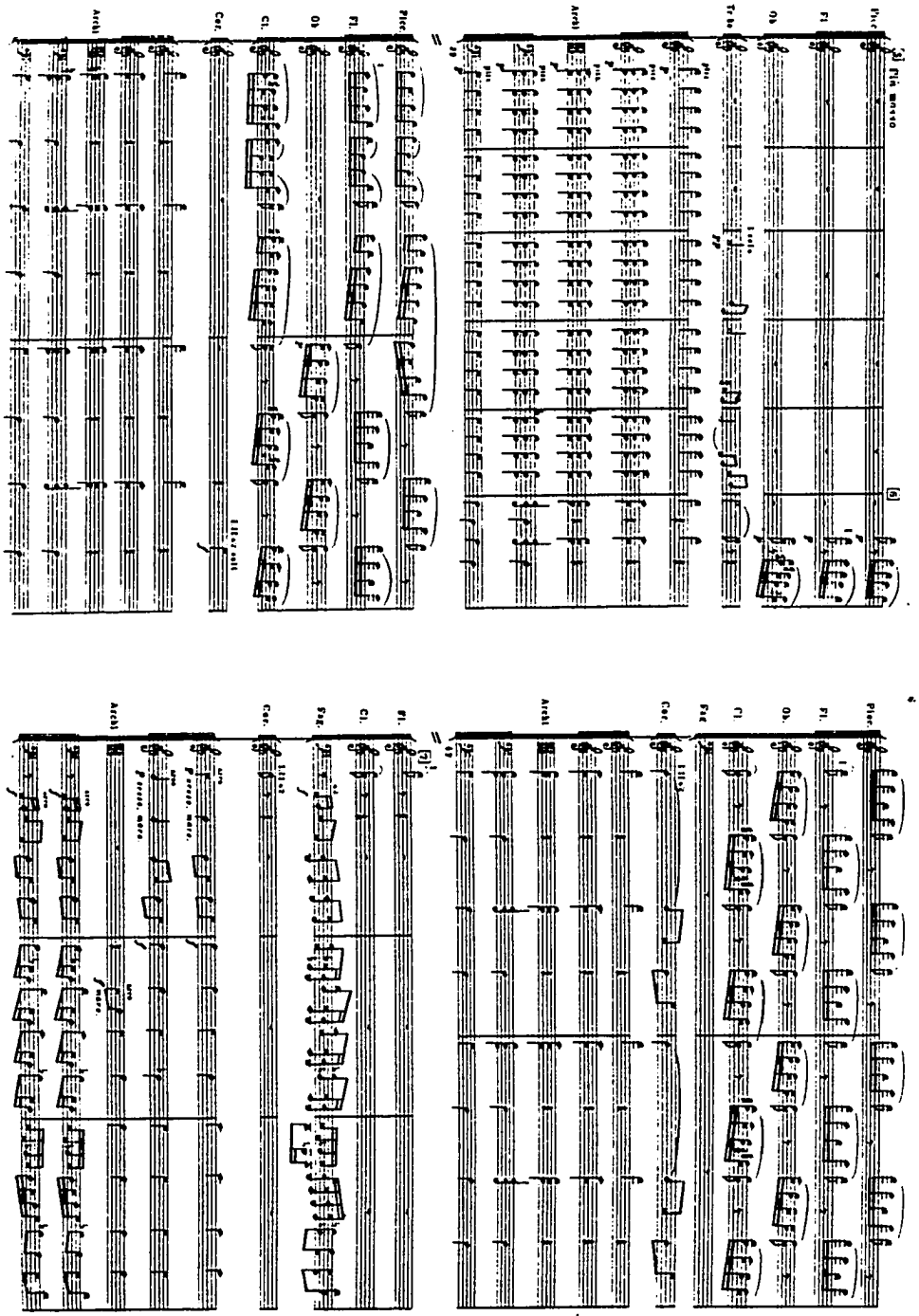
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background accompaniment, and a single layer within a highly stratified, polyphonic environment.

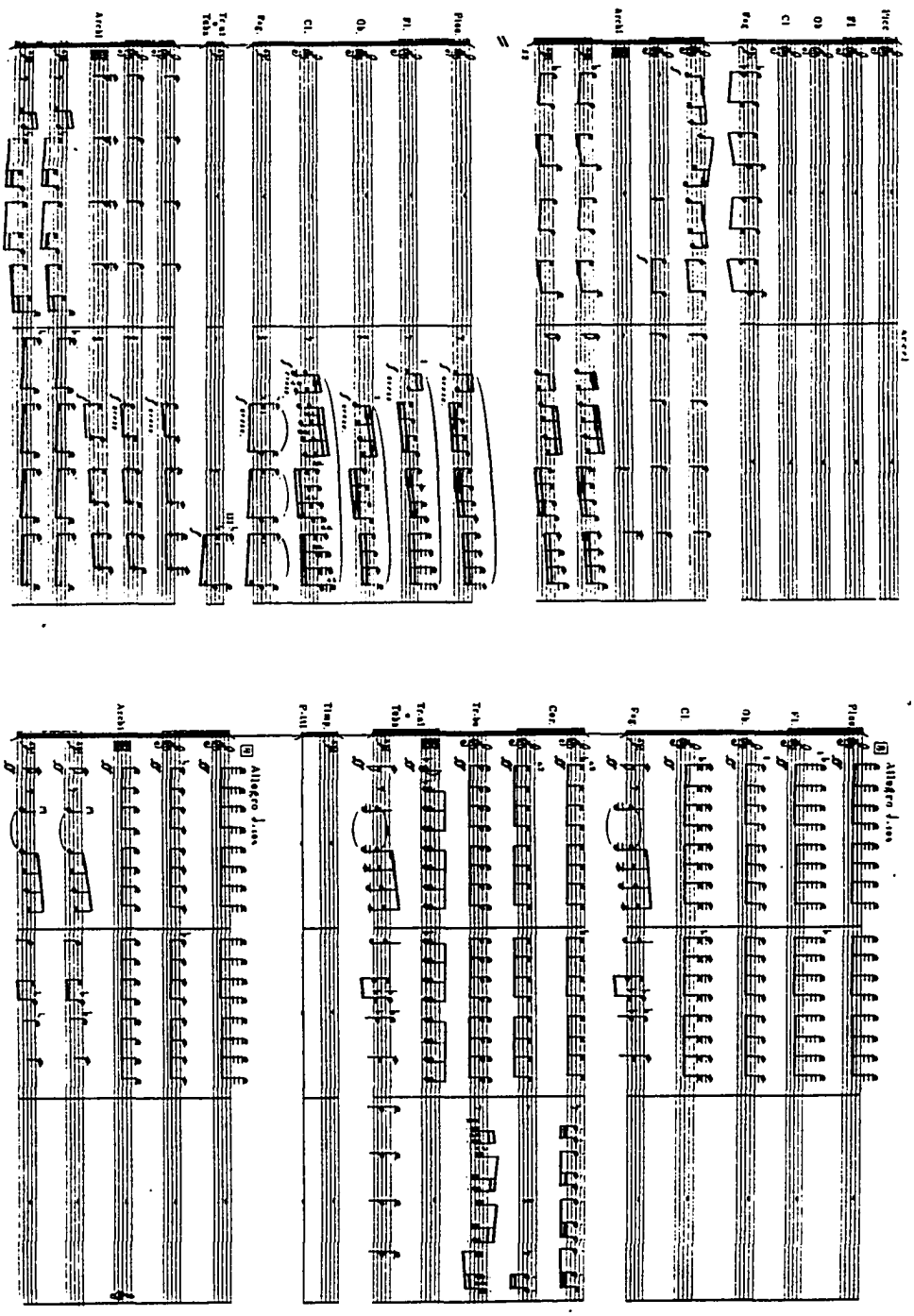
In the next episode (Più mosso, rehs. 17-22) short spans of conjunct motion are heard in the woodwinds. The woodwind melodies in this section (see Example 2.16), combining stepwise motion with repeated notes and gallop rhythms, recall the decorative woodwind melodies at reh. 6. Similar combinations of stepwise melodies, repeated notes, and gallop rhythms are also found in reh. 14, m. 4-reh. 19, m. 3 (flutes and clarinets) and reh. 21, mm. 1-5 (flutes). The next two episodes, Meno mosso (rehs. 23-25) and the fugato at Allegro (rehs. 26-31), also contain stepwise melodies, usually in short spans. An example of each fugato subject is given in Example 2.17. I use the word *example* deliberately because the fugato subjects are constantly varied throughout the passage. The highly polyphonic accompaniment during the fugato explores longer spans than the subjects themselves. In Example 2.18a ascending scalar lines accompany the fugato, gradually drawing the texture toward a climax. In Example 2.18b Shostakovich creates further variety in his treatment of ascending stepwise motion by using parallel motion and interpolated notes within a rising scalar line, thus stretching out the musical tension of the ascending motion. The effect here is similar to the climatic passages of ultrapolyphony in the Second Symphony, in which different scalar lines are superimposed within a larger textual mass.

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Example 2.15: Continuous variation of stepwise motion, reh. 5-reh. 8, m. 3

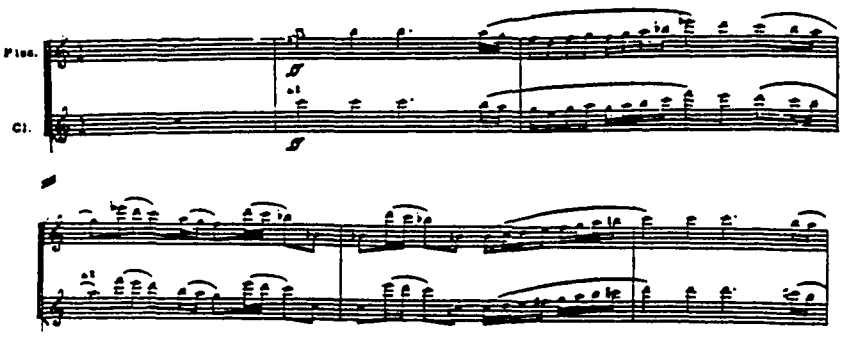


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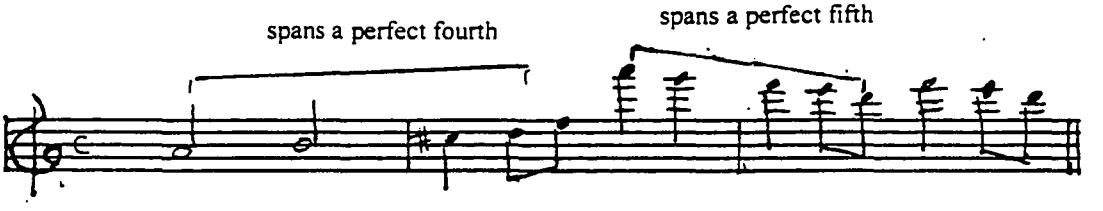
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Example 2.16: Continuous variation of stepwise motion, reh. 17, mm. 1-6

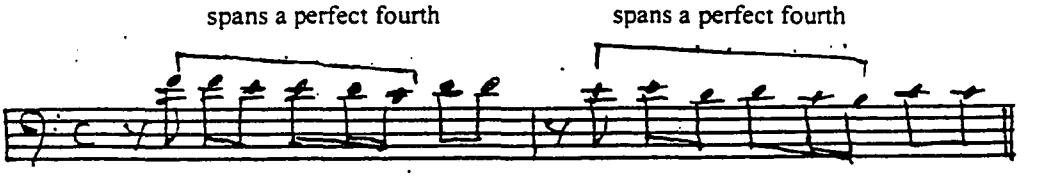


Example 2.17: fugato subjects

X = violin I, reh. 26, mm. 2-4



Y = cello, bass, reh. 26 mm. 1-2



Z = flutes, reh, 29, mm. 3-4



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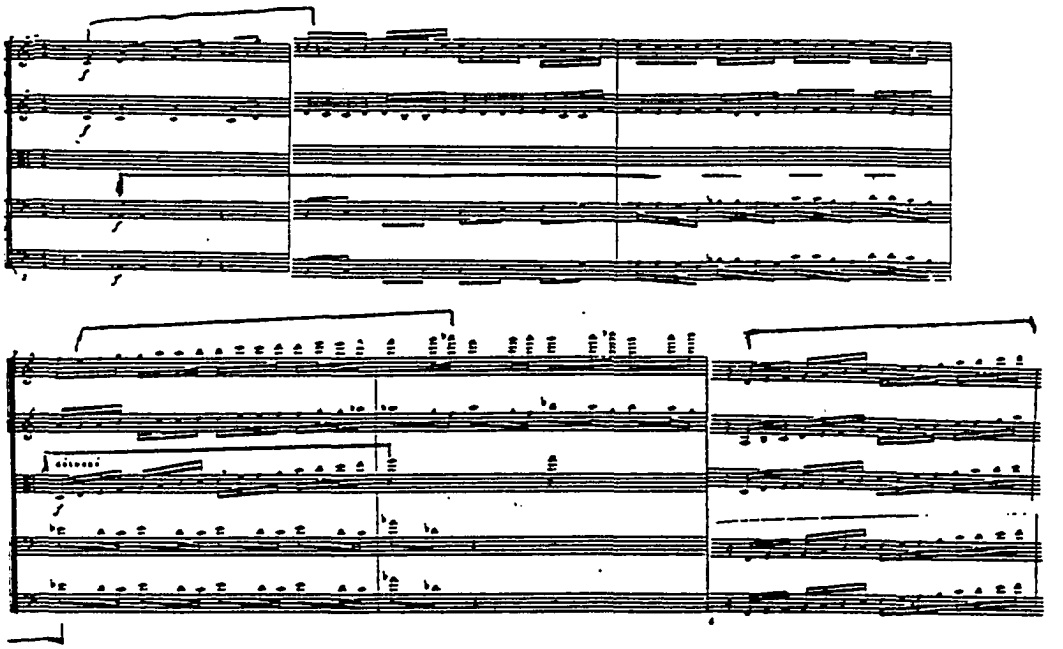
Example 2.18: Continuous variation of stepwise motion in the fugato

a) reh. 27



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b) Continuous variation of stepwise motion, strings, reh. 31, mm. 1-6



After the fugato dissolves into ultrapolyphony (rehs. 32-37), Shostakovich uses both chromatic and diatonic scales in a layered texture (much like the ultrapolyphony in To October). A network of twelve individual lines is formed at reh. 32, in which D is used as the starting pitch. Additional scalar lines then gradually enter at various pitch levels (the clarinets, however, play a different figure, a sequence that ascends gradually by a semitone). It is worth noting, too, the introduction of these lines at various rhythmic durations, creating a kind of heterophony--or in Shostakovich's words, ultrapolyphony, as shown in Example 2.19:

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Example 2.19: "ultrapolyphony," reh. 32



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The energy of the scalar ultrapolyphony is punctuated by a series of four climaxes, each of which is approached by a mass of individual, ascending, stepwise lines (at rehs. 33, 34, 35, and three bars before reh. 37).[40] The four-fold ultrapolyphony/climax structure of the previous section is followed by a jaunty march (rehs. 37-43) and an Andante (rehs. 44-51) in which short conjunct spans are prominent (mostly fourths and fifths), but longer spans are occasionally used.

Up till now, the instances of stepwise motion in this symphony have been nearly exclusively ascending, largely to express the sweeping jubilation of a large public festival. But from reh. 63 until the beginning of the choral finale at reh. 98, stepwise motion is found in both ascending and descending contexts, in part because the music takes on a much more rhetorical function in the later stages of the orchestral section, much like the slow movement of a conventional four-movement symphony. The trombone soli at reh. 67, for example, exhibit a common formula: scalar descent interrupted by octave displacement (Example 2.20a). Shostakovich then weaves the melody from reh. 67 into subsequent themes (Examples 2.20b-c, see also reh. 76, mm. 3-9). The process at work here, like his treatment of previous themes, is one of continuous variation of the rhythm and intervallic contour:

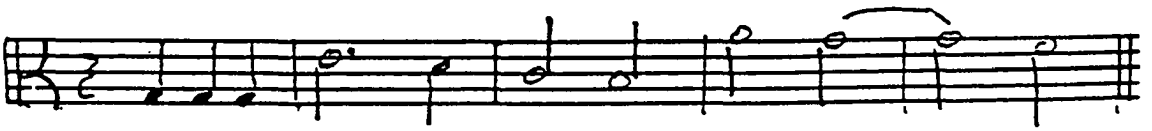
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[40] I am particularly struck by the similarities between the scalar ultrapolyphony in To October and the following passages in The First of May: two bars before reh. 33-reh. 33, m. 1; two bars before reh. 34-reh. 34, m. 1; two bars before reh. 35-reh. 35, m. 1; reh. 36, mm. 6-10.

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Example 2.20: continuous variation of themes, rehs. 67-75

a) trombone soli, reh. 67, mm. 1-5



b) French horns, reh. 73, mm. 1-4 (written at pitch)



c) violins, reh. 75 (doubled in strings and winds)



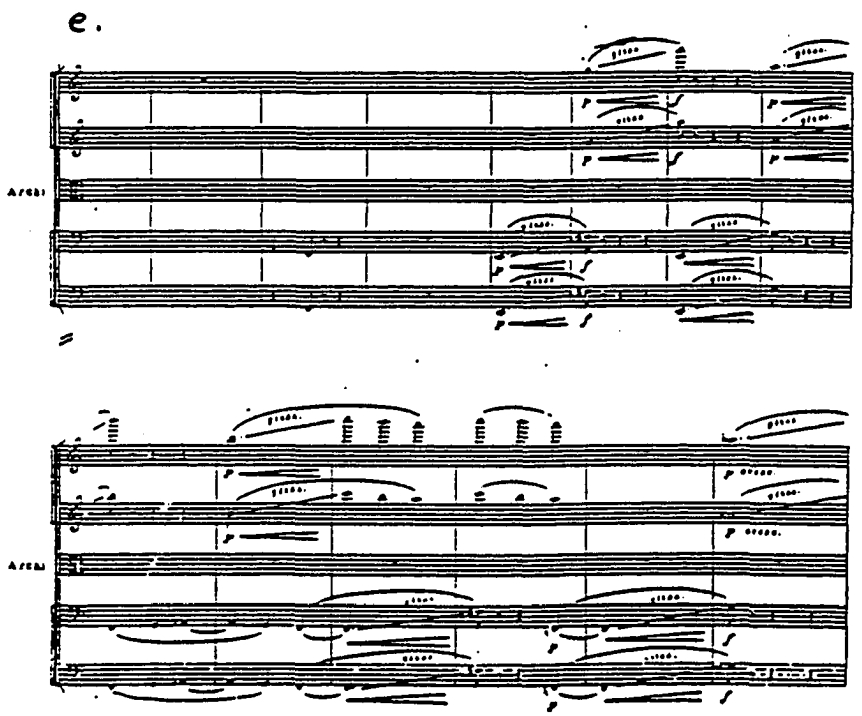
The episode from reh. 78 up to reh. 88 is characterized by dramatic rhetorical flourishes and stepwise melodies doubled in octaves, examples of which are given in Example 2.21. Note, too, the similarities in melodic construction between Example 2.21a and the opening clarinet solo (stepwise motion, major sixth ascent, leap up to an appoggiatura). This powerful passage is followed by highly disjunct brass soli that alternate with eerily constructed glissandi that trace another type of stepwise ascent (Example 2.21e):

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Example 2.21: continuous variation of stepwise melodies, rehs. 78-86

a) reh. 78, mm. 1-5
b) reh. 81, mm. 1-5
c) reh. 82, mm. 1-5
d) reh. 86, mm. 1-6
e) trombone, strings, reh. 95 (glissandi move stepwise with octave displacement)





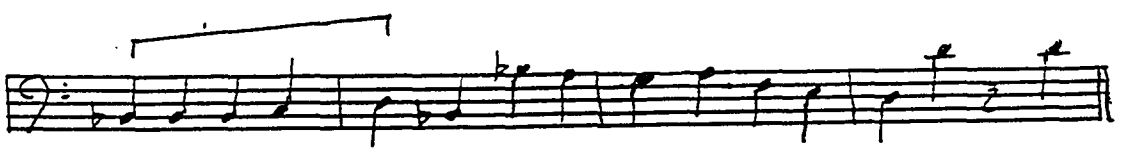
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We have seen many instances of stepwise motion, most of which exhibit ascending motion--reflecting the optimistic theme of the work's program. Stepwise motion forms the basis of many themes, countermelodies, and accompaniment patterns in the choral finale, too. The choral melodies mostly contain stepwise motion with occasional triadic leaps (thirds, fourths, and fifths), and are often placed in a two-part texture with doubling at the third and octave. After reh. 107, the voice parts are often a matter of repeated-pitch syllabic declamation (somewhat like the end of To October, where the chorus is instructed not to sing at pitch, but rather to declaim).

The three-note, stepwise figure and the principle of continuous variation

In connection with the pervasive use of stepwise material in The First of May, I would like to discuss another web of thematic variants, one which is based on three-note, stepwise figures. A three-note, stepwise figure is first heard in the opening pizzicato (Example 2.22). Here the three-note figure is used as an ascending motive at the beginning of the phrase, followed by an octave leap and a broken scalar descent of a minor sixth:

Example 2.22: three-note, stepwise figure, cellos, mm. 7-10



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Ascending and descending versions of a three-note, stepwise figure are also heard in the rhythmic gallop at reh. 7 (Example 2.23). The interpolated sixteenth notes in the second measure are used to vary and extend a descending version of the three-note, stepwise figure:

Example 2.23: three-note figure with interpolations, cellos, basses, bassoon, reh. 7, mm. 1-2



Later, at the beginning of the Più mosso episode (Example 2.24, next page), a three-note, stepwise figure is heard in the violin/viola ostinato, while other variants of the figure are heard in the woodwind line (note especially the melodic construction of the gallop figures). Both the Più mosso (rehs. 17-23) and Meno mosso (rehs. 23-25) contain many examples of the three-note, stepwise figure: an ascending ostinato sequence at reh. 18, rhythmic gallop at reh. 19, and the cello/bass ostinato at reh. 23. Though there are many instances of melodic ostinato in this symphony, it is interesting to see how the three-note, stepwise figure in rehs. 17 is put in neutral, so to speak, before moving upward through sequence and variation in reh. 18--helping to give a energetic boost to the music. The energy again slows at the Meno mosso--both the tempo and the rate at which musical themes are presented slows. Despite a wealth of themes and events, Shostakovich's use

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of ostinato to slow the overall temporal effect of the music shows that he is aware of controlling the pace of events, and does not let them simply spin away in a wash of constantly changing material.

Example 2.24: continuous variation of three-note, stepwise figure, reh. 17, mm. 1-6



I would like to briefly mention the continuous variation of the three-note, stepwise figure in the remainder of the orchestral portion of The First of May. As shown earlier in Example 2.17, each subject in the fugato at Allegro (rehs. 26-31) uses some variant of a three-note, stepwise figure. After the fugato, however, neither the ultrapolyphony (rehs. 32-36) nor the ensuing march episode (rehs. 37-44) varies the figure. Variants of the three-note, stepwise figure return at the Andante (rehs. 45-51), serving to again unify a number of widely divergent melodies. Three-note, stepwise figures are largely missing from the material in both the spiky Allegro episode (rehs. 52-

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62) and the cut time episode (reh. 63-74), but they return again at the Poco meno mosso in the strings and woodwinds (see Example 2.20c). In the Meno mosso episode (rehs. 81-88), the three-note, stepwise figure is often used in a series of dramatic, agogically-accented motives (see Example 2.21).

Repeated-note figures and the principle of continuous variation

Shostakovich applies the principle of continuous variation to the many repeated-note figures that dot the melodic landscape in The First of May. In the opening Allegro, repeated notes are often used in accompaniment patterns. The first repeated-note figure is presented in the string pizzicato at Più mosso (Example 2.25). Both the percussive effect of the static pizzicato and the solo trumpet contribute to the march-like quality of the passage:

Example 2.25: repeated-note accompaniment pattern, reh. 5, mm. 1-5



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The repeated-note pizzicato accompaniment pattern of reh. 5 returns again at reh. 14 (Example 2.26). Here the oboe and clarinet add a decorative chromatic upper neighbor, giving the passage an added percussive flavor, like the sound of a struck tambourine:

Example 2.26: repeated-note accompaniment pattern with grace notes, reh. 14, mm. 1-3



In this episode, too, repeated-note figures are used as melodic "plateaus" that serve to halt melodic motion for a brief period and give the same kind of declamatory immediacy to the writing that we encounter in the choral finale. The first repeated-note/melodic plateau idea appears at reh. 7 (Example 2.27):

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Example 2.27: repeated-note figure as melodic plateau, violins, viola, reh. 7, mm. 1-6

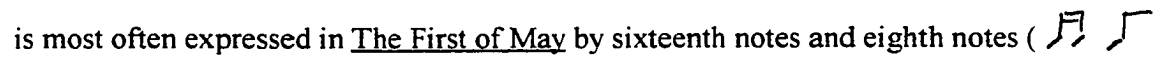
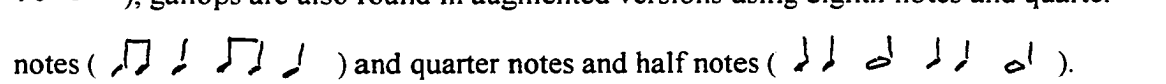
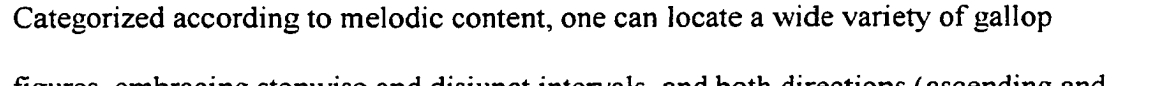


Variants of the repeated-note/melodic plateau idea, including repeated-note "nadirs" (i.e., repeated notes punctuating the lowest point of a melody) are heard in the Più mosso (rehs. 17-22, see Example 2.16) and Meno mosso (rehs. 23-25). In the fugato episode (rehs. 26-29), subjects Y and Z incorporate repeated-note ideas. (see Figure 1.17). Used as motives, ostinato patterns, single-note tremolos (both measured and unmeasured), and block-chord formations, repeated-note figures influence the continuous variation of melodic lines throughout The First of May. Many melodies in the choral finale contain repeated-note figures, which are often placed at the beginning of vocal phrases, thus providing declamatory directness (see rehs. 99, 101, 102, 104, 106, 108, 111, and 113).

Rhythmic "gallops" and the principle of continuous variation

Having seen how Shostakovich creates new themes by continually varying such features as stepwise motion, three-note stepwise melodic figures, and repeated-note figures, I would like to address the continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop, which may be expressed as either an anapest (two short notes followed by a long) or a dactyl

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(long note followed by two shorts). The gallop rhythm occupies a central position in the rhythmic language of The First of May, as in much of Shostakovich's orchestral music, and gives many passages excitement and rhythmic vitality. Although the rhythmic gallop is most often expressed in The First of May by sixteenth notes and eighth notes (), gallops are also found in augmented versions using eighth notes and quarter notes () and quarter notes and half notes (). Categorized according to melodic content, one can locate a wide variety of gallop figures, embracing stepwise and disjunct intervals, and both directions (ascending and descending).

The gallop is first heard at reh. 7, leading to a series of gallops at rehs. 7-8 that exhibit unique melodic features and occupy different placements within the bar (Example 2.28, next page). At reh. 8 (see Example 2.28c) no fewer than seven different gallop figures are found. After a brief respite from the gallop in rehs. 9-12, an arpeggiated gallop in E♭ major appears at reh. 13 (see Example 2.28d):

The gallop forms a major part of the energetic rhythmic language in the next few episodes, too. The woodwind melody at rehs. 17-19 contains descending stepwise gallops separated by frequent wide leaps (see Example 2.16). In the subsequent Meno mosso episode (rehs. 20ff), the gallop is presented in augmentation at reh.23 (see Example 2.29), and in fugato subjects X and Y at reh. 26ff (see Example 2.17). The gallop does not appear in the ultrapolyphony (rehs. 32-36), but returns prominently in the next two episodes: march (rehs. 37-43) and Andante (rehs. 43-46). At rehs. 45-46 many gallop types are featured, some of which are shown in Example 2.30a. The two- and

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Example 2.28: continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop (see also reh. 8, mm. 4-5)

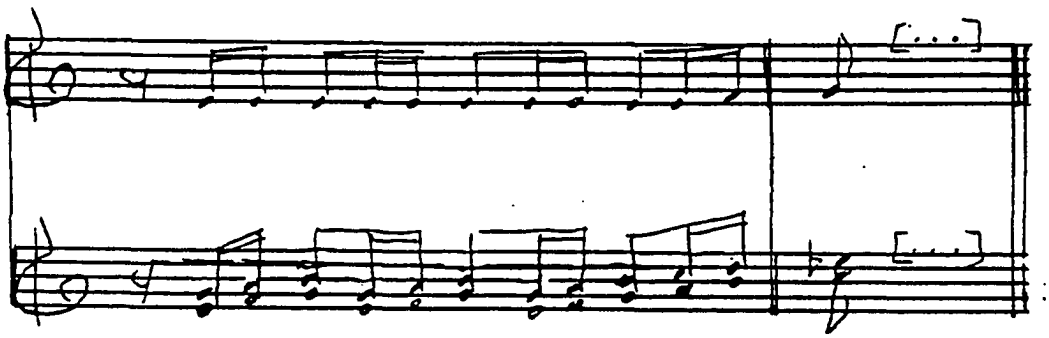
a) cello, bass, bassoon, reh. 7, mm. 1-2



b) violin I, reh. 7, mm. 4



c) horns, trumpet, reh. 8, mm. 3



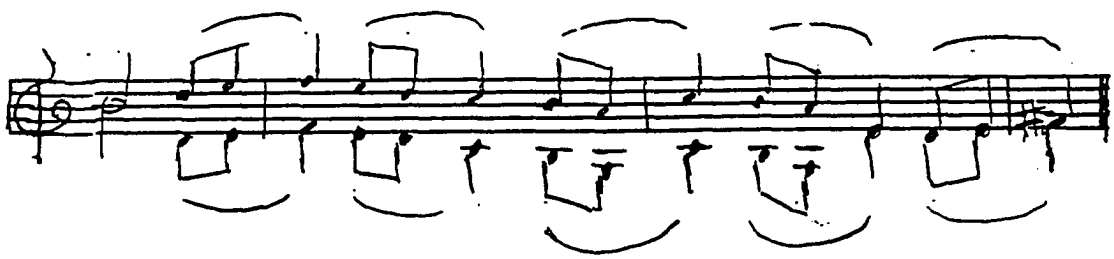
d) French horns, trumpets, reh. 13, mm. 1-2



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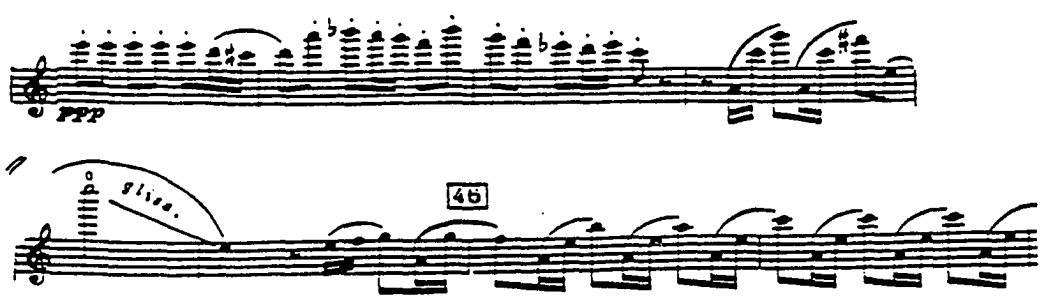
three-part counterpoint at rehs. 45-46--with its exaggerated register, eerily shrill timbre, highly differentiated melody, rhythm, and articulation--is similar to the widely-spaced, chamber-like textures of Mahler's symphonies (Example 2.30b):[41]

Example 2.29: rhythmic gallop in augmentation, violins, reh. 23, mm. 6-8



Example 2.30: continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop

a) violin I, reh. 45a-reh. 46, m. 2



[41] The extremely high violin writing in rehs. 45-46 is reminiscent of several passages in the symphonic dedication To October.

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b) reh. 46a, mm. 5-9



The passage at rehs. 63-75 features monotone gallops and ascending skip gallops (Example 2.31), often notated in eighth notes and quarter notes:

Example 2.31: continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop

a) strings (doubled by winds and brass), reh. 63



b) strings, reh. 68, mm. 1-3



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From the Poco meno mosso at reh. 75 until the start of the choral section at reh. 98, rhythmic gallops are notated in augmentation. The head motives at rehs. 75 and 77 fall into this category (Example 2.32a-b, two quarter notes followed by a half note). The ostinato melody at reh. 79 (Example 2.32c) recalls the ascending step gallops in Example 2.31:

Example 2.32: continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop

a) winds and strings (with octave doubling), reh. 75, mm. 1-3



b) winds and strings (with octave doubling), reh. 77, mm. 2-5



c) trumpet, reh. 79, mm. 1-3 (written at pitch)



The gallop continues to form a crucial part of the rhythmic language during the choral finale. The short durations of the gallop are often used by the orchestra to fill in

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the gaps left by long-held notes of the chorus, as shown by Shostakovich's setting of the first stanza of Kirsanov's text (rehs. 98-101). From reh. 103 until the end of the symphony, Shostakovich uses the gallop figure in many ways. The ever-evolving network of gallop figures may be summarized by the following chart:

- reh. 103: several types, including both ascending and descending broken gallop
- reh. 104: several types, including ascending stepwise gallop, lower neighbor gallop, and the variant (eighth rest-sixteenth-sixteenth|sixteenth-sixteenth-eighth)
- reh. 105: several types, including descending broken figure gallop, lower neighbor gallop, and the following variant (eighth rest-two sixteenths-eighth-3 triplet sixteenths-eighth-4 thirty seconds-eighth)
- reh. 107: several types in the violins and cellos; note the ostinato use in cellos
- reh. 108: mostly ascending stepwise gallop (with occasional octave displacement)
- reh. 109: both ascending stepwise and monotone gallop as a one-bar ostinato
- reh. 111: several types in both horns and bass-line instruments
- reh. 114: ascending stepwise gallop in the final melody (trumpet)

In this section, I analyzed the continuous variation of the rhythmic gallop, an energetic figure that forms a major part of Shostakovich's rhythmic language in general. The continuous variation of rhythmic gallops complements his treatment of other significant thematic ideas in the piece, as shown in my earlier discussion of the work's opening episodes, stepwise melodies, three-note stepwise figures, and repeated-note figures. The principle of continuous variation, in effect a dialectical approach to composition that constantly synthesizes old and new material, leads to a hyper-episodic structure in which both traditional symphonic form and thematic recurrence are deliberately avoided.

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Conclusion

In this chapter I have examined Shostakovich's The First of May symphony in the context of ideological pressures placed on Soviet artists during the First Five-Year Plan. In addition, I provided an analysis of the music, focusing on the principle of continuous variation--an evolutionary, dialectical approach to composition in which old and new melodic materials are constantly synthesized and varied to create new themes. The principle of continuous variation (or "linking" procedure) that I have identified in The First of May symphony comes close to Boris Asafiev's idea of "symphonism." (Boris Asafiev and the idea of Soviet symphonism will be explored in Chapter Five). In Chapter One we saw how the "coming into being" of the October theme and the use of ultrapolyphony in To October depicted "the zeal of struggle and victory." In The First of May, Shostakovich attempted to capture the general spirit and mood of a public holiday of peaceful construction. How does he accomplish this? May Day celebrations in early Soviet Russia were festive occasions, filled with parades, carnivals, fairs, and of course, propaganda. As in any parade, objects and sounds gradually move in and out of the observer's consciousness; there is a constant swirl of jubilant activity. The First of May, a symphony in which virtually no theme is ever repeated, captures the spirited atmosphere of May Day celebrations by constantly transforming thematic material within a series of quickly-changing episodes.

Though he wrote The First of May in part to deflect mounting criticism of his music by ideologues in the proletarian music camp, the symphony is nonetheless an important work for Shostakovich. Many of the procedures I identified in the work--

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especially the highly complex, episodic style--are hallmarks of his symphonic music in general. Judging from the deafening silence in the proletarian music press at the time of its premiere, there can be no doubt that Shostakovich's complex symphony did not sit well with his critics. Within a few years, he was sending mixed messages about his feelings toward the work. As we see in Chapter Four, he criticized the "leftism" (i.e., uncompromisingly revolutionary attitude) of both To October and The First of May in statements to the western press in 1931. But at the same time, he boasted in the Soviet press that The First of May was one of the best pieces he had written. It is unclear whether his use of the term leftism referred to the works' revolutionary compositional approaches, their connection to a revolutionary theme, or both. During the *perestroika* period of Soviet music history (1932-35), a time when composers were expected to compose Soviet "classics" in the style of nineteenth-century romantic music, critics acknowledged Shostakovich's attempt in The First of May to combine a revolutionary theme with a revolutionary approach to symphonic music.[42] Both To October and The First of May virtually vanished during the repressive period of the late 1930s and 1940s, when they were singled out as manifestations of Shostakovich's "formalism." After the death of Stalin and the relative cultural thaw of the late 1950s and early 1960s, as mentioned in Chapter One, Shostakovich remained ambivalent toward these works and encouraged musicians not to perform them.[43] It is unclear whether he was embarrassed

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[42] I.Ya. Ryzhkin "Zadachi sovetskovo simfonizma" (Tasks of soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 6, 10-11; A.A. Ostretsov, "Sovetskoe simfonicheskoe tvorchestvo" (Soviet symphonic creativity), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1935): 11-13.

[43] Schwarz, Music and Musical Life, 646.

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by the works' musical substance or their political content. The answer, most likely, is both.

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Chapter Three
"*Detskaya bolezn levizny*": Leftism, constructivism, and formalism as terms of critical discourse

In Chapters One and Two I examined how the political, intellectual, and artistic environment in the late 1920s shaped the composition of Dmitri Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies. Chapters Three, Four, Five, and Six examine Soviet Russian discourse about music and Shostakovich's historical position within the culture debates from the late 1920s through the mid 1930s. This decade-long period saw the transformation of the Soviet Union into a totalitarian state led by Josef Stalin. From the onset of Stalin's rule--and especially during periods of harsh political orthodoxy in the arts such as the proletarian episode, the Great Terror, and the late Stalin period--critics, party activists, the press, and artists used a system of abusive discourse to attack the Soviet creative elite, regiment artistic production, and silence freethinking intellectuals and artists. In this chapter I trace the use of "leftism," "constructivism," and "formalism" as terms of abuse in the Soviet lexicon and look at their use in the reception of Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies.[1] We have already encountered these terms in Chapters One and Two, and in the remaining chapters we will continue to see

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[1] The reception history of the Fourth Symphony (1935-36), which bears the imprint of the same terms of abuse, is examined more closely in Chapter Seven and the Conclusion. Shostakovich withdrew the Fourth Symphony from its scheduled premiere in late 1936 at the bidding of officials in the Communist Party, Soviet government, Union of Soviet Composers, and Leningrad Philharmonic. A victim of the antiformalist debates of the Stalin period, the Fourth Symphony did not receive its first performance until 1961, twenty-five years after its completion. Despite the composer's public renunciation of the Fourth, it was one of his most prized works--a musical credo and a symbol of resistance in the face of official repression.

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them used in connection with Shostakovich's music. For that reason, it is important to delve into the meanings of leftism, constructivism, and formalism. This chapter, however, is not meant to be a detailed examination of the origins and history of leftism, constructivism, and formalism (that would lie far outside the scope of this study), nor is it a detailed reception history of Shostakovich's music. Rather, this chapter serves as an analysis of *why* these terms were used as codewords to attack the intelligentsia in general and Shostakovich in particular.

During the revolutionary period the political "left" encompassed a broad spectrum of ideologies--social democracy, menshevism, bolshevism, and anarchism, among others. Following the Revolution, Lenin strongly criticized leftist dissident groups in Russia and abroad for their revolutionary purism and refusal to compromise on questions of ideology. The term "left," in a leninist sense, denoted persons or ideas that were either "too" revolutionary in his view (hard-line ideologues and utopian socialists) or did not conform to centralized bolshevik authority (left-wing anarchists). Following a purge of left-wing communists in 1920-21 and the implementation of NEP in 1921, the Left Opposition objected to the Party's move toward state-sponsored capitalism.[2]

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[2] The Left Opposition is a convenient label to describe the various oppositionist groups that objected to Lenin's New Economic Policy, a program of state capitalism instituted in 1921 to rebuild the country following the devastating Civil War. Left oppositionists also wanted to stimulate industrial and agricultural production, but to do so according to a state command economy that was sympathetic to the needs of the working class. Over strenuous objections from the left, Tenth Party Congress (March 1921) ratified NEP and banned intraparty factionalism. In the wake of the Tenth Congress, oppositionist groups criticized Lenin and the Central Committee for abandoning the basic principles of socialism and squelching political debate. After Lenin's death in 1924 and losses for the left in the leadership struggles, leaders of the Left Opposition were forced to share power with Josef Stalin. Stalin used his influence as

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Oppositionists also criticized the Party for suppressing workers' rights and squelching the free debate of economic and social policies.

After Lenin's death, the Left Opposition led by Trotsky objected strenuously to the increasing power that Josef Stalin held in matters of party appointments, reviews, transfers, and expulsions.[3] Because left oppositionists had been the ones who opposed Stalin's consolidation of power in the mid to late 1920s (and later sought to overthrow him as party leader in 1934) "left" became a codeword for abusing Stalin's opponents or anyone else deemed ideologically suspect. In late 1927, after a three-year long battle for leadership, Stalin had gained enough control over the party apparatus to secure the expulsion of the Left Opposition from the Party. (And yet, as I pointed out in Chapter Two, Stalin incorporated many idea of the left's platform in his First Five-Year Plan) Trotsky himself was forced into exile in 1929 and assassinated in Mexico City on Stalin's orders in 1940.

Constructivism, one of the most influential artistic movements of the early twentieth century, was developed in the early 1920s as a way to bridge the gap between the artistic revolution (western-influenced modernism) and the Russian political revolution (bolshevism). As self-described leftists whose activities were patronized by Trotsky and other leaders of the Left Opposition, constructivists ran afoul of the Soviet

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Party Secretary to wage a war against the Left Opposition over the next three years, culminating in the Left Opposition's expulsion from the Party at the Fifteenth Party Congress (December 1927).

[3] For a summary of left-wing opposition to NEP and the rise of Stalin, see A Documentary History of Communism in Russia, ed. Robert V. Daniels (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1993), 109-17, 125-31, and 144-59.

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regime following the Opposition's defeat in late 1927. The modernist tendencies and freethinking aesthetic of leading constructivists, despite their commitment to communist ideals, had already made them ideologically suspect and easy to isolate politically. The influence of constructivists in Russia waned quickly during the proletarian episode, even though they continued to work for state industries and agit-prop divisions within the government. With constructivism abolished during the Stalin period, the term "constructivism" was often used as a convenient label to denigrate all modernist experimentation in the arts.

During the Stalin period, "formalism" was the harshest term of abuse in the Soviet artistic lexicon, and like "leftism" and "constructivism," it often denoted ideas or artistic techniques influenced by western modernism. The term, of course, is associated with Russian formalism, an approach to literary criticism that emerged in the 1910s, became a leading school of thought in the 1920s, and was fully suppressed by 1930. During the 1920s, formalists entered into heated polemics with a broad cross-section of ideologues--trotskyists, leninists, stalinists, and others who distrusted the intellectual elite. Easy to abuse publicly because of their social background as *intelligenty*, formalists lost all political patronage by 1929 and were soon expelled from universities. By this time, the term "bourgeois formalist" had been used broadly to denigrate the work of the creative elite, especially modernists whose work did not overtly pay homage to the political revolution.

In the section that follows, I provide a brief reception history of Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies, noting ways in which "leftism," constructivism," and

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"formalism" were used to describe the music. I then survey the origins, aesthetics, aims, and significance of leftism, constructivism, and formalism in Soviet intellectual life during the 1920s, and explain more fully why these terms were used to denigrate the Soviet creative intelligentsia (the previous discussion merely introduced the terms involved).

Shostakovich's Second and Third Symphonies: a brief reception history in Soviet Russia

The Second and Third symphonies drew a variety of responses from critics, musicians, and scholars in Soviet Russia. Because of their political content, relative chronological proximity, and cantata-like format, the Second and Third are conveniently lumped together in the secondary literature on Shostakovich.[4] Though Russian

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[4] Western critics during the 1920s and 1930s often ridiculed the political content and criticized the modernist complexity of the Second and Third symphonies. For concise treatment on the reception of Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies, including criticism by western writers, see Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, enlarged ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 79-83. Recently, however, most western scholars have overcome their distaste for the agit-prop nature of these symphonies to recognize the importance of these pieces for Shostakovich's development as a composer. Representative examples of recent western scholarship on the Second and Third symphonies include: Hermann Danuser, "Dmitri Schostakowitschs musikalisch-poetisches Revolutionsverständnis (1926-1927). Zur Ersten Klaviersonate und zur Zweiten Symphonie." Melos/Neue Zeitschrift für Musik, no. 1 (1978): 3-11; Hugh Ottaway, Shostakovich Symphonies (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1978), 13-18; Eric Roseberry, Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process in the Symphonies, Cello Concertos, and String Quartets of Shostakovich (New York: Garland, 1989), 126-29; Detlef Gojowy, Neue Sowjetische Musik der 20er Jahre (Regensburg: Laaber-Verlag, 1980); Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 79-83; Karen Kopp, Form und Gehalt der Symphonien des Dmitrij Schostakowitsch (Bonn: Verlag für Systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990), 137-59; Ian MacDonald, The New Shostakovich (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1990), 46-48, 61-64; Roy Blokker with Robert Dearling, The Music of Dmitri Shostakovich: the Symphonies (London: Tantivy, 1979), 47-55; Stefan Weiss, "Text und Form in

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modernists in the late 1920s hailed the Second and Third as achievements that combine modern compositional principles with a revolutionary ideology, as noted in Chapters One and Two, supporters of proletarian music did not like the works' complex musical content (though they did approve of the political messages). The reception of these pieces during the proletarian episode (1928-early 1932) is obscured by the official hostility to complex orchestral music, the tight ideological and censorship restrictions on art and criticism, and the sharp decline in the number of periodical and books dedicated to contemporary Soviet musical life.

Following the stalinist *perestroika* of the arts in April 1932, favorable opinions of leading artists and intellectuals started to reappear in the press by the next year. From 1933 until 1936, music banned during RAPM's tenure was permitted to be played in public (operas, jazz, light music, purely instrumental music) and a softer line on music and culture prevailed. Music critics during this period hailed Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies as two of the most important works in the early history of Soviet symphonic music. Remarkably, such sentiments came from the composer's friends and foes alike. In early 1933 Shostakovich's longtime friend, Ivan Sollertinsky (himself newly rehabilitated after April 1932) wrote sympathetically of both symphonies in an article for Rabochii i teatr.[5] A year later Yuri Keldysh, a former RAPMist and frequent critic of Shostakovich, described the Second in 1934 as a "purely philosophical

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Schostakowitschs 2. Sinfonie op. 14." Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 51 (1994): 145-60; Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, 61-63, 72-73.

[5] Ivan Sollertinsky, "Zametki o sovetskom simfonizme" (Thoughts on Soviet symphonism), Rabochii i teatr, no. 11 (1933): 8-9.

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symphonic conception" (*chisto filosofskaya simfonicheskaya kontseptsia*) with a marxist-leninist world-view--in other words, he approved.[6] Because left oppositionists had been the ones who opposed Stalin's consolidation of power in the mid to late 1920s (and later sought to overthrow him as party leader in 1934) "left" became a codeword for abusing Stalin's opponents or anyone else deemed ideologically suspect. At the *diskussia o simfonizme* (discussion on symphonism) in February 1935, a conference sponsored by the Union of Soviet Composers, several influential critics pointed to the Second and Third as leading Soviet song symphonies.[7]

The relative conciliation of the *perestroika* period ended in 1936, when Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk and Bright Stream were harshly reviewed in Pravda. The infamous Pravda article on Lady Macbeth is filled with indictments of the opera's alleged "formalism," "leftist grotesquerie," and "Meyerholdism," after the famed leftist theater director Vsevolod Meyerhold, a dedicated trotskyist and leading constructivist artist of the 1920s (see Chapter Six for a review of the Lady Macbeth affair and its place in the

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[6] Yuri Keldysh, "12-ya simfonia Myaskovskovo i nekotorie problemy sovetskovo simfonizma" (Myaskovsky's Twelfth Symphony and certain problems of soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 2 (1934): 22. The work satisfied the demands of a "symphony of a socialist society" (*simfonia sotsialisticheskovo oshchestva*), Keldysh added, because it embodies a "synthetic reflection" (*sinteticheskoe otobrazhenie*) of the struggle, victory, and establishment of socialism. These comments are remarkably similar to the composer's own assessment of the piece in 1928 and 1929 (see Chapter One).

[7] A. A. Ostretsov, "Sovetskoe simfonicheskoe tvorchestvo" (Soviet symphonic creativity), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1935): 3-21; I. Ya. Ryzhkin, "Zadachi sovetskovo simfonizma" (Tasks of soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1935): 3-27.

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broader antiformalism debates of 1936).[8] From the time of Shostakovich's censure in 1936 until the period of destalinization of the late 1950s, the Second and Third symphonies, along with nearly all of Shostakovich's early works, were essentially banned.

Following the Great Patriotic War, Stalin and the upper party echelon resumed its campaign of harassment of leading artists and intellectuals. Charges of anti-Soviet "bourgeois formalism" were raised against the musical intelligentsia as a whole in 1948. In January 1948 the Central Committee organized a conference of musicians, chaired by Andrei Zhdanov, at which leading Soviet composers and musicologists were targeted for abuse.[9] The Central Committee resolution of 10 February 1948 ("On the opera The Great Friendship by V. Muradeli") officially condemned prominent Soviet composers and singled out Shostakovich as the leading formalist in the Union of Soviet Composers.[10] The resolution was followed by a Discussion of a General Assembly of Soviet Composers in Moscow (17-26 February 1948) at which composers and critics denounced

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[8] "Sumbur vmesto muzyki" (Muddle instead of music), Pravda, 28 January 1936, p. 3, trans. in Victor Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich: the Life and Background of a Soviet Composer (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1943), 204-07.

[9] Andrew Werth, Musical Uproar in Moscow (London: Turnstile Press, 1949). See pp. 47-86 for a transcript of proceedings from the three-day Conference of Musicians at the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, Moscow, January 1948.

[10] "Resolution of the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party (Bolsheviks) of 10 February 1948," in Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 5th ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 1055-57.

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each other and "confessed" their formalist sins.[11] In his statement before the assembly, Tikhon Khrennikov strongly condemned Shostakovich's Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies as examples of formalist music.[12] Unlike 1936, when Shostakovich remained silent following his censure by the Party, he was forced to recant in 1948. Adding to the insults Shostakovich had to endure at the time, the composer/critic Marian Koval wrote a three-part article in the 1948 volume of Sovetskaya muzyka detailing Zhdanov's criticisms of Shostakovich's music.[13]

The strict ideological orthodoxy of the late 1940s continued past Stalin's death in 1953, but began to relax in the late 1950s as part of Nikita Khrushchev's destalinization campaign. The Central Committee resolution of 28 May 1958 ("On Rectifying Errors in Evaluation of Operas The Great Friendship, Bogdan Khmelnitsky, and With All One's

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[11] For the official reports of the 1948 antiformalism debates in the Union of Soviet Composers, see Sovetskaya muzyka no. 1 (1948): 3-28, 54-128; no. 2 (1948): 62-78. The entire 1948 volume of Sovetskaya muzyka, too, is filled with inflammatory articles denouncing "formalism" in the works of leading Soviet composers. Materials from the USC debates are translated in: Werth, Musical Uproar in Moscow; and "Discussion at a General Assembly of Soviet Composers, Moscow, 17-26 February 1948," in Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 1057-66. The documents published by Slonimsky include speeches and statements by Andrei Zhdanov, Tikhon Khrennikov, Vano Muradeli, Dmitri Shostakovich, Aram Khachaturian, and Sergei Prokofiev; Published here, too, is a fawning letter from the Union of Soviet Composers to Josef Stalin, promising vigilance against formalism.

[12] "Discussion at a General Assembly of Soviet Composers," in Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 1058-1062. For his loyalty in the antiformalist purges of 1948, the Party rewarded Khrennikov with the chairmanship of the Union of Soviet Composers.

[13] Marian Koval, "Tvorcheskii put D Shostakovicha" (Shostakovich's creative path), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 2 (1948): 47-61; no. 3 (1948): 31-43; no. 4 (1948): 8-19. For his discussion of "formalism" and "constructivism" in the Second and Third symphonies, see Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 2 (1948): 57-58.

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Heart") reversed the earlier 10 February 1948 resolution on leading composers, giving musicians a bit more breathing space with respect to artistic freedom.[14] The reforms of the late 1950s and early 1960s created a slightly freer environment for Soviet artists and critics--but small freedoms came at a heavy price. The rejection of hard-line policies was part of Khrushchev's attempt to recruit the intelligentsia in supporting his so-called New Program of Communism. Many leading figures among the Soviet intelligentsia, including Shostakovich, were forced to join the Communist Party.[15] The relative tolerance of the Party toward the creative intelligentsia in the 1960s, of course, had many limits. Despite the so-called thaw, the Party continued to demand folk-inspired, patriotic, socialist realist music from its composers.

On the positive side, many former "enemies" were rehabilitated during Khrushchev's reign and a number of banned works of art, music, literature, and theater were resurrected. Critics began to speak less harshly of modernist works from the early Soviet period, as illustrated by a big change in the reception of Shostakovich's early works. In short, the harsh rhetoric of previous years was replaced by a softer line, similar

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[14] "Party Reverses Past Criticism of Leading Composers," in Current Digest of the Soviet Press 10, no. 23 (1958): 3-7. This article contains two documents first published in Pravda, 8 June 1958, pp. 3-5: a translation of the Central Committee resolution of 28 May 1958 ("On Rectifying Errors in Evaluation of Operas The Great Friendship, Bogdan Khmelnitsky, and With All One's Heart"); a translation of the Pravda editorial "The Path of Soviet Music is the Path of Folk Content and Realism."

[15] The idea that Shostakovich was forced to join the Party, first intimated by Solomon Volkov in 1979, was confirmed by Isaak Glikman. On Shostakovich joining the Communist Party, see Isaak Glikman, Pisma k drugu (Moscow: DSCH, 1993), 160-61, quoted in Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 338-39; and Solomon Volkov, ed., Testimony (New York: Limelight, 1979; reprint, New York: Limelight Editions, 1984), xxxix.

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to that of the late NEP era.[16] During the poststalinist thaw, Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies were again marginally rehabilitated (the Fourth was finally premiered in late 1961). The musicologist Genrikh (Henry) Orlov, for example, published three studies on Shostakovich's symphonies in the 1960s, in which the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies were viewed as important milestones in his symphonic career. In 1966 he rejected previous studies of the Second Symphony that unfairly portrayed it as a "model of unrestrained formalism, arbitrary rebelliousness, and artistic anarchism" (*obrazets bezuderzhnovo formalizma, samotselnobo buntarstva, khudozhestvennovo anarkhizma*).[17]

Despite its emphasis on modernist experimentation, Orlov argued that the Second was an outstanding landmark in the creation of Soviet symphonism. In drawing parallels between the Second Symphony and constructivist techniques in film, visual arts, poetry, and theater, he referred to the piece as "the most finished and complete representation of

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[16] Representative examples of poststalinist Soviet scholarship on the Second and Third symphonies include: Marina Sabinina, Simfonizm Shostakovicha - Put k zrelosti (Path toward maturity. Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 32-62; Genrikh Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm (Moscow: Muzyka, 1966), 61-67; Edison Denisov, "Ob orkestrovke D. Shostakovicha" (On Shostakovich's orchestration) in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed. Lev Danilevich (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor), 439-99; Alfred Schnittke: "Nekotorye osobennosti orkestrovovo golosovedenia v simfonicheskikh proizvedeniakh D. D. Shostakovicha" (Some peculiarities of orchestral counterpoint in Shostakovich's symphonic compositions) in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed. Lev Danilevich, 499-532; Marina Sabinina, Shostakovich-Simfonist: dramaturgia, estetika, stil (Dramaturgy, aesthetics, style. Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 55-79; Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's early years), vol. 1 (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1975), 202-06, 270-73; Sofia Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde - Leningrad (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1979), 36-61; Sofia Khentova, Zhizn i tvorchestvo (Life and work), vol. 1 (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1985), 185-90, 248-52.

[17] Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm, 63.

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the 'left' approach toward a revolutionary theme" [my emphasis].[18] Among the constructivist traits in the Second, he cited a high degree of motoric rhythmic energy ("like the work of an engine"), "rationality," "an economy of means," the dramatic blast from a pitched factory siren at the beginning of the chorus, and the fugato in episode three (reh. 30ff), which he calls "a complicated timbre-sonic construction (*slozhnaya tembrovo-shumovaya konstruktsia*).[19] Unlike previous Soviet histories of music, Orlov's use of the labels "left" and "constructivist" here is not pejorative. Orlov's assessments sound like earlier critiques written in the modernist press of the mid 1920s; thus the reception of the Second Symphony had come full circle in the forty years since its completion.[20]

For his part, Shostakovich expressed a wide variety of opinions concerning his Second and Third symphonies. In letters to the Leningrad Conservatory and statements to the Soviet press during the late 1920s and early 1930s, he mentioned their importance in the formation of his symphonic style.[21] But in December 1931 he seemed to distance

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[18] Ibid., 62. "Naibolee zakonchennoe i polnoe predstavlenie o 'levom' podkhode k revolyutsionnoi teme daet Vtoraya simfonia Shostakovicha."

[19] Ibid., 63, 65.

[20] Several positive reviews of Shostakovich's To October, including ones that speak favorably of his incorporation of constructivist techniques, are surveyed in Chapter One. See especially M. Grinberg, "Dmitri Shostakovich," Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 23 (1927): 16-20;.

[21] See Manashir A. Yakubov, "'Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi'" (I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka no. 10 (1986): 54-55; and Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6.

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himself publicly from the Second and Third--not in the Soviet press, but in The New York Times, seemingly an odd place for him to make an about-face with respect to politically-inspired music that boosted his reputation as a professional composer.[22] He continued to maintain his distance from the pieces later in life, too. Shostakovich expressed great ambivalence toward these two symphonies--understandably so since he came under great abuse for them during the 1948 antiformalist campaign. Later in life, as mentioned earlier, he expressed a degree of embarrassment over the pieces--probably because of their overtly political stance and the low quality of the music as compared to his other symphonies.[23]

I will return to Shostakovich's music at the end of this chapter, where I discuss constructivist features of the Second Symphony. But to gain a greater appreciation of the composition and reception histories of the Second and Third symphonies, I turn now to a discussion of the political and artistic landscape in the early history of the Soviet period, noting the contributions of leftism, constructivism, and formalism to the ideological-artistic-intellectual debates of the 1920s.

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[22] Rose Lee, "Dmitri Szostakovitch: Young Russian Composer Tells of Linking Politics with Creative Work," New York Times, 20 December 1931, sec. 8, p. 8.

[23] In Chapters One and Two, respectively, I noted that Shostakovich accepted the commission for To October because of financial reasons and that he wrote The First of May as a graduation exercise and in part to shield him from the increasing number of attacks on his music in the press. The low quality of these symphonies may have resulted because he composed them out of financial and political necessity--not exclusively out of artistic conviction.

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Russian formalism and the problem of "formalism" in Russia

In Stalin's Russia, "formalism" was the harshest possible indictment in the Soviet artistic, philosophical, and scientific lexicons; it was used often to denounce the work of the creative and intellectual elite. We can see, for example, the overuse of "formalism" as a term of abuse in the cultural purges during three periods of extreme political repression: the proletarian episode in the arts, the antiformalism debates of the late 1930s, and the campaign of repression during the late Stalin years. Victor Erlich, in his pioneering study on formalism, points to two main tenets of Russian formalist thought: "(a) its emphasis on the 'literary work' and its constituent parts, and (b) its insistence of the autonomy of literary scholarship."[24] By the early 1920s various theories of formalism, an analytical approach that emphasizes formal and structural content of a work instead of its expressive content, competed for the attention of the Russian literary elite.[25]

Largely the domain of academics and the literary elite, formalism attracted hostility among many artists and critics for various reasons during the 1920s--ideology,

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[24] Victor Erlich, Russian Formalism: History-Doctrine, (New York: Mouton, 1980), 171. First published in 1955, Erlich's book is the pioneering study in English on Russian formalism, and to this day remains the best survey of the subject. According to Erlich, formalism originated in 1915-16, had its heyday in the early 1920s, and was fully suppressed by 1930. Erlich credits Russian formalism for making significant methodological and philosophical contributions to a number of trends in twentieth-century critical thought, including structuralism and Anglo-American "new criticism."

[25] For a discussion of the history and doctrine of Russian formalism from the time of the Revolution until 1930, including a survey of differing theories by its leading proponents, see Erlich, Russian Formalism, 70-153, 171-271.

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ignorance, and hostility to academicism.[26] Formalist theorists wrote on topics such as methods of language production, literary and social analysis, building a new language of the bolshevik state, and creating new literary forms and genres. Often published in LEF (the journal of the influential Left Front of Arts group), the views of formalists clashed with each other with respect to methodology, ideology, and interpretation. Not only did formalists differ with each other, they battled marxists, the party leadership, the Left Opposition, and self-styled proletarian artists. Fueling the fire, leading formalists such as Boris Eikhenbaum and Viktor Shklovsky dismissed the reflection theory of art advocated by cultural leninists as too simplistic and clashed bitterly with supporters of proletarian culture over the content and function of art in a workers state.[27] Formalists' open hostility to proletarian groups made them vulnerable to ideological attack, smear campaigns, and charges of counterrevolutionary activity.

After the defeat of the Left Opposition at the Fifteenth Party Congress (December

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[26] In a letter to his mother (dated 8 April 1924), Dmitri Shostakovich used the word "formalist" to describe a slavish adherence to academic principles among professors at the Leningrad Conservatory. At the time, he was in Moscow to audition for admission to the Moscow Conservatory (his mother nixed the plans because of Dmitri's poor health). For his audition, he played several pieces for the committee (Professors Myaskovsky, Vasilenko, Konyus, and Bryusov), after which they debated the merits of the young composer's work. Shostakovich wrote to his mother, "I listened to this dialogue and was bursting with joy. Miskva [Kvadri] was in transports of delight. In Leningrad they would never have accepted the Trio as my sonata form piece. *What stupid formalists*" [my emphasis]. Dmitri Shostakovich, "Pisma k materi" (Letters to mother), Neva, no. 9 (1986): 169-70, quoted in Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, 38.

[27] Samuel D. Eisen, "Whose Lenin is it Anyway? Viktor Shklovsky, Boris Eikhenbaum and the Formalist-Marxist Debate in Soviet Cultural Politics (A View From the Twenties)," The Russian Review 55 (1996): 65-79.

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1927) opened the way for the imposition of a hard line on culture, the lack of unity among formalists and their denigration of marxist criticism contributed to their downfall. By the middle of 1929, hard-line proletarian arts groups controlled the content of all legally published material and formalists were unable to repel the increasing attacks against them in the press. "Formalism" and "formalist" became widely-used, catch-all denunciations of the intellectual elite. The misapplication of "formalism" as a term of derision continued unabated until the end of the Stalin period. In Chapters Six and Seven, I examine more fully the use of "formalism" as a term of abuse against Shostakovich and his music during the antiformalist campaigns of 1936 and 1948.

The political positions of the early Soviet avant-garde: "severance" versus "revisionist" theories

One of the overriding problems that Shostakovich scholars have faced recently is determining if and to what extent the composer believed in communism and supported the Soviet regime. These questions, I find, are part of a larger debate within the field of Soviet studies over the past twenty years. Historians are reevaluating the political positions of Soviet artists and intellectuals as a whole, especially those who lived during the first ten years of the Soviet state, when the government allowed and at times even encouraged experimentation in creative endeavors (as compared to the Stalin period, when modernist experimentation was officially repressed). In this section I would like to make the point that contemporary historians in Russia and the West are still divided on whether leading avant-garde artists in the 1920s believed in communism and willingly

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supported bolshevism, or whether they were coerced into cooperating with the state's heavy-handed regulation and censorship of artistic production. This discussion thus helps to frame the remaining chapters in this dissertation, in which questions of Shostakovich's loyalties are addressed with respect to politics and the creative process.

Soviet Russian avant-garde art of the 1920s began receiving greater attention in the scholarly community in the 1980s, when *glasnost* and *perestroika* opened the way to freer discussion of the topic in Russia and permitted greater access to documents for all scholars. Still, historians continue to reach contradictory conclusions regarding the avant-garde's role in Soviet cultural politics during the 1920s and 1930s. The art historian Paul Wood views the current rift within the historical community as a conflict between "severance" and "revisionist" theories.[28] Proponents of the severance thesis maintain that the Soviet avant-garde (here avant-garde is used synonymously with western-influenced modernists) held no influence on the administration of culture in the 1920s and point to the open antipathy between avant-garde artists and Soviet authorities. "Perhaps the most dangerous rumor concerning the Russian avant-garde," John Bowlt writes, "has to do with its alleged support of radical politics, and radical political philosophy in general."[29] The post-*glasnost* Russian historian Vassili Rakitin also dissociates the avant-garde from involvement with revolutionary politics, arguing that

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[28] Paul Wood, "The Politics of the Avant-Garde," in The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-1932, ed. Thomas Krens et al. (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 1992), 1-24.

[29] John Bowlt, "The Old New Wave," New York Review of Books, 16 February 1984, p. 28, quoted in Wood, "The Politics of the Avant-Garde," 2.

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practitioners of the 1920s left agit-art (Aleksandr Rodchenko, and El Lissitsky, among others) had "much less in common with leftist sociological hypotheses than has been supposed."[30]

Revisionist accounts, on the other hand, draw a direct connection--convincingly so, in my view--between the Soviet avant-garde of the 1920s and left-wing, trotskyist political principles (e.g., commitment to a state-directed economy, international socialism, workers' state utopia). Without exception, Paul Wood argues, Russian avant-garde artists of the 1920s were "explicitly committed to working-class revolution."[31] It is important to keep in mind, of course, that making determinations about the ideologies of individuals among large groups of people (in this case freethinking intellectuals and artists in a revolutionary society) is extremely difficult, and that one must adhere to making such determinations on a case by case basis. Though Wood's sweeping statement sounds like an overextended generalization, this so-called revisionist perspective is supported by documentary evidence and the kind of creative work many avant-garde undertook during NEP and the First Five-Year Plan.

The leading "left-wing" arts organizations and journals specializing in modernism during the NEP period--such as LEF, Novii LEF, and Muzykalnaya kultura, among others--openly supported the ideals of the Revolution. But the extent to which the avant-garde's adherence to politically revolutionary ideals resulted from coercion, and to what

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[30] Vassili Rakitin, "The Avant-Garde and the Art of the Stalinist Era," in Hans Gunther, ed., The Culture of the Stalin Period (London: Macmillan, 1990), 185, quoted in Wood, "The Politics of the Avant-Garde," 3.

[31] Wood, "The Politics of the Avant-Garde," 1-2.

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extent it resulted from political conviction is difficult to determine. We should be reminded that during NEP, when artists had the option *not* to infuse their work with ideological content, many of the avant-garde's leading artists worked for state enterprises and willing created agit-prop works for the May and October holidays (see my discussion of this issue in Chapter One). Though the defeat of the Left Opposition in party politics and the implementation of the First Five-Year Plan eroded the influence of modernists in Russian artistic life, constructivist artists and other avant-garde artists continued to work directly with state enterprises by designing political posters, advertisements, product packaging, books, buildings, and other items of use. By making useful products for everyday life rather than aesthetic objects for contemplation, such artists were able to prove their usefulness in a workers' state, where utilitarian function was considered an artistic value.

"Leftism," "left art," and the Soviet avant-garde of the 1920s

The discrepancies and contradictions concerning the origins, aesthetics, aims, and reception of the early Soviet avant-garde art oblige us to explore the post-October political landscape in Russia and its impact on artistic practices and discourses. The end of the tsarist empire at first promised new institutions for artists and students, new approaches to training and pedagogy, independent unions, greater creative freedom, and an end to censorship. Fearful of governmental hostility and interference, many individuals and organizations in the arts rejected any cooperation with the Soviets following the October Revolution. Avant-garde futurists were the exception; they openly

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courted the Party's favor. Russian futurists adopted stridently revolutionary (i.e., leftist) positions both politically and artistically, envisioned a future of artistically revolutionary art that celebrated the political revolution, and attempted to establish "futurism" as the artistic and ideological vanguard of the Soviet state.

The ultraleft-futurist organization Proletkult (Proletarian Culture) became a section of Narkompros (People's Commissariat of Public Enlightenment, the chief ministry of culture and education) almost immediately after the October Revolution. With its hard line program, Proletkult won little support from the rest of the artistic community. While the futurists worked directly with communists, other self-described leftists, such as the anarchistic suprematists, actually stood at the opposite end of the ideological-artistic spectrum, favoring governmental noninterference and creative autonomy for artists. Many members of the Russian creative intelligentsia found it impossible to compromise with the utopian values of futurism and strongly objected to Proletkult's attempt to monopolize the arts. In addition, many artists and intellectuals (left, right, and moderate) denigrated Proletkult artists for a lack of talent, and were repelled by the desecration of art works and demolition of important architectural landmarks that took place under Proletkult's watch.

The split among members of the left-wing avant-garde entered a new phase in December 1920 when the Central Committee liquidated the Proletkult section of Narkompros and reorganized the cultural ministries. The reorganization of Narkompros served not only to tighten bolshevik control over cultural production, but also to isolate ideologically-suspect intellectuals in the artistic community--especially left-futurists

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whose factionalism divided the community, left-anarchists who scorned the idea of state administration of the arts, and freethinkers who were suspicious of the Party's motives (and vice versa). The restructuring of cultural organizations in 1920-21 was part of a broader program of administrative, intellectual, and ideological adjustments in party policy that Lenin oversaw during and after the Civil War, when disaffection with bolshevik rule was widespread--even among communists and the Red Army. Politically isolated in the purges of 1920-21, leftists reorganized to keep pace with a rapidly changing political situation.

But what did it mean exactly for an artist to be "left"? The use of the terms "leftism" and "left art" in Soviet critical discourse, whether used in a sympathetic or an unsympathetic context, is highly problematic. To demonstrate the point, I would like to return to Shostakovich's 1931 interview with The New York Times:

> All of his symphonies so far have been atonal in harmony, and today he cannot help finding them a bit 'old fashioned'--not as an American might understand the word, but in the Russian sense of being too sharply revolutionary. *"A children's disease of the Left Wing!"* he called those early theories. [emphasis added]

The curious phrase attributed to Shostakovich, "a children's disease of the left wing," calls to mind Lenin's famous essay "Detskaya bolezn 'levizny' v kommunizme" (The infantile disorder of the left-wing in communism, 1920) in which left-wing communists were criticized for their revolutionary zealotry, utopian ideals, lack of discipline, and failure to compromise.[32] The reference to "left" in Shostakovich's interview is *not* used

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[32] V. I. Lenin, "'Left-Wing' Communism--An Infantile Disorder," in Collected Works, vol. 3 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1960), 17-118. Lenin wrote this famous

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to denigrate the overtly revolutionary content of the political message in the Second and Third symphonies, but rather to critique the musical style for being "too" revolutionary--i.e., exhibiting modernist experimentation and complexity.

It is difficult to determine whether Shostakovich meant to copy Lenin's words, whether he agreed with what he said, whether he used the phrase consciously or unconsciously, or whether he felt obliged to pay lip-service to such political slogans. Perhaps the answer lies in the fact that the interview was given to a leading newspaper of the western press during a period of strict ideological orthodoxy. Without question Shostakovich was greatly constrained by political factors not to express himself honestly. Simply put, the interview is filled with official, ready-made rhetoric that seems out of character for Shostakovich, especially considering his role in the reform movement of 1931, when he strongly opposed the "proletarian" administration of the arts. The interview, too, contradicts public statements to the Soviet press at the time in which he criticized Soviet artistic life (an expanded discussion of this interview is given in Chapter Four).[33]

The problem of using "leftism," or "leftist," or left-wing" as terms of artistic discourse arises from the application of "left," a political term, to artistic practices. If

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tract in April-May 1920 and published it in June 1920.

[33] For Shostakovich's critique of proletarian hegemony in music from 1928 until April 1932, see especially Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor," 6; and "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom, 18-19 Dekabrya, 1931" (Plenum of the All-Russian Union of Comedy and Drama Workers, fragments of the stenographers' reports dedicated to musical questions, 18-19 December 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 162-64, 171-72.

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one applies the political meaning of "left" to art, a nearly infinite number of possible manifestations of "left art" could result, depending on how the concept of being 'unconditionally revolutionary,' 'undisciplined,' or not 'subject to compromise' (the leninist usage of the term "leftism") is made manifest. Following the liquidation of Proletkult and the eradication of futurists' influence on cultural policy in 1920-21, "left art" fell into two main camps by 1923, broadly defined as proletarian art (stylistically simplistic, almost always with an overtly political or social message) and western-influenced modern art (stylistically complex, artistically revolutionary, at times politically agitational). In the field of music during NEP, there were self-styled proletarian groups (RAPM, PROKOLL) and groups that supported modern music (such as the Moscow and Leningrad branches of ASM), and one group (ORKiMD) that was designed to bridge the gulf between RAPM and ASM.[34]

It is crucial to understand that the term "left" was used in the 1920s to describe opposing sides of the ideological-artistic debate among Soviet artists. As the Left Opposition came under pressure following its defeats in the party leadership struggles of 1924 and 1927, left-wing proletarian arts groups in Russia sought official recognition from the Party by increasingly smearing their modernist opponents with accusations of

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[34] RAPM (*Rossiiskaya assotsiatsia proletarskikh muzykantov*, Russian association of proletarian musicians), PROKOLL (*Proizvodstvennovo kollektiva studentov nauchno-kompozitorskovo fakulteta*, Working collective of students of the science-composition faculty), ORKiMD (*Obedinenie revolyutsionnykh kompozitorov i muzykalnykh deyatelei*, Association of revolutionary composers and musical workers), ASM (*Assotsiatsia sovremennoi muzyki*, Association of contemporary music).

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"leftism," "trotskyism," and "bourgeois formalism."[35] Though it is certainly puzzling to find leftists accusing their opponents of "leftism," the apparent contradiction can be explained by recognizing an ideological-artistic split among the creative left. Issues such as the nature, function, and style of revolutionary art divided left artists into what I call *political leftists* (supporters of proletarian culture) and *artistic leftists* (modernists). Proponents of so-called proletarian culture advocated replacing pre-revolutionary forms and genres with politically revolutionary art--simple and "accessible to the masses" (a politically left position), while left-modernists wanted to replace pre-revolutionary forms and genres with artistically revolutionary forms and practices that drew inspiration from experimental approaches in the West. Still, a number of prominent ASM members staunchly defended the October Revolution in print, and many composed works which, like constructivists in the field of visual art, served to celebrate the aims and program of the October Revolution.

A main reason why "leftism" became synonymous with modern art and music in the 1920s and 1930s lies in the fact that many modernists supported Trotsky and the Left Opposition during the leadership struggles of the mid 1920s. Many dedicated artistic leftists, including members of LEF and ASM, openly sided with oppositionist politicians

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[35] Representative examples of criticism of "leftism" in Soviet music include: L. Kaltat, "O podlinno-burzhaznoi ideologii tov. Roslavetz" (On the pure-bourgeois ideology of comrade Roslavetz), Muzykalnoe obrazovanie, nos. 3-4 (1927): 32-43; Victor Belyi, "'Levaya' fraza 'muzykalnoi reaktsi'" ('Left' phrases of the 'musical reaction'), Muzykalnoe obrazovanie, no. 1 (1928): 43-47; "The Ideological Platform of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians," quoted in Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 5th rev. ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 1353-57; and Yuri Brodersen, "Burzhuaznuyu ideologiyu v muzyke razoblachim do kontsa" (The bourgeois ideology in music will be exposed to the end), Rabochii i teatr, nos. 62-63 (1930): 7.

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and felt no need to hide leftist ideals or shed the leftist label. (This statement is in no way meant to imply that members of LEF and ASM shared the same political beliefs or were similar in artistic style and technique.) Supporters of modern music, like avant-garde artists in other fields, were likely drawn to Trotsky's ideas on culture primarily because of his tolerance for the intelligentsia, the relatively *laissez-faire* position on artistic expression he subscribed to, and his dismissal of proletarian culture.[36]

Founded in 1923 to promote contemporary music and the work of neglected pre-revolutionary masters, the ASM quickly became the leading modern music organization in Soviet Russia. The inaugural issue of ASM's journal, Muzykalnaya kultura (1924, no.1), begins with a statement of purpose that quotes Trotsky's book Literatura i revolyutsia (written in 1923). In a swipe at supporters of proletarian culture, Trotsky argued that art works should be judged according to their significance in creating a *future* proletarian culture: "Our epoch is still not the epoch of a new culture" (*Nasha epokha ne*

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[36] Though it may seem a paradox for Trotsky, the leading left oppositionist, to advocate conciliation with the intelligentsia--who were largely viewed as class enemies by working-class leftists--keep in mind that Trotsky himself was an *intelligent* and recognized the need to court favor with the country's best and brightest in order for Soviet communism to become a reality. Also, Trotsky had little or no interest in setting cultural policy at a time when there were more important issues at stake for the survival of the Revolution, such as implementing a state program of industrialization and agricultural collectivization. For that reason, he and other leaders looked to the future as a time when the Party could more fully address questions of art and culture. Trotsky's position on proletarian culture and his encouragement of competing creative trends were shared by many party officials, as seen by the Central Committee resolution of 1 July 1925 ("On the policy of the Party in the field of literature"), which vowed not to interfere in matters of culture, except to liquidate so-called counterrevolutionary literature (see my discussion in Chapter Two).

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essh eschche epokha novoi kultura).[37] In Literature and Revolution he also advocated relative party non-interference in matters of literature, and by extension all creative disciplines--despite his own criticisms of futurism, theoretical formalism, classicism, and proletarian culture. The Leningrad branch of ASM, to which Shostakovich belonged in the late 1920s, excelled in its presentation of the latest works by western and Russian composers. Shostakovich's involvement with ASM, of course, does not mean that he supported Trotsky, but ASM's association with and open support of Trotsky during the mid 1920s helps to explain why Shostakovich and other modernist composers of the 1920s were smeared with accusations of "leftism" and "trotskyism" during the late 1920s and 1930s.

The formation of a constructivist program, 1919-1923

Denounced as "superfluous persons" and "bourgeois parasites" who produced nothing of material value and had no right to exist in a communist society, many artists and intellectuals in Russia increasingly found themselves on the political defensive following the October Revolution.[38] As a means of political and economic survival following the Civil War, artists were forced to compromise their political-aesthetic positions to match the changing demands of the Soviet state. With the reorganization of

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[37] Quoted in "Nashi zadachi" (Our tasks), Muzykalnaya kultura, no. 1 (1924): 4. The journal's title is revealing; in the lexicon of the 1920s, *kultura* necessarily meant "high culture," an idea firmly rejected by hard-line leftists.

[38] Hubertus Gassner, "The Constructivists: Modernism on the Way to Modernization." In The Great Utopia: The Russian and Soviet Avant-Garde, 1915-1932. Eds. Thomas Krens, et al. New York: Guggenheim Museum, 1992, 301.

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the cultural ministries in 1920-21, artists' groups that wished to be granted a license to operate (collectives, workshops, organizations, pedagogic institutes, concert institutions, and the like) had to demonstrate to the state how their work helped to ensure the survival of the political-social revolution--i.e., artists needed to justify their existence in a revolutionary society.[39] Many artists and groups added a sociological dimension to their ideas and used their professional and technical skills in the service of literally building a new world.

The ideological-artistic program of Russian constructivism, perhaps the most influential modern movement among the early Soviet avant-garde, called for cooperation between artists and the state to achieve working-class socialism. During NEP, constructivists were in the vanguard of placing modernism in the service of bolshevism. As Hubertus Gassner notes, the gestation and birth of constructivism lies at the juncture of the Russian political revolution and the Russian industrial revolution (1920-21).[40] Christina Lodder reminds historians to be precise about the emergence of constructivism in the 1920s, particularly because the origins, meaning, and profound impact of

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[39] Around the same time that the Party reorganized Soviet arts and placed new ideological-aesthetic demands on artists (1920-21), Kazimir Malevich formed Unovis (Affirmers of the New Art), a group devoted to the notion of collective creative work--a far cry from the anarchistic individualism of suprematism (the term suprematism--first coined by its founder, Malevich--is derived from the belief in the artistic supremacy of the individual). Most members of Unovis were self-described constructivists who supported impersonality and anonymity in their work ideal. Like constructivism, Unovis engendered a new set of terms: *unovisets* (unovist), *unovisskii* (unovistic), and *unovizm* (unovism). Aleksandra Shatskikh, "Unovis: Epicenter of a New World," in The Great Utopia, 53-64.

[40] Ibid., 299.

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constructivism were greatly distorted in Stalin-era histories of the early Soviet period.[41] The use of the Russian noun *konstruktsiia* (construction), derived from the Latin noun *constructio*, implied a break from the traditional assumptions about art--its creation, creator, audience, and function--and launched a new system of discourse among the Soviet Russian avant-garde.[42] In the late nineteenth century, the Russian word *konstruktsiia*, like its English equivalent, was applied specifically to denote the construction of buildings and machines.

By the early 1910s both *konstruktsiia* and *konstrukivnost* (constructiveness) were used as terms denoting a new artistic approach.[43] The First Working Group of Constructivists, formed in March 1921 at the Institute of Artistic Culture in Moscow, was the first of a number of diverse, self-described constructivist groups in early Soviet Russia. Key figures in the early history of constructivism, such as Aleksandr Rodchenko

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[41] The influence of constructivism on the arts lies at the heart of several essays in The Great Utopia; see especially Christina Lodder, "The Transition to Constructivism," 266-281. Other leading English-language studies on Russian constructivism include: Christina Lodder, Russian Constructivism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983); Richard Andrews and Milena Kalinovska, eds., Art Into Life: Russian Constructivism, 1914-1932 (New York: Rizzoli, 1990); and the preface to Alla Efimova and Lev Manovich, Tekstura: Russian Essays on Visual Culture (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993).

[42] The transfer of the Western and Latin vocabulary into Russian was (and still is) a common phenomenon; this process was accelerated during the revolutionary period, in part because many revolutionaries received western-style education. On the process of language building in revolutionary Russia, see Michael S. Gorham, "Speaking in Tongues: Language Culture, Literature, and Language of State in Early Soviet Russia, 1921-34" (Ph.D. diss., Stanford University, 1994).

[43] For a concise discussion on the origins of a constructivist discourse, see Lodder, "The Transition to Constructivism," 271-72.

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and Varvara Stepanova, made a careful distinction between *konstruktsiia* (a construction--something that is built) and *sochinenia* (composition or opus, the most common term in Russia for denoting any work of art or music). Constructivists referred to themselves not as *khudozhniki* (artists), but rather as *konstruktory* (constructors, also a synonym for engineers) and *khudozhnik-konstruktory* (artist-constructors); their utilitarian constructions (speakers' rostrums, chairs, tables, workers' clubs) were made multifunctional, relying on a systematic and economical use of materials. In applying themselves to the production of useful objects, constructivists abandoned individualism and the notion of artistic autonomy.

For constructivists and the more ideologically rigid productivists, the idea of constructing new art served as a metaphor for building a new society. Constructivism offered an approach that steered artists away from old artistic forms and aesthetics, moving them toward the exploration of technology and experimental thinking. Many constructivists were former futurists, and as such they celebrated the ongoing technological and industrial revolution in Russia (hence the widely circulated idea that "constructivist music" imitates industrial noises or mechanized sounds). Montage was a major feature of constructivists' creative work. The *sdvig* (dislocation or shift) of elements in the viewspace was already a common device in Russian avant-garde visual art prior to the formation of constructivism, and became a key feature of the constructivist montage. With Rodchenko's use of intersecting and overlapping planes and geometrical shapes in his earliest constructivist works, he dislocated the surface plane of the canvas, "so as to express great constructedness [and] architecturalness," thus

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simulating three-dimensional space.[44] By 1923 Rodchenko and his fellow constructivists abandoned painting and moved in the direction of three-dimensional linear constructions and photomontages, works that are characterized by mixing, intersecting, and overlapping disparate elements--montages that are literally built or 'constructed' from its materials.[45]

Constructivist principles in theater, photography, and film

Perhaps no modern movement in the visual arts of the early twentieth century had a broader impact on other arts than Russian constructivism of the 1920s. Though the influence of Russian constructivism on music has yet to be fully examined by musicologists, constructivism's impact on the direction of early Soviet visual art, theater, photography, film, and literature is well documented. The idea of *sdvig*, the physical and temporal dislocation of objects, and the emphasis on montage techniques greatly influenced the work of Russian artists in all creative disciplines, especially theater, photography, and film.

Elena Rakitin has recently written that "beginning in 1922, the theater,

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[44] Quoted in Aleksandr Lavrentiev, "What is Linearism?" in The Great Utopia, 295.

[45] The linear dislocation of objects found later in the constructivist montage also finds parallels within suprematism, a style that would seem to be at odds with constructivism, though after 1921 the two were quite closely linked. Malevich's suprematist paintings are filled with a non-objective play of free color, while El Lissitsky's suprematist canvases are composed of lines, planes, and geometric elements. Like their suprematist and constructivist colleagues, both artists employed *sdvig* as the formal organizing principle of their work.

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summoning the constructivists to participate in its experiments, stepped into the vanguard of [Soviet Russian] artistic life."[46] Vsevolod Meyerhold, the leading avant-garde director of the early Soviet period, was a dedicated trotskyist and constructivist whose eclectic interests often angered both fellow constructivists and members of proletarian arts groups. Meyerhold's approach to dramaturgy was often episodic, creating an overall temporal montage. His productions placed attention on virtuosic actors who mastered biomechanics, a systematic approach to acting based on pseudo-scientific analyses of human behavior. During the 1920s, Meyerhold frequently worked with the constructivist Lyubov Popova, whose sets consisted of non-representational designs, props from everyday modern life, and three-dimensional mobile constructions.[47] Among other leading constructivists to work in Meyerhold's theater, Aleksandr Vesnin distinguished himself by using highly urbanized set designs filled with streetlights, elevators, escalators, moving sidewalks, robots, and flashing billboards. As in many constructivist productions, mechanized motions of stage constructions were mimicked by the mechanized movement of human characters on stage (the idea of placing humanity in rhythmic unison with the machine matched constructivists' ideological-artistic celebration of technology).

Meyerhold was Shostakovich's favorite theater director. Though the young composer was delighted by Meyerhold's invitation to join his theater in Moscow

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[46] Elena Rakitin, "How Meierkhol'd Never Worked with Tatlin, and What Happened as a Result," in The Great Utopia, 650.

[47] Ibid., 656.

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(January-February 1928), the collaboration was short-lived. They worked together again in 1929 on a new play by Vladimir Mayakovsky, The Bedbug--a dystopian view of a future communist society. [48] There were even hopes that Meyerhold would produce Shostakovich's modernist opera The Nose.[49] Though this idea fell through and the two never worked together after The Bedbug, they remained close friends and colleagues (for more on the Shostakovich-Meyerhold relationship, particularly how they supported each other during the Terror of the 1930s, see Chapter Six).

In addition to the theater, constructivists were pioneers in photography, graphic design, and moving pictures. Montage techniques employing *sdvig* were common among constructivist photographers; photomontages were featured in leading constructivist journals (see especially Rodchenko's photomontages on the covers of LEF, Kino-Foto, and Novyi LEF). The photomontage also inspired constructivist-style innovations--experiments with fonts, characters, and other typographical techniques--in the fields of graphic design, printing, and publishing.

Constructivist manifestos on filmmaking were published as early as 1922; film quickly became an important medium for the constructivist program of uniting art, industry, technology, and ideology. Aleksei Gan, for example, argued that the cinema

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[48]Understandably, the authorities frowned upon the pessimistic view of the future shown in Meyerhold's production, so when the play was revived in 1936, both Shostakovich's music and the dystopian elements of the original production had been removed.

[49] Laurel E. Fay, "The Punch in Shostakovich's Nose," in Russian and Soviet Music: Essays for Boris Schwarz, ed. Malcolm Hamrick Brown (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1984), 234.

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should be not be used merely as entertainment, but as a "cultural and active weapon of society" in documenting "real life."[50] But the fragmentation of imagery, montage approach, and oddly-angled perspectives--all hallmarks of early Soviet filmmaking techniques--were often criticized by critics and audiences. The young Sergei Eisenstein defended constructivist experimentation by arguing that montage techniques--the juxtaposition of disparate elements, angles, perspectives, and scenes--do not create artistic discontinuity and are accessible to working-class audiences. The process of juxtaposition itself, he continued, establishes a continuity in both style and practice.

Constructivist filmmakers--like constructivists in other fields--incorporated social, political, and economic themes in their work. In 1922 Dziga Vertov began making a series of documentaries for Kino-Pravda that placed him in the vanguard of constructivist directors. Though Vertov's experimental approaches to film-cutting, montage effects, and sound film were controversial, he gained favor with the Party because of his firm commitment to social themes.[51] In addition, several of the leading films about the Revolution commissioned during the Jubilee year of 1927 (Pudovkin's The End of St Petersburg, Barnet's Moscow in October, and Eisenstein-Aleksandrov's October) were greatly influenced by experimental techniques of film-constructivists and the episodic treatment of material of theater-constructivists.

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[50] Aleksei Gan, "Constructivism in the Cinema," quoted in Bann, ed., The Tradition of Constructivism, 129.

[51] In 1925 the Central Committee's Agitation and Propaganda Division officially validated Vertov's work for Kino-Pravda by announcing, "newsreel and film magazines are particularly useful for agitation and propaganda than so-called topical films of everyday life." Quoted in Bann, ed., The Tradition of Constructivism, 132

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Conclusion: Shostakovich's To October and the idea of constructivist music

Though a detailed account of how Russian composers of the 1920s were influenced by constructivism has yet to appear, histories of Soviet Russian music (both Russian and western) use the term "constructivist" to denote music that imitates sounds of the technological revolution, includes dense polyphony, and incorporates episodic or montage-like form.[52] Such assessments are not incorrect, but constructivism in the other arts (visual, literary, theatrical) possessed an equally significant ideological component that musicologists have tended to ignore. Constructivism in music should not be understood simply in terms of immanent characteristics (imitations of industrial noises, motoric rhythms, montage effects), but also as a deliberate attempt to synthesize artistically revolutionary practices with politically revolutionary ideals. Shostakovich's symphonic dedication To October contains all of these features, and as such correctly fulfills the ideological-artistic program of Russian constructivism.[53]

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[52] In this way we can see a direct aesthetic link between Russian constructivists, the leaders of which were at one time self-described futurists, and other futurist-inspired composers in western Europe and the United States (Luigi Russolo, Edgard Varèse, George Antheil, among others). Russian futurists, many of whom openly supported the Soviet regime at first, disparaged western futurists for not embracing communist ideals. In the 1920s (especially late 1920s), Russian futurists and constructivists were accused of being ideologically unsound precisely because of the stylistic and aesthetic links to western futurism.

[53] In Chapter One I examined several Russian reviews of the Second Symphony from the year 1927 in which the terms "constructivism," "constructivist," and "constructions" were used to describe the polyphony of the work's first and third episodes. See especially M. Grinberg, "Dmitri Shostakovich," Muzyka i revolyutsia, no. 23 (1927): 16-20; and V., "Simfonicheskoe Posvyashchenie 'Oktyabr'" (The symphonic dedication "To October"), Sovremennaya muzyka, no. 24 (1927): 32-36. Though M. Grinberg, M. Koval, G. Orlov (in the 1960s), and other writers point to the third episode as one in which a constructivist approach is evident, to me the systematic ultrapolyphony

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On the artistic side, the method of composition shown in the opening episode (Largo)--a systematic approach to composition that literally builds or constructs an ultrapolyphonic texture--calls to mind the scientific and architectural bases of constructivism.[54] Other passages of complex polyphony in To October, such as the dazzling fugato of the third episode (rehs. 30-47) and the many instances of strict canon throughout the piece, may be said to occupy a middle ground between systematic and unsystematic ultrapolyphonies (rehs. 20-23, 48-52, 75-77, and 81-83), and are in a sense less "constructivist" than the opening episode. When the systematic ultrapolyphony is reprised in a modified form in the choral finale, the systematic nature of the original is lost, compromised by C Major. Because of the absence of quasi-serialized features, the unsystematic ultrapolyphony of the choral finale may be said to be far less "constructivist" than the opening.

In my view, To October is a constructivist work not only because it imitates the sounds of technology, involves montage-like episodic form, and exhibits quasi-serialized processes, but also because it functions as a politically agitational work. This is not to say that Shostakovich necessarily subscribed to Soviet communist ideas, of course, but simply that the piece is similar to constructivism in two main ways: placing modernism

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of the opening episode--with its systematic use of pitch, rhythm, articulation, orchestration, and phrase structure--more clearly reflects constructivist principles.

[54] In Chapter One, I discussed a report that Shostakovich wrote to the Leningrad Conservatory (1928) in which said that he used "ultrapolyphony" to depict the zeal of struggle and victory in the Second Symphony. I identifying two main types of ultrapolyphony, systematic and unsystematic, I argued that the clearest example of systematic ultrapolyphony is seen in the work's opening episode (up to reh. 13), with its mathematical, quasi-serialized construction.

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in the service of bolshevism, and building a new society through a transformation of the artistic process. Aesthetically, constructivists equated the modernist artistic revolution with the social-political revolution of Soviet communism and found inspiration in the technological revolution taking place in the Soviet state. Though he was motivated to write the piece largely for financial gain and professional notoriety (as opposed to purely ideological reasons), Shostakovich's use of his talents to celebrate and perpetuate the social, political, and artistic revolutions--like his contemporaries in other fields--represents an ideologically constructivist approach to composition.

In the end, the musical style and political stance of To October cannot be conveniently explained away as simply Shostakovich's response to what was taking place in contemporary art and politics. He was too young to participate in the debates of leftism, constructivism, and formalism in the late 1910s and early 1920s, and remained largely indifferent to the practice of constructivists in the mid to late 1920s, except for his enthusiasm for the work of Vsevolod Meyerhold. The factors that influenced the composition of this work have more to do with his experiences and training as a pianist and composer. Despite the constructivism exhibited by To October, we must also acknowledge that the modern traits in Shostakovich's music arose from the maturation of an individual style, a new path that extends, or "maximizes" traditional approaches to composition.[55] As a sensitive, talented, young artist, Shostakovich absorbed numerous

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[55] For Taruskin's discussion on "maximalism" in early Soviet Russian music, questions of "avant-garde" music, and debates between ASM and RAPM composers, see his "Safe Harbors," in Defining Russia Musically (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 87-94. On p. 87, he states that maximalism "implies the extension of a tradition which in turn implies loyalty to the tradition one is extending, even if one is extending it

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musical influences that may have led to his extensive use of episodic form, progressive tonality, and other modern features. Such influences include, but are not limited to, nineteenth-century piano music, nineteenth-century Russian romanticism, Mahler, Bruckner, Skryabin, and the experimental piano music of the Russian avant-garde in the 1920s.[56] We must consider, too, the importance of his work as a cinema pianist in the mid 1920s, and (after the composition of To October) his collaborations with pioneers in the Soviet filmmaking industry. Indeed, the film techniques appropriated by Shostakovich during his early career (episodes, fade-out, overlap, quick-cut) remained an important part of his compositional language throughout his life.[57]

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to the point of so-called decadence.

[56] For a detailed examination of modernist composers of early Soviet Russia, see Larry Sitsky, Music of The Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1900-1929 (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1994).

[57] Richard N. Burke, "Movement and Meaning in Shostakovich's Last Quartet" (paper presented at Speaking of Shostakovich: A Symposium, Hunter College, New York City, 27 September 1996). A new version of his paper will appear in The Musical Quarterly, Fall 1999. See also Marina Sabinina, "Das sinfonische Schaffen von Schostakowitsch und dessen Beziehungen zu Film und Theater," in Bericht über das Internationale Dmitri-Schostakowitsch-Symposion, Köln, 1985, ed. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse Verlag, 1986), 375-84

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Chapter Four
Shostakovich documents: essays, letters, and speeches, 1927-1933

This chapter examines published statements by Dmitri Shostakovich that chronicle his position in Soviet musical life during the late 1920s and early 1930s.[1] The scope of this chapter is limited to those documents that shed light on two main issues: Shostakovich's position within the ideological debates of the musical community, and his attitudes toward symphonic music.[2] In other words, I do not discuss articles related to his operas and incidental music. The documents reveal the extent to which Shostakovich

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[1] For bibliographic sources of published Shostakovich articles, speeches, and letters of the period, I consulted the following: Efim L. Sadovnikov, ed., D.D. Shostakovich - Notograficheskii i bibliografeskii spravochnik (Works list and bibliographic handbook), 2nd ed. (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1965); Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's early years), Book 1 (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1975); Dmitri Shostakovich, D. Shostakovich o vremeni i o sebe, 1926-1975 (About his times and himself), ed. Mikhail Yakovlev. (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1980); Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitri Schostakowitsch - Erfahrungen (Experiences), ed. Christoph Hellmundt and Krzysztof Meyer, (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam, 1983); and Sofia Khentova, Zhizn i tvorchestvo (Life and creativity), Book 1 (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1985).

[2] In late 1931, at the height at proletarian hegemony in music, Shostakovich bravely stated, "above all, a composer is obliged in the first place to apply his talents for creating symphony, opera, ballet, sonata, quartet, song, cantata, fugue, and so forth." It is interesting to note that the symphony genre, effectively forbidden during RAPM's reign, leads this list of genres. Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6. The issue appeared on 20 November 1931. In a speech before theater workers the following month, Shostakovich reiterated his stand on the importance of symphonic music: "In conclusion it is necessary to appeal to composers not to forget about such an important front as the symphony. It is necessary to create symphonies, instrumental music, and so forth. On this front we have the most colossal breakdown." See these comments in "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 172.

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participated in the public debates concerning the role of music in a workers state. Thrust into the public eye following the premiere of his First Symphony in May 1926, he saw his stature within the musical community rise dramatically during the early Stalin period. At this time, too, Shostakovich's reputation as a brash iconoclast was fueled by the public statements he made--statements that at times ran him afoul with authorities. His views often conflicted with those of RAPM (Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians), an organization of self-styled proletarian musicians who were installed by the Party to administer Soviet musical life during the so-called proletarian episode in the arts (1928-early 1932). This chapter also examines both his role in the reform movement of 1931, which led to the end of proletarian hegemony in the arts, and his public reaction to the restructuring of artistic life ordered by the Communist Party's Central Committee in April 1932.

The documents under examination in this chapter include: a series of annual reports Shostakovich sent to the Leningrad Conservatory (1927-29); a letter to the editors of the theater journal Rabochii i teatr that strongly condemns the state of music criticism; a letter in support of a campaign to liquidate the popular, "light music" genre--an act of political cover in my view (January 1931); his controversial essay "Declaration of a composer's responsibilities" (November 1931); a speech delivered to a gathering of theater workers (December 1931); an interview with The New York Times (December 1931); his response to the historic Central Committee resolution of 23 April 1932 (May 1932); a letter to Rabochii i teatr in which he asks the musical community not to seek further retribution against former members of RAPM (March 1933); and a statement he

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published in Sovetskaya muzyka, in which he again deplores the state of Soviet music criticism (April 1933).

Like many Soviet composers during the proletarian episode in music, Shostakovich mostly composed *prikladnovo muzyka* (applied music) for theater, film, and ballet. Although such work provided needed income, by the end of 1931 he openly rebelled against the overabundance of incidental music in contemporary musical life. The necessity for composers to work in the theater, he wrote in November 1931, had led to the "depersonalization" of composers and a deterioration of compositional craft.[3] The trend toward incidental music resulted directly from RAPM's attempt to transform Soviet music into a landscape of utilitarian compositions (mass songs, mass-song operas, musicals, and incidental music). By the middle of 1929, RAPM had gained administrative control of Soviet music; its program left little room for either traditional large genres (symphonies, operas, quartets, sonatas) or modernist experimentation. Shostakovich resented being forced into a collective creative process in which the will of non-musicians placed restrictions on his creativity. After the so-called *perestroika* (restructuring) of the arts in the spring of 1932, composers were again encouraged to direct their creative energies toward traditional large genres and other types of independently circulated music. The proletarian episode in music was not the first time Shostakovich felt that theatrical and film work impeded his development as a composer. In the mid 1920s, while a student at the Leningrad Conservatory, he was forced to work in the cinema to help support his family.

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[3] Ibid., 6.

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"Autobiography," 1927

As part of his duties as a postgraduate candidate at the Leningrad Conservatory (1927-30), Shostakovich was required to submit annual reports detailing his creative activity. The first, titled "Autobiography," provides important details about his education, musical training, conservatory studies, professional duties, and compositional successes. Shostakovich wrote, too, about how he was forced by economic necessity to accept employment as a cinema pianist in Leningrad--work that he clearly detested [the translation here is that of A. and N. Roxburgh]:[4]

> When, in February 1922, my father died, my family found itself in difficult financial straits. On top of that, at the beginning of the next year I developed tuberculosis of the bronchial and lymphatic glands, and the doctors found it necessary to send me to the Crimea for treatment. When I returned, there were debts to be cleared. At the end of 1923, I had to take work in a cinema. . . . During my two months of work at the Svetlaya Lenta [Bright Reel], the cinema paid me my wage only once, I was forced to leave and seek other sources of income, while appealing to a court of law to obtain the wages I was due. It was not until 1924 that I found more work, and again it was the same type. . . . A couple of months later I was out of work again. . . . At last at the beginning of February 1925 I found permanent work in the Pikadelli. Then the management decided that both pianists should work from the time the cinema opened until it closed each day, changing over half-way through each showing. This clever arrangement was put into force after one pianist had fallen ill and there had been no other to take his place. As a result of it, however, I stopped going to concerts and theaters entirely. In the end I left the cinema; so far I have not returned, and I hope I shall never have to.[5] *My cinema work completely paralysed my musical*

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[4] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Avtobiografia" (Autobiography), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1966): 24-25. The excerpts presented here are taken from the translation in Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitry Shostakovich - About Himself and His Times, ed. Lev Grigoryev and Yakov M. Platek, trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh. (Moscow: Progress Press, 1981), 12-13.

[5] Unfortunately for Shostakovich, Agitodel (Agit-Prop division of the State Publishing House) was late in paying his commission fee for To October, forcing him to

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> *pursuits. It was only once I had left the cinemas for good that I could start composing again* [emphasis added].

The tone of the last sentence quoted above is remarkably similar to the negative attitudes he expressed toward theatrical work four years later in his controversial article "Declaration of a composer's responsibilities" (20 November 1931), discussed later in this chapter. Shostakovich's career as a film accompanist was unpleasant, and like other members of the middle- and working-classes during the NEP years, he suffered from poor health, malnutrition, personal debt, exploitation by profit-driven managers, overwork, poor morale, and membership in an ineffectual trade union. As noted in Chapter Three, in an effort to revive the economy following the devastating Civil War, Lenin partially reintroduced the profit motive under the New Economic Policy. With exploitation rampant, many disaffected workers felt betrayed by a regime that had promised justice for the socially and economically disenfranchised. I suspect that Shostakovich was deeply embittered by his brush with capitalism in the theaters during NEP; it is perhaps understandable that he accepted work in the late 1920s writing music for productions that both celebrated Soviet-style socialism and mocked capitalism and the bourgeois classes (note especially The Golden Age, Rule, Britannia!, New Babylon, Hypothetically Murdered).

Shostakovich's reports to the Leningrad Conservatory, 1928 and 1929

The autobiography of 1927 was the first of three reports Shostakovich submitted

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return briefly to the cinema in the summer of 1927.

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to the Leningrad Conservatory during his post-graduate studies. These reports (1927, 1928, and 1929) seem to show a gradual transformation of Shostakovich's persona--from a daring *wunderkind* to a hardened class warrior. But I find that this public transformation was necessary for him to keep pace with the increasing proletarianization of the creative intelligentsia under the First Five-Year Plan. In order to maintain a career as a professional composer, and to keep his Conservatory stipend following the radical reorganization of the Leningrad Conservatory in 1928-29, he needed to demonstrate his allegiance to the idea of socialist construction in music. His report of 31 October 1929, for example, contains strongly ideological rhetoric common to public discourse of the day. In his discussion of "ultrapolyphony" in his symphonic dedication To October (Second Symphony), Shostakovich plays down the modernism of this technique in favor of commenting on the appreciation supposedly shown by the general public. The report also includes a fawning appraisal of the musical judgements of "the mass listener," which I interpret as an obligatory gesture to satisfy the new, "proletarian" leadership of the Conservatory. Still, in the last line quoted below, Shostakovich maintains a degree of independence by bitterly attacking several works that were favored among supporters of the proletarian musical establishment:

> The device [of ultrapolyphony], placing "To October" on the side of the working public, convinced me that the path I selected is correct. The following thoughts always guided the composition: accessibility and intelligibility [*dostypnost i dokhodchivost*] for the mass listener, since the mass listener is the only genuine judge of music, and since music is one of the mass arts. I consider it to be my duty to struggle against the troubling stream of musical pornography flowing onto the head of the mass listener on the pretext of "intelligibility" and "understandableness." I consider the struggle against the "Red Poppies,"

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> "Gadflies," "Sons of the Sun," "Small-edged Glasses," and other musical pulp to be my basic duty as a musician-activist.[6]

The harsh mood in this statement reflects not only the uncompromising rhetoric characteristic of this period (in music and all other fields), but also Shostakovich's frustration with the direction that Soviet music theater and opera had taken in the recent past. The period of experimentation in the Soviet arts was over; authorities were now demanding conformity. Fears and frustration over this change led to despair among many Soviet artists during the proletarian episode, as illustrated by the suicide of Vladimir Mayakovsky in 1930 (with whom Shostakovich collaborated in Meyerhold's theater).

In the mid to late 1920s, the management of the opera theaters was being pulled in opposite directions. On one side, Boris Asafiev led a group of talented and influential supporters of modern music (including Shostakovich) in advocating operatic reform in the direction of modernism and experimentation. At the same time, however, the Party

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[6] "Otchet: aspiranta Leningradskoi gosudarstvennoi konservatorii Dmitria Shostakovicha [31.X. 1929]" (Report of Dmitri Shostakovich, aspirant of the Leningrad State Conservatory) was first published in Manashir A. Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedy" (I attempted to depict the joy of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 10 (1986): 55-56. "Priem, okazyvaemyi 'Oktyabryu' so storony rabochei publiki, ubedil menya, chto namechennyi mnoi put pravilnyi, Sochinyayu vsegda rukovodstvuyas sleduyushchimi soobrazheniyami. Dostupnost i dokhodchivost do massovovo slushatelya, ibo tolko massovyi slushatel est edinstvennyi i nastoyashchii tsenitel muzyki, ibo muzyka est odno iz samykh massovykh iskusstv. Pri etom schitayu svoim dolgom borotsya protiv mutnovo potoka muzykalnoi pornografii, vylivaemobo na golovu massovovo slushatelya, pod predlogom 'dokhodchivosti' i 'ponyatnosti'. Borbu s 'Krasnymi Makami,' 'Ovodami,' Synami Solntsa,' 'Stakanchikami granenymi' i prochei muzykalnoi makylaturoi schitayu svoim osnovnym dolgom muzykanta-obshchestvennika."

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began to demand exactly the opposite from theater management. Party directives issued in May 1927, for example, demanded that "music of Soviet opera must be structured, accessible, and understandable to the mass listener and immediately penetrating in its composition. . . . *Music of new opera must sound beautiful* [emphasis added]."[7] In order for new operas to be staged, the subject matter had to include "episodes from the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat in the past ten years, the reflection of our socialist construction, the industrialization of the country, and so forth." New operas that contained unapproved subject matter [i.e., not directly propagating socialist construction]--or what the Party called "profound psychologism - the decadent, the fantastic, the mystical, the legendary, and so forth"--were immediately withdrawn from the repertory.

By 1929 the decision-making apparatus of the state academic theaters began to adhere to the new directives under pressure from the Party, RAPM, and Glavrepertkom (the state commission in charge of repertoire). Needless to say, the new administrative efforts of the leadership of Soviet theater were unpopular among many in the musical community (composers, performers, and audiences). Take, for instance, a letter sent by Nikolai Myaskovsky to Serge Prokofiev (dated 1 August 1930): ". . . prohibitions were raining down on all sides - mainly in opera, of course. . . . it is a complete outrage against

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[7] These directives were published as editorial comments (without attribution) in the article "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom" (Plenum of the Union of All-Russian Comedy and Drama Workers: fragment of the stenographic reports dedicated to musical questions, 18-19 December 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 163. "Muzyka sovetskoi opery dolzhna byt prostoi, dostupnoi i ponyatnoi massovomu slushatelyu i neposredstvenno pronikayushchei v evo soznanie. . . . Muzyka novoi opery dozhna zvuchat krasivo . . ."

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common sense."[8]

"Diseases of music criticism," April 1929

As RAPM's power increased over Soviet music, criticism became an important battleground in the war for performing rights. If a "proletarian" critic questioned the ideology of a work or its performers, subsequent performances were put in jeopardy (see my discussion in Chapter Two of Shostakovich's opera The Nose). By the middle of 1929, all journals sympathetic to western-influenced modern music were silenced, leaving music criticism solely in the hands of RAPMists and others who held intolerant views. This, of course, spelled disaster for composers and musicians who supported modern or academic approaches to composition. The onset of proletarian hegemony in music created another problem; a number of newly hired music critics in the press, drawn from the general population, who knew virtually nothing about music. Shostakovich articulated his frustration with this situation in a note published by Rabochii i teatr in April 1929.[9] His comments were part of a collection of four short essays entitled "Bolezni muzykalnoi kritikii" (Diseases of music criticism), in which members of the musical community complained bitterly about the state of music criticism. "Bolezni muzykalnoi kritikii" was submitted in support of a controversial article published in Rabochii i teatr by V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky, a longtime friend of

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[8] Ibid., 163. ". . . zakazy mogil by supatsya so vsekh storon--glavnym obrazom, na opery, konechno. . . . polnoe nadrugatelstvo nad zdravym smyslom . . ."

[9] Dmitri Shostakovich, et al.,"Bolezni muzykalnoi kritikii" (Diseases of music criticism), Rabochii i teatr, no. 14 (1929): 4.

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Shostakovich who had earlier written an essay complaining about the poor quality of music criticism.[10] Although Bogdanov-Berezovsky's article received swift and strong opposition from the journal's editorial staff, two months passed before articles were published in support of his position. Shostakovich's remarks in Rabochii i teatr are given here for the first time in English translation:

Za muzykalnuyu kulturu (In Support of Musical Culture)

> A very great misunderstanding in our music criticism has arisen from completely opposite opinions. Certainly, it is hard to demand from all critics the identical opinion on the same work. Everyone has his own tastes. However, it seems to me that the critic must not proceed strictly from his own tastes, bur rather from an objective evaluation of formal and other merits or shortcomings of the thing he is criticizing. *Critics must possess the highest musical culture* [emphasis added]. There is no reason to pretend otherwise, but not all of our critics get it. Critics must first of all explain to the readers who is being criticized, why this is terrible and this is good, and also show what means and paths are necessary to eliminate this or other shortcomings.[11]

In this short and carefully worded statement, Shostakovich is complaining about the poor and uneven quality of music criticism. The title of his piece, "Za muzykalnuyu kulturu"

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[10] V. Bogdanov-Berezovsky. "Muzykalnaya kritika sevodnya" (Music criticism today), Rabochii i teatr, no. 5 (1929): 2.

[11] "BOLEZNI MUZYKALNOI KRITIKI . . . ZA MUZYKALNUYU KULTURU - - Samoe bolshoe nedorazumenie v nashei muzykalnoi kritike eto polnaya protivopolozhnost mnenii. Trudno, konechno, trebovat ot vsekh kritikov odinakovovo suzhdenia ob odnom i tom zhe proizvedenii. U kazhdovo svoi vkus. Odnako, mne kazhetsya, kritik dolzhen iskhodit ne ot svsevo sobstvennovo vkusa, a ot obektivnoi otsenki formalnykh i prochikh dostoinstv ili nedostatkov kritikuemovo. Kritik dolzhen obladat vysshei muzykalmoi kulturoi. Nechevo grekha tait, chto ne vse nashi kritiki takovoi obladayut. Kritika dolzhna prezhde vsevo, obyasnyat i chitatelyu i kritikuemomu pochemu eto plokho i eto khorosho i ukazat, kakim sposobom i kakimi putyami mozhno izzhit te ili inye nedostatki."

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(In support of musical culture) is revealing, too. In the usage of the 1920s, *kultura* (culture, declined *kulturu* in the title) necessarily meant "high culture." Considering the dramatic rise in repression of the Russian intelligentsia in 1928-29--a time of political show trials, purges, and blacklisting (see Chapter Two)--it is highly significant that Shostakovich published remarks in full support of high culture and against the proletarianization of music criticism.[12]

Political cover: Shostakovich's role in the campaign against light music, January 1931

As part of the First Five-Year Plan reforms, the Central Committee resolution of 29 December 1928 ("On serving the mass reader with literature") led to an immediate and dramatic consolidation in the publishing industry.[13] In accordance with the Central Committee decree, all publications were now required to focus on themes of class struggle, mass education, marxist criticism, and political indoctrination. Many journals of the specialized press often did not hold up to the ideological scrutiny of party activists. Under the pretext of developing a program of mass education, many specialized journals in all fields had their state support withdrawn and their license to publish revoked. New journals appeared, but they were of poor quality compared to the journals that had been closed. In the field of music, all journals that held a tolerant view of modernism

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[12] For a concise summary of the harassment of the creative, technical, and bureaucratic intelligentsia during the period of the First Five-Year Plan, see Chapters Five, Six, and Seven of Sheila Fitzpatrick, The Cultural Front (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992).

[13] Edward J. Brown, The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature, 1928-1932 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 241-42.

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disappeared by the middle of 1929.[14] In response to the 29 December 1928 resolution of the Central Committee, RAPM also passed a new platform in early 1929, calling for a struggle to be waged against both "the left" and "the right" in music.[15] In RAPM's lexicon, "left" (like "formalism") denoted modernist compositional trends, while "right" lumped together many types of music (nontexted music of the Classical and Romantic periods, popular music derived from jazz or other forms of syncopated dance music, and works from the standard operatic repertoire.).

With the administrative control of musical affairs given to RAPM in the spring of 1929, modernists and traditionalists found themselves increasingly under attack for being "bourgeois formalists." Shostakovich's earlier negative comments in Rabochii i teatr concerning the field of music criticism certainly made matters worse for himself personally. In this environment, it is hardly surprising that Shostakovich's contributions to the musical press during the 1929-30 musical season are limited to brief articles in connection with the January 1930 premieres of The First of May symphony and The

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[14] Russian music journals tolerant of modernism (all defunct by the end of 1929): De musica (Leningrad, 1925-28), Muzyka i byt (Leningrad, 1927), Muzyka i revolyutsia (Moscow, 1925-29), Novaya muzyka (Leningrad, 1926-28), Persimfans (Moscow, 1926-29), Novii zritel (Moscow, 1924-29), Sovetskaya filarmonia (Moscow, 1928-29), Sovremennaya muzyka (Moscow, 1924-29), Zhizn iskusstva (Leningrad, 1923-29). Russian music journals during the proletarian episode in music (late 1929-1932): Muzykalnoye obrazovanie (Moscow, 1926-30), Proletarskii muzykant (Moscow, 1929-32), Za proletarskuyu muzyku (Moscow, 1930-32). The only publication to cover musical life in Leningrad on a regular basis during the proletarian episode in music, the theater journal Rabochii i teatr, vacillated between ambivalence and hostility toward musical modernism.

[15] "The Ideological Platform of the Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians," in Nicolas Slonimsky, Music Since 1900, 5th ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1993), 1353-57.

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Nose.[16] For a number of reasons (political, financial, and artistic), he accepted work as a composer for productions at the ideologically-correct Leningrad TRAM, a successful theater troupe of young professionals and amateurs.[17]

Additional political cover for Shostakovich came in the form of a public response he gave concerning a trumped-up scandal in the field of "light music" (*legkii zhanr*, the light-music genre)--popular songs and other works performed by jazz bands. During NEP, popular songs and other light music were sold as sheet music in piano arrangments for middle-class consumption. Widely popular among all classes, light music was often characterized in the press as music of "bourgeois wreckers," "NEPmen," and other "saboteurs" conspiring against socialist construction.[18] (After all, if the workers are dancing and being entertained, they must not be working toward the goals of the First Five-Year Plan!) With limited private publishing still permitted, composers were permitted to receive royalties from both the sale of printed music and performing rights. In early 1930 the Association of Moscow Authors, the main organization for popular song composers, was dissolved and its chief imprisoned for alleged misdeeds with profits

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[16] Dmitri Shostakovich, "K kultpokhodu 'Smenu' v filarmoniyu 22 yanvarya" (For the cultural campaign of Smena at the Philharmonic on 22 January), Smena, 21 January 1930; Dmitri Shostakovich, "Pochemu 'Nos'?" (Why "The Nose"), Rabochii i teatr, no. 3 (1930): 11-12.

[17] TRAM works: The Shot, op. 24 (1929), Virgin Soil, op. 25 (1930), Rule, Britannia, op. 28 (1931).

[18] "Na fronte borby c nepmanskoi muzykoi" (On the front of struggle with NEPman music), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 3 (1930): 1-5.

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and royalties.[19] Shostakovich used the scandal to his own political benefit by joining in a call for the prohibition of light music. In this way, he exploited both his distrust for capitalist ventures in general and his disdain for the scandals in the light music business in particular. In a response to a questionnaire sent by the journal Proletarskii Muzykant (Proletarian musician), Shostakovich conveniently feigned loyalty to a musical and political establishment that he deeply disliked.[20]

In my view, the article he wrote for Proletarskii muzykant was an act of political cover. Although we should not assume that Shostakovich believed everything he wrote in this article (presuming, as I do, that the authorship is authentic), it is not surprising to see him showing contempt for those who would sacrifice their integrity as artists in the interest of material gain. To what extent Shostakovich truly advocated the harsh methods of censorship he proposed is anyone's guess. To me, the views expressed here seem out of character for Shostakovich--readers may judge for themselves:

> First, I very energetically welcome the struggle started by the journal "Proletarskii muzykant" against the so-called "light music" of musical art. It is unnecessary for me to repeat my sharply negative attitude toward the wrecking activity of Messers Khait, Messman, Lipatov, and others.[21] I propose the following measures of

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[19] Robert Rothstein. "Popular Song in the NEP Era," in Russia in the Era of NEP, ed. Sheila Fitzpatrick et al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1991), 268-94. On the liquidation of AMA, see pp. 269-70.

[20] "Anketa 'Proletarskovo muzykanta' o 'legkom zhanre'" (Survey of 'Proletarian musician' about the light-music genre), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 3 (1930): 22-25. Shostakovich's comments are found on p. 25

[21] These men were major figures in the light music business. Yuli Khait (1897-1965), the best known of those mentioned here, was known for orchestral pieces, works for jazz band, popular songs, and mass songs.

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struggle against "light music:"

1. Turn to the organs controlling the publication and performance of musical production, Glavlit and Glavrepertkom, with a demand to publish an appropriate resolution completely forbidding the publication and performance of light music.[22]

2. Eliminate the rule from the statutes of creative societies that anyone may be admitted who proves that his works are performed publicly. In connection with the elimination of this rule, ban a number of the members in the creative societies of composers who are working in the field of light music.

3. Considering that light music is widely practiced in workers' clubs, radio-broadcasts, and so forth--thus creating great harm and poisoning the good health of the musical consciousness for the general public, radio lovers, and members of workers' clubs--we must conduct a broad campaign in clubs and on radio broadcasts, explaining the artistic poverty and harmfulness for listeners in the production of light music, as well as the very basic *class essence* of light music. [emphasis in the original unless otherwise noted]

4. Certainly, the current administration will not eliminate light music as a style. The suppliers of musical production, in line for receiving royalties, will hardly give up their positions and cushy jobs willingly. They will not come to light only with the use of gypsy romances and unconcealed foxtrots. No, they will attach a text that is "one-hundred per cent ideologically sound" to a gypsy romance. They crawl out from all cracks with "Bricks," "John Gray"--instead of "John Gray - dandy," it will be "John Gray - miner" (such a thing exists)--and similar pulp.[23] In

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[22] Established by decree in 1919, *Glavnaya literaturnaya kommissia* (Glavlit, Main literary commission) and *Glavnaya repertuarnaya kommissia* (Glavrepertkom, Main repertory commission) were the central regulating agencies of the Soviet government in the artistic fields; in short, they were responsible for censorship. Glavlit regulated the publication and dissemination of literature; Glavrepertkom regulated the publication, dissemination, and performance of works in the performing arts. In 1929 Glavrepertkom issued lists of approved and forbidden works in music, theater, ballet, and film. With respect to popular song in Soviet Russia, Robert Rothstein states: "The censors of Glavrepertkom made subtle distinctions, not only between banned and permitted songs but, in the latter category, between songs that were recommended, those that were allowed, and those that were allowed in moderation." Rothstein, "Popular Song in the NEP Era," 271.

[23] One of the most popular "songs of the new way of life" (*pesni novovo byta*), "Bricks" was a light music song with a revolutionary text. First published in the journal

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> turn, this often dulls the vigilance of Soviet society, which is not being thoughtful, and swallows the musical poison with an "ideological" text. For the struggle against light music, the vanguard of the musical community itself must call for the help of the Party, Komsomol, professional unions, radio stations, club activists, and the organizers of musical entertainments. Only when the entire Soviet society is being led in a broad campaign, explaining the work of light music's *class essence*, will it be successful in liquidating this genre.
>
> P.S. I regard the permission I gave to the conductor Malko to make an arrangement of my orchestration of "Tahiti-Trot" to be a political mistake, since "Tahiti-Trot" (a number from the ballet "The Golden Age"), performed without an appropriate setting or showing *the composer's attitude toward the material*, would perhaps give the false impression that I am a supporter of light music. I sent a strict prohibition abroad to the conductor Malko three months ago.[24]

The postscript, surprisingly, is the key to interpreting this document as an act of political cover. It refers to Shostakovich's Tahiti Trot, op. 16, an orchestration of "Tea for Two" from Vincent Youman's musical No, No, Nanette. Composed and published in 1928, Tahiti Trot received (and continues to receive) many performances in Russia and abroad. Nikolai Malko, a firm supporter of Shostakovich's music, conducted the work frequently. The work's popularity prompted Aleksandr Gauk to ask Shostakovich to use the piece as an interlude in the second act of the ballet The Golden Age. The piece complements other so-called "foxtrots" in The Golden Age, which served to satirize bourgeois capitalists, corrupt police, and other sleazy characters in the ballet's plot. The use of Tahiti Trot in such a satirical context, so it seemed, would have been enough to shield Shostakovich from criticism for his use of light music. But this justification did

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Smena, a widely circulated publication on culture; "Bricks" provoked outrage among opponents of light music. See Rothstein, "Popular Song in the NEP Era," 271.

[24] See Appendix 00 for the original text.

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not satisfy his critics, and despite enthusiastic reception by audiences for The Golden Age, Shostakovich was roundly criticized in the press following the ballet's premiere in October 1930.[25] The criticism he received for his use of light music prompted him to ask Malko publicly to withdraw the work from future performances.

For the first time in his life, Shostakovich was forced to withdraw a work from performance under political pressure. It is significant, I believe, that Shostakovich admitted to a *political mistake* in his statement to Proletarskii muzykant, but not to an artistic mistake. For his part, Malko sent a rebuttal to Proletarskii muzykant, in which he refuted the composer's assertion that any prohibition was sent to him.[26] Both artists publicly placed blame for the entire mess at each other's feet, yet at the same time they admitted to errors in judgement. Such feigned acts of contrition were commonplace during the Soviet period, especially during periods of extreme political repression. There seem to have been no hard feelings resulting from the incident, as shown in a letter from Shostakovich to Malko (who never returned to the Soviet Union following his concert tour to South America in 1929), in which he thanked the conductor for withdrawing the work.[27]

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[25] See, for example, Yuri Brodersen, "Legalizatsia prisposovlenchestvo" (The legalization of time-serving), Rabochii i teatr, no. 60-61 (1930): 8-9. For an examination of the reception of The Golden Age, see Manashir Yakubov, "The Golden Age: the true story of the premiere," in Shostakovich Studies, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 189-204.

[26] Nikolai Malko, "Pismo v redaktsiyu" (Letter to the editor), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 6 (1930): 39.

[27] Solomon Volkov, "Dmitri Shostakovich and 'Tea for Two'," The Musical Quarterly 64 (1979): 223-28.

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Fed up with the situation: "Declaration of a composer's responsibilities," November 1931

As RAPM's repressive policies continued into the year 1931, the morale of Soviet musicians declined precipitously. With march tunes and class themes becoming a necessary requisite for the publication and performance of music, disaffection against the hyper-regulation of musical life led to a backlash within the musical intelligentsia. Articles began to appear in the musical press that boldly criticized the direction of Soviet music under the reign of proletarian organizations. A new reform movement in the arts gradually took shape in 1931--one in which Shostakovich played a leading role.[28] On 20 November 1931, a controversial article by Shostakovich appeared in Rabochii i teatr; he was clearly fed up with the situation in music.[29] Although still unable to directly challenge RAPM by name, Shostakovich went after the most glaring by-products of RAPM's hegemony in music: the decline in compositional and critical standards, the abandonment of music as an independent art in favor of an exclusively "applied" use, the deplorable state of affairs "on the musical front," and the declining role of the composer in the production of music for the theater, ballet, and film. He called on composers to reclaim both their individual creative will in composing independently circulated music and their rightful place in the development of Soviet musical art. Although excerpts of

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[28] Statements critical of RAPM and calls for a new creative society of composers were published in Proletarskii muzykant, no. 7 (1931); Sovetskoye iskusstvo, 8 August 1931.

[29] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6.

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Shostakovich's "Deklaratsia" have been published in English, what follows is a new translation of the entire statement:

"Declaration of a Composer's Responsibilities"

Being on a two-month holiday I thought a great deal about my compositional work. From the beginning of 1929 until the end of 1931, just three years, I have only worked in the capacity of an "applied" [*prikladnovo*] composer. I wrote music for dramatic productions and film. I have done very much in this area: "New Babylon" (FEKS), "The Bedbug" (Meyerhold's theater), "The Shot," "Virgin Soil," "Rule, Britannia" (Leningrad TRAM), "Alone" (FEKS), "Golden Hills" (Yutkevich), "Hypothetically Murdered" (Music-Hall). I have agreements for "Hamlet" (Vakhtangov theater, director Akimov), "Concrete Hardens" (Moscow Film-factory, director Mogaret), and "Negro" (operetta on a text by Gusman and Mariengof). During this time, apart from the aforementioned works, I wrote two ballets ("The Golden Age" and "Bolt") and "The First of May Symphony." Perhaps the only one, in my opinion, to lay claim to a "permanent place" in the development of Soviet music culture is *The First of May Symphony*, despite a number of shortcomings in this composition. I do not wish to say that all the rest I have written are unsuitable. *But all of the rest are connected with the theater and are not in independent circulation.* [emphasis in the original unless otherwise noted]

It is no secret to anyone that on the fourteenth anniversary of the October Revolution, *the situation on the musical front is catastrophic.* We, the composers, are answerable for the situation on the musical front. And I am deeply convinced that such a difficult situation was created, namely, by the general flight of composers into the theater. Such typical phenomena may lead to the following example: only small orchestras are present in all theaters (dramatic), into which a composer is forced to cram his often successful thoughts. We have not been able to gain improvement in this matter. At this time, since administrators are "not to waste expenses" on staging or on an increase of the cast, *the orchestra remains in the position of an stepchild.* Therefore the music heard there is wretched and terrible. The matter is no better in the field of sound cinema. I do not want to complain about the orchestra in my work for "Alone" and "Golden Hills." I had an orchestra of an exceptionally high quality, under the direction of the talented conductor N. Rabinovich. But the result? The soundtrack had made certain that the entire work had a vulgar dust: the screen wheezes, hiccups, and emits different sounds, *turning the work of a first-class orchestra and composer into nothing.* This, so to speak, is the physical part of working in the theater and film.

Now the ideological. For a long time, all work in every dramatic theater

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and sound film has been simply cranked out (I exclude from this list only the work at TRAM). Music there plays the role of accenting "despair" and "delight." There are certain "standard" tricks in music: a rap on the drum in announcing a new character, the "cheerful" and "fiery" dance of positive characters, a foxtrot for "decay," and "cheerful" for a happy ending. This is the "material" for the composer's creativity. It is impossible--a crime before Soviet music, of which we carry responsibility before the Party and the government of the working class--to reduce the role of music toward the bare adaptation of the tastes and creative methods of the theater, which are often terrible and disgraceful ("Hypothetically Murdered" at the Music-Hall). It has resulted in a real lack of compositional individuality. The "lightness" and stamping-out of work in the theater has corrupted and weakened high quality. A composer, with all of his might, strives for "a tour of duty" in the dramatic theater and film, but not as permanent work. Above all, a composer is obliged in the first place to apply his talents for creating symphony, opera, ballet, sonata, quartet, song, cantata, fugue, and so forth.

The absolute one-hundred per cent impotence of our musical theater in creating a Soviet music production has demonstrated to me, with perfect certainty, that such work must be created outside the confines and collaboration with the theater. The theater that is currently being built by the leadership and workers has recently manufactured two clear aims: 1) music in opera or ballet should assist pleasant digestion and 2) to create favorable conditions for a tenor to show effective notes, and a ballerina--for some turn. By being covered with a fig leaf--this falsely understood slogan about mastery of the classical heritage - the theater makes its most harmful business by reviving all sorts of "Judases," "Corsaires," and similar trash. With regard to Soviet music productions, we have seen perfectly disgraceful methods at work here ("Red Poppy," "Ice and Steel," "Black Ravine," "Bolt," and "The Golden Age"). It is necessary to note that all of these performances were created in close collaboration with the theater. And the result was shameful. The only composition, however, that perhaps lays claim to a "permanent place" in Soviet music, even with all of its mistakes, is my opera "The Nose." This composition had been written *outside of any collaboration with the theater* and proved to be a work that rightly lays claim to the title of "high art." Both of my ballets were created within the confines of the theater; "The Golden Age" and "Bolt" were grave failures.[30] I hastened to agree with all of the work by balletmaster Fyodor Lopukhov in "Bolt." The work is good, but Lopukhov proved to be at the mercy of the theater, accepting a libretto of low quality--therefore it turned into a lampoon. The experience suggests that it is necessary for musical productions to be created outside the confines of musical

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[30] Despite unfavorable reviews in the press, Manashir Yakubov has recently shown that The Golden Age was a tremendous success (both artistically and at the box office). Shostakovich, nonetheless, still felt that the production did not meet his own high standards. See Yakubov, "The Golden Age: the True Story."

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theater. The theater should exist only to accept (or not accept) and stage operas and ballets in ready shape when we bring them to the theater for consideration. Such was the case with "The Nose" And the theater, possessing an outstanding performing apparatus, created a wonderful production. Afinogenov and Kirshon, you know, have created the best examples of proletarian dramaturgy without the "help" of the theater![31]

A slogan should be advanced for the leading role of music in musical theater. The Soviet musical production, which can serve as a powerful spur toward the restructuring of musical theater, will be created outside the collaboration of the theater, for the leadership and workers of musical theater are in no condition to help in the matter of creating a Soviet musical production.

To summarize: *For the leading role of music in musical theater! Down with the lack of compositional depersonalization! To be further removed from the dramatic theater and sound film! Further from musical theater in the matter of creating a Soviet musical production!* I end this article with facts from my biography: with a heavy heart, I assure the Vakhtangov theater that I will write music for "Hamlet." With regard to "Negro" and "Concrete Hardens" I intend to cancel my contracts in a few days and return the advance. I do not have enough strength to "depersonalize" myself and carry on mechanically. Thus I am clearing the way for a large symphony, dedicated to the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution.[32] I announce to all of my future "customers" from the dramatic theater and sound film that I am breaking from these fronts of music for the next five years.

D. Shostakovich[33]

This article, published at the height of the proletarian episode, was one of the

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[31] Aleksandr Afinogenov and Vladimir Kirshon were leading young Russian playrights of the late 1920s and 1930s. As dedicated communists, members of RAPP (Russian Association of Proletarian Literature), and prominent figures in the field of literature, both suffered repression during the Great Terror. Arrested as a so-called trotskyite, Kirshon was shot in late July 1938. Afinogenov, with whom Shostakovich worked in 1936 on the theater piece Salute to Spain, saved himself from execution in 1938 by allegedly denouncing others and issuing a public confession that documented his past trotskyite leanings.

[32] The symphonic poem "From Karl Marx Until Our Own Days," was left unfinished after Shostakovich completed the first of five projected sections in February 1932.

[33] See Appendix 4 for the original text.

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strongest challenges to RAPM's policies and aesthetics. Not surprisingly, Shostakovich's "Deklaratsia" created a firestorm, angering members of the proletarian administration, as well as prominent figures in theater, film, and ballet. In the following issue of Rabochii i teatr, for example, there appeared an open letter to Shostakovich from M. Yankovsky, whose condemnation of Shostakovich's position seemed to express the editorial staff's point of view.[34] Shostakovich's call for composers to reassert creative individuality in their works was sharply criticized at a meeting of composers in Leningrad held shortly after Shostakovich's declaration appeared. Members of RAPM staunchly defended their position and attacked those who expressed dissatisfaction with the state of affairs. A collection of four short essays drawn from the meeting directly challenge Shostakovich's position.[35] The essays conclude with slogans such as "Against the declaration of individualism!" (*Protiv deklaratsii individualizma*!) and "Trust the collective!" (*Golosuyu za kollektiv*!). In my view, part of the hostility toward Shostakovich stemmed from professional and personal jealousy; many musicians and critics within the proletarian music establishment clearly resented Shostakovich's abilities, outspokenness, and prestige as an artist. We will see in Chapter Six that professional envy fueled later criticism of Shostakovich, as seen in the the Lady Macbeth affair (1936) and the antiformalist cultural purges of the late 1940s.

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[34] M. Yankovsky, "Kto protiv edinoglasno: otkrytoe pismo D. Shostakovichu" (Who is against individuality: a response to Shostakovich's letter), Rabochii i teatr, no. 32 (1931): 10-11.

[35] The essays written in opposition to Shostakovich's declaration (A. Gladkovsky, A. Tsurmilen, K. Arenkov, and A. Peisin) are published in "Govoryat kompozitory" (Composers speak), Rabochii i teatr, no. 32 (1931): 11.

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Shostakovich speaks out: "Plenum of the Union of All-Russian Comedy and Drama Workers," December 1931

With disaffection continuing to spread throughout the intellectual community in late 1931, meetings were held in all fields of activity to chart the direction of creative organizations into the period of the Second Five-Year Plan. The issue of declining morale topped the agenda at many of the meetings. At the plenum of the Union of All-Russian Comedy and Dramatic Workers (hereafter Vseroskomdrama) held in Moscow (18-19 December 1931), Shostakovich was again outspoken in his denunciation of Soviet music and theater. With both his essay in Rabochii i teatr and his Vseroskomdrama plenum speech, Shostakovich moved to the forefront in the movement to restructure artistic life. At the Vseroskomdrama plenum, Shostakovich challenged RAPM's positions more forcefully than before. Though Shostakovich was strongly denounced by RAPM delegates at the plenum, as well as by those dramatists and cinematographers whom he had angered with his comments in Rabochii i teatr several weeks earlier, he garnered support from several composers in attendance.[36] The following translation, the first to appear in English, contains excerpts of Shostakovich's address to the plenum:[37]

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[36] The materials from the Vseroskomdrama plenum were recently published in the post-Soviet journal Muzykalnaya akademia, the successor to the highly influential journal Sovetskaya muzyka. "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 160-77. Among the published transcripts, we see that Shostakovich received support from comrades Gnesin, Rafolovich, Fere, and Atovmyan; on the other hand, he was sharply criticized by RAPMists Viktor Belyi and Yuri Keldysh.

[37] Ibid., 162-64. See Appendix 5a for the original text. The text published in Muzykalnaya akademia is a stenographer's transcript of Shostakovich's speech--not the speech *per se*. Therefore, the wording is often awkward and unclear. I have attempted to produce a translation that is faithful to the original yet readable and coherent--not an easy

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> It is necessary, too, to have a talk about music here at the plenum, despite a disgracefully small number of composers present. The problem is as follows: it is necessary to announce categorically that there exists Soviet film, Soviet dramaturgy, and Soviet literature--but Soviet music? Almost nothing. This is the current condition. Nikitin here reproached me that I am going to sit in a study, and as such, I will sit there for the next five years and do nothing. Then he brought in an analogy with a beet. I venture to say that in all matters on the compositional front, to continue with such a mechanical comparison, we have a colossal shortage of beets--and no musical compositions. Why are there such terrible attacks on me? Because I committed a major mistake with my statement to the press? Because I assert that composers went to applied work in vast numbers? And because they do not make Soviet culture in the dramatic theater and sound film?
>
> It is well-known that the dramatic orchestra is the means of our compositional expression, with which we must build and organize for the audience. Well then, we do not have it, because one cannot say that we can create the great art of bolshevism with twenty-three or thirty-one people in the best orchestra. We do not have the technical basis for this. Furthermore, the matter is considerably better in sound film, now that I am working on the composition "Golden Hills." I had the opportunity to have a very good orchestra and conductor, in contrast to the trash which exists in the dramatic theater. . . . And what, after all, are we to do with this sound, because the sound is not reaching [the audience]. The work is wasted because of wheezing and hissing sounds. Certainly the future will be better. But I think that a composer must not be devoted wholly and completely to work in the dramatic theater and sound film. He must only be on tour that way [i.e., not being permanently connected to the theater].

Shostakovich then proceeds to criticize the journal Rabochii i teatr for misstating some minor points in his "deklaratsia," after which he laments the flight of composers into the theater and addresses the problem of artistic restructuring for both himself and the field of Soviet music as a whole:

> We heard Shebalin's symphony in the Large Hall, a wonderful symphony that shows a step forward for Shebalin. But when I asked when this composition

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was composed --it was 1928. But what has he been doing for the past two years, and what is he doing now that he is obliged to work? I am accused of desertion, but I accuse Shebalin and many others of desertion.[38] They went to sound film and the theaters, and did not create contemporary music. Nikitin says that I am rejecting the theater, that I am saying nothing, that I am escaping from the musical theater, and that I am locked away in a study. . . . It is foolish even to discuss this. Taking leave from musical theater has become the struggle for my own restructuring, because when and where would I get this restructuring otherwise? Under the guidance of actors at the Mariinsky Theater? They will do nothing for me.

The problem, to me and all other composers, is that we struggle little for the mastery of the proletarian world-outlook. This fundamental task is worthwhile to me and every composer. Why must we create and compose our works, musical opera for the theater and so forth, away from collaboration with the theater? Because the theater cannot kick-start itself. . . . Perhaps "Red Poppy" or "Zagmuk" naively does something for somebody.[39] No, in no way is it possible for them to lay claim to the title of a Soviet musical composition. My problem is that the only composition of mine for which it is impossible to lay claim to the title of a work of Soviet musical theater is the only composition of high quality that I have written. [Shostakovich here refers to his opera The Nose.] I do not want to put this with such a high work as "Zagmuk"--I am too modest [note the satirical tone]. Therein lies my trouble and shortcoming [with this situation]. We thought little about restructuring, we were greatly influenced by the bourgeois school when all of these pieces were written. When we begin to reform ourselves, then strictly speaking we are not reforming but rather standing still. Some simply withdraw into sound film and theater, and think, "this is great!" They write music. But the director says to them: kindly write "explication." Even here it is impossible to know what it means and what they want.

The journal "Rabochii i teatr" once wrote on an interesting case which

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[38] Vissarion Shebalin (1902-63). The work in question is Shebalin's Second Symphony. Despite the critical comments reserved for Shebalin here by Shostakovich, the two were lifelong friends and supported each other during turbulent times. In my view, Shostakovich is here calling for Shebalin to speak out, too, and write music in a contemporary vein. During the Lady Macbeth affair, when Shostakovich was censured by the Communist Party and the Union of Soviet Composers, Shebalin was the only major composer to come fully to Shostakovich's defense. The story of the friendship between the two is documented in an article written by Shebalin's widow. A.M. Shebalina, "Eto byl zamechatelnyi drug" (He was a wonderful friend), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 7 (1982): 75-85.

[39] Reinhold Glière's ballet "Red Poppy" is well known, of course, but I have yet to locate information on "Zagmuk."

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> strongly convinced me that it is necessary all the same to be rather afraid of the leadership of the State Academic theaters in Leningrad. And in Moscow--it is the same. This case with "Yellow Jacket," which was written there [in Moscow]:[40] we are putting on such an operetta in Leningrad, but it has acquired a bad reputation. I think that making this operetta on China is bad, because it is impossible to show some kind of sugary Mandarin, when events are being made on a world scale in China. Unfortunately we must recognize that there are still philistine tastes among the working class, and we must not close our eyes to this. At one of the factories, they organized a cultural campaign of Rimsky-Korsakov's "May Night." Then comes along a representative of the factory committee, or the cultural commission in charge of theater, who says that we have expressed a desire to see "Yellow Jacket." Uh, "Yellow Jacket"--please! "May Night" was withdrawn and the would-be favorite, "Yellow Jacket" was seen. We spoke with the leadership of the theater, who said, "Yellow Jacket"--this is a pleasant thing; why do you Soviet composers not make such music for us. That is why I wrote [in the "deklaratsia"] about the issue of good digestion in the musical theater. They [theater management] think that they [patrons] come to the theater after a fat dinner and enjoy music there. . . .
>
> *In conclusion it is necessary to appeal to composers not to forget about such an important front as the symphony. It is necessary to create symphonies, instrumental music, and so forth. On this front we have the most colossal hold-up* [*proryv*, emphasis added]. Composers are obliged to liquidate this hold-up, not hide in the corner of the theater and leave it saying that we created music to something. But nothing has resulted. It is necessary to bring this situation to an end. (Applause)

Following acrimonious debate between supporters and opponents of proletarian arts organizations, with a sharp denunciation of Shostakovich's position by Victor Belyi, Shostakovich addressed the plenum for a second time on the failures of RAPM and the future of Vseroskomdrama:[41]

> Comrades, speaking for a second time, I will keep it within five minutes. I am forced to speak for a second time because a rather animated debate developed

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[40] I have yet to locate information on the operetta "Yellow Jacket."

[41] "Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama," 171-72. See Appendix 5b for the original text.

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here on the musical question. Therefore I consider it necessary to touch on certain questions not on the basis of a debate, but rather on the basis of a proposal or formulation of questions for the future work of Vseroskomdrama in the field of music. I would like to say that RAPM at the present time has become a massive organization. RAPM is the leading organization on the musical front. With RAPM we have paid great attention to composers. We attentively keep up with creative achievements, theoretical articles, and so on, and so on.

Yesterday comrade Rafalovich, in his speech, criticized the theoretical errors of RAPM. I consider it necessary, too, to touch on creative questions, because in the recent past, the journals "Proletarskii muzykant" and "Za proletarskuyu muzyku" have written about RAPM's lagging behing the tempo of our life. I wish to note that there is not a lag here, but rather RAPM is standing still. I take the question of technique. . . . By now Koval's "Songs about the Red Flag" have been subjected to serious enough criticism in the journal "Za proletarskuyu muzyku."[42] Indeed, the work is absolutely pitiful. Next, a work by Davidenko, "Downslope" . . . the technique is also perfectly pitiful.[43] It is necessary to criticize RAPM sharply for these helpless, illiterate things that are found in the press and have received wide dissemination. RAPM must be answerable to the production of its members and not put out light pulp like the opera "Downslope.". . . I do not see progress among proletarian composers in their creativity. As Koval composed three years ago, so he also composes now. . . .

Therefore I consider that in the future, Vseroskomdrama's task should be to develop a broad creative discussion, which for us is as essential as air. Because what we now say, what I am now saying, is perhaps incorrect, and my error may be unmasked. And perhaps I am not right in calling Davidenko's opera "Downslope" an illiterate-childish composition. . . . Well then--I am in favor of having a creative discussion. In my opinion, this is the first and most fundamental task of Vseroskomdrama in the future. It is necessary in every way possible to welcome and support all symphonic concerts. I do not know what kind of "hostile compositions" will be included, which comrade Fere talked about in his address. His speech was unsuccessful in this regard--he did not name a

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[42] Marian Koval (1907-71), a leading figure of the proletarian arts movement of the late 1920s and early 1930s, was a composer and critic who became editor of Sovetskaya muzyka during the cultural purges of the postwar era (1948-52). In 1948 Koval published a series of blistering articles in Sovetskaya muzyka (nos. 2-4) that harshly condemned Shostakovich's music.

[43] Like Belyi and Koval, Aleksandr Davidenko (1899-1934) was an instrumental figure in the development of proletarian music hegemony during the First Five-Year Plan period. Davidenko's unfinished opera, originally called Downslope, is also known under another title, The Year 1919.

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single example. So then, I support a creative discussion in the future.

With his "Declaration of a composer's responsibilities" and his speech at the Vseroskomdrama plenum, Shostakovich joined a reform movement that soon led to the liquidation of RAPM and the end of "proletarian" hegemony in the field of music. As we see below (and again in the next two chapters), Shostakovich continued to speak out in favor of creative freedom for composers and against state control of the arts during the next stage of Soviet arts, the so-called *perestroika* period (1932-35).

Mask of loyalty?: an interview with The New York Times, December 1931

Despite his dissatisfaction with the state of artistic affairs in 1931, Shostakovich was forced to hide his discontentment from the rest of the world. In early December 1931, between the time he published his controversial essay in Rabochii i teatr and gave his speech at the Vseroskomdrama plenum, a correspondent from The New York Times conducted an interview with Shostakovich.[44] Needless to say, he was constrained from discussing the negative side of Soviet cultural life in such an important publication of the capitalist West. Though the correspondent paints a kind of official portrait of Shostakovich, her observations in the introduction nonetheless provide interesting details concerning the music, living arrangements, and demeanor of Soviet Russia's best-known young composer:

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[44] Rose Lee. "Dmitri Szostakovitch: Young Russian Composer Tells of Linking Politics with Creative Work," New York Times, 20 December 1931, sec. 8, p. 8. The by-line reads, "Moscow, Dec. 5, 1931," though it is unclear whether the interview took place on that date in Moscow, or if the correspondent filed the story on that date.

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> On the tenth anniversary of the revolution, his Second, or October, symphony was played in four large cities of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics--Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev, and Kharkov. Since then it has been heard every year at some October jubilee. His third, or May Day, symphony had its first performance in 1930 and has stirred Russian audiences on each succeeding May Day. It seems as if this pale young man, with the tremulous lips and hands and the manner of a bashful schoolboy, were on the way to becoming a kind of composer-laureate to the Soviet State. . . . For a more intimate approach to his music, however, it would be well if every one could see him as I did, in an old-fashioned Leningrad apartment, with its rocking-chair and family photographs and immense grand piano. It was not the kind of setting you would imagine for a young iconoclast. There was a pair of Angora kittens romping on the floor. In the background was a gentle gray-haired mother who murmured in French, so that her boy should not understand, "*C'est vraiment un grand genie*!" The crystal chandelier overhead; the high-backed Victorian settees ranged against the walls. . . . A glance around his study gave one a clearer idea of the young composer than several hours in the music room outside could have done. A bust of Lenin prominent on the edge of the desk. A Stalin calendar on the wall, its chrome colors speaking more loudly than the sepia prints of Beethoven, Mussorgsky, and Rubinstein.

Chock full of political analyses of the creative process, Shostakovich's brash comments begin with a statement that is often misquoted in the secondary literature:

> "There can be no music without an ideology," he said gravely. "The old composers, whether they knew it or not, were upholding a political theory. Most of them, of course, were bolstering the rule of the upper classes. Only Beethoven was a forerunner of the revolutionary movement. If you read his letters, you will see how often he wrote to his friends that he wished to give new ideas to the public and rouse it to revolt against its masters. On the other hand, Wagner's biographies show that he began his career as a radical and ended as a reactionary. His monarchistic patriotism had a bad effect on his mind. Perhaps it is a personal prejudice, but I do not consider Wagner a great composer. It is true he is played rather frequently in Russia today, but we hear him in the same spirit as we go to a museum to study the forms of the old régime, We can learn certain technical lessons from him, but we do not accept him. We, as revolutionists, have a different conception of music. Lenin himself said that 'music is a means of unifying broad masses of people.' Not a leader of masses, perhaps, but certainly an organizing force! For music has the power of stirring specific emotions in those who listen to it. No one can deny that Tchaikovsky's Sixth

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> Symphony produces a feeling of despair, while Beethoven's Third awakens one to the joy of struggle. *Even the symphonic form, which appears more than any other to be divorced from literary elements can be said to have a bearing on politics* [emphasis added]. Thus we regard Scriabine [sic] as our bitterest music enemy."

In his rejection of Scriabin, hero among Russian musical modernists in the 1920s, Shostakovich seems again to lapse into official, ready-made rhetoric:

> "Why?" repeated Szostakovitch, staring through his spectacles like an earnest little boy. "Because Scriabine's music tends to an unhealthy eroticism. Also to mysticism and passivity and escape from the realities of life. Not that the Soviets are always joyous, or supposed to be. But good music lifts and heartens and lightens people for work and effort. It may be tragic but it must be strong. It is no longer an end in itself, but a vital weapon in the struggle. Because of this, Soviet music will probably develop along different lines from any the world has known. There must be a change! After all, we have entered a new epoch, and history has proved that every age creates its own language. Precisely what form this development in music will take I cannot say any more than I can say what the idioms of speech will be fifty years from now. The notes will be the same!" he concluded with a smile.

For the remainder of the article, the correspondent largely paraphrases Shostakovich:

> As far as his own career went, he was quite sincerely modest. He was reluctant to speak of himself at all and had to be prodded with questions. . . . He had adopted with a will the policy of self-criticism, which figures so prominently today in Soviet reports of progress. With the loftiness of one who has put away childish things, he was ready to discount a great deal of his previous work as tentative and unripe. His first symphony, he felt, was marred by "academic influence." . . . Nor does he consider his October symphony entirely successful in evoking the mighty conflicts of the revolution. It should be supplanted by a worthier composition on the same theme, which Szostakovitch himself hopes to do by 1932, in time for the celebration at the end of the Five-Year Plan.
>
> All of his symphonies so far have been atonal in harmony, and today he cannot help finding them a bit "old-fashioned"--not as an American might understand the word, but in the Russian sense of being too sharply revolutionary. *"A children's disease of the Left Wing!" he called those early theories.* At present he is interested in tonal work, and his newer compositions are constructed

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> upon the diatonic scale. In common with a good many of his contemporaries, he is searching for a middle course and hopes to derive inspiration from the folk-themes of Russia and Ukrainia. *It is instructive to see how closely this development follows upon the defeat of the Left Wing in politics and the dominance of Stalin's views.* [emphases added]

I would like to note three things about the comments attributed to Shostakovich in this interview, because all of these positions were undoubtedly obligatory for a Soviet artist speaking to the foreign press: a reluctance to speak about himself; self-criticism, especially about his three symphonies; and an expressed desire to incorporate folk themes in upcoming works.

Stalin's cultural perestroika*: the Central Committee resolution of 23 April 1932*

With dissension threatening the fabric of the industrial, agricultural, and cultural reforms of the First Five-Year Plan, changes were promised to allay fears in the intellectual community, many members of which suffered mightily under the weight of class struggle. On 23 April 1932, musicians gathered in Moscow at the headquarters of Narkompros to debate the policies of RAPM and determine the future of Soviet music.[45] Unbeknownst to the gathering, the Central Committee of the Communist Party had passed a resolution earlier in the day, "O perestroike literaturno-khudozhestvennykh organizatsii" (On the restructuring of literary-artistic organizations), that banned all independent creative organizations, including the ruling proletarian organizations. This resolution set the stage for a brief period of conciliation between the Party and the

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[45] Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 112.

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creative intelligentsia (the *perestroika* period of the arts, 1932-35):

> The Central Committee resolves:
> 1) To liquidate the Association of Proletarian Writers (VOAPP, RAPM);
> 2) To unite all writers upholding the platform of the Soviet power and striving to participate in socialist construction into a single Union of Soviet Writers with a Communist fraction therein;
> 3) To promote a similar change in the sphere of other forms of art;
> 4) To entrust the Organizing Bureau with the working out of practical measures for the application of this resolution.[46]

Pravda, the newspaper of the Central Committee, explained the 23 April resolution this way:

> The organizational structure of the literary and artistic organizations does not answer to the new conditions and new tasks of Soviet literature, especially since elements of clannishness, and administrative methods, in spite of directives from the Party itself, have not been overcome. . . . Gross political errors were also made with relation to the fellow-travelers. On the pages of On Literary Guard there was cultivated a clearly leftist slogan: "Not fellow-traveller, but ally or enemy." . . . Such an approach to the task of remaking and reeducating the fellow-travelers radically contradicts the line of the Party.[47]

Shostakovich responds publicly to the "historic" resolution, May 1932

Understandably, the restructuring of artistic organization ordered by the 23 April resolution did not sit well with the leadership of RAPP and RAPM; several journals even

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[46] "O perestroike literaturno-khudozhestvennykh organizatsii" (On the restructuring of literary-artistic organizations). Pravda, 24 April 1932, quoted in Edward J. Brown, The Proletarian Episode in Russian Literature, 1928-1932 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1953), 200-01.

[47] Quoted in Brown, The Proletarian Episode, 201-02.

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refused to publish the resolution.[48] The musical intelligentsia (modernists, academics, and traditionalists), on the other hand, at first reacted cautiously to the resolution, but with the liquidation of the proletarian hegemony, their public response soon grew overwhelmingly positive. A month following the publication of the 23 April resolution, a number of artists expressed their gratitude to the Central Committee in a collection of short essays published in Rabochii i teatr.[49] Shostakovich's remarks were placed at the head of this article, which I interpret as yet another sign that he stood at the forefront of the reform movement to unseat RAPM. Here is an original translation of Shostakovich's remarks:

> The Central Committee resolution has given a big push to creative work, liquidating the lack of individuality and laying a huge responsibility on our shoulders. I personally consider that the Central Committee resolution puts trust in the composers who did not belong to RAPM, thus setting the development of Soviet music in new directions. The liquidation of RAPM is timely and necessary. Without a doubt, RAPM made a contribution to the struggle against light music. But abuse, conceit, exclusion, and ultraleft deviations also prospered during RAPM's reign. RAPM in no way occupied itself with questions on the education of fellow-travellers--it was only abuse, abstraction, and demagoguery in opinion, sticking labels and nicknames on fellow-travellers and their works. Now that this position has ended, it is necessary to fear a relapse of the right deviation

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[48] For a concise survey of reactions to the 23 April resolution by proletarian arts groups, see Brown, The Proletarian Episode, 202-05.

[49] Dmitri Shostakovich, et al., "Polnotsennymi proizvedeniyami: otvechaem na postanovleni TsK" (Valuable works: responses to the Central Committee's resolution). Rabochii i teatr, no. 16 (1932): 5-6. Those writing essays for this article include (in order of appearance): Shostakovich - composer, Deshevov - composer, Nikitin - playwright, Paparigopulo - playwright, Zinoviev - playwright, Trauberg - film director, Zhezhelenko - playwright, Derzhavin - playwright, Tur - satirist, Zrmler and Yutkevich - film directors.

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> in music.[50] The Central Committee resolution is not a manifestation of "liberal freedom," but rather a historically important document, determining the future development of Soviet music. My wish is for the creation of a union of Soviet composers as soon as possible.[51]

"Leningrad composers--a year after the Central Committee resolution," April 1933

A year after the so-called *perestroika*, Shostakovich expressed gratitude for the liquidation of RAPM in remarks again published in Rabochii i teatr:

> D.D. Shostakovich has called on us to reject the relentless revenge-seeking mood on the side of musicians who, after the publication of the 23 April resolution, were hugging and joyfully kissing each other, like inhabitants in the town of Glupov [sillyville, or foolishville] receiving news about the change of mayor, and saying: "There, now we'll show them!" This is a vulgar understanding. Class struggle is still taking place in the country, taking place also in musical art, because music, of course, reflects all that is going on in the country. . . . Relentlessly repulsing the left, we should not for one moment forget

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[50] At a time when Soviet citizens were urged to maintain vigilance against the "rightist deviation" in society, meaning an overreaction against the radical reforms of the previous four years, Shostakovich equated the hostility toward former members of RAPM with the "rightist deviation" in music.

[51] "Postanovlenie TsK daet bolshoi tolchok v tvorcheskoi rabote, likvidiruet obezlichku i vozlagaet na nashi plechi ogromnuyu otvetstvennost. Ya lichno rastsenivayu postanovlenie TsK, kak doverie k kompozitoram, ne vkhodyashchim v VAPM, i stavyashchee razvitie sovetskoi muzyki na novye vysoty. Likvidatsiya VAPMa svoevremenna i neobkhodima. U VAPMa byla nesomnennaya zasluga, vyrazhavshayasya v borbe s legkim zhanrom, po naryadu s etim v nem (VAPMe) protsvetalo zaushatelstvo, zaznaistvo, zamknutost i levatskie zagiby. VAPM nikak ne zanimalsya voprosom vospitania poputchikov--byla tolko rugan, abstraktnost, demagogia v vyskazyvaniyakh, nakleivanie yarlychkov i klichek na poputchikov i ikh proizvedenia. Teper etomu polozhen predel, no nuzhno opasatsya retsidivov i proyavlenia pravykh zagibov v muzyke. Postanovlenie TsK--eto ne manifest na kakuyu-to 'liberalnuyu svobodu,' a istoricheskoi vazhnosti dokument, opredelyayushchii dalneishee razvitie sovetskoi muzyki. Moe pozhelanie--skoreishee sozdanie soyuza sovetskikh kompozitorov."

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about the danger threatening us from the right wing.[52]

"Soviet criticism is lagging," March 1933

In another essay published for the first anniversary of the 23 April 1932 resolution, Shostakovich laments the state of Soviet music criticism, just as he had done three years before in Rabochii i teatr. Shostakovich's remarks are part of a collection of essays by members of the newly-created Union of Soviet Composers:[53]

> A year has passed since the Central Committee's historic resolution fundamentally restructured the work of our creative organization. It eliminated clannishness from the musical front, and a number of other abnormal phenomena that gave rise to clannishness, and the incapability of RAPM to rule musical life like bolsheviks rule the USSR. The year since 23 April 1932 has passed in an atmosphere of consolidating Soviet creative energy and a steady creative revival. To this end, two outstanding works are Popov's symphony and Shaporin's symphony. Shcherbachev is working actively. Deshevov is working hard. Shebalin is completing the first movement of the "Lenin" symphony. I could continue with this list of creative achievements, but it would occupy more space, and this is not the task of my remarks. I would like to express some wishes for

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[52] "Leningradskie kompozitory v godovshchinu postanovlenia TsK" (Leningrad composers in the year after the Central Committee's resolution). Rabochii i teatr, no. 11 (1933): 10-11. Composers writing essays for this article include (in order of appearance): Kyshnarev, Yudin, Shostakovich, Shcherbachev, Asafiev, Shteinberg, Pashchenko, and Pushkov. Shostakovich's essay reads: D.D. SHOSTAKOVICH prizyval k tomu, chtoby '. . . dat besposhchadnyi otpor revanshistskim nastroeniyam so storony tekh muzykantov, kotorye posle opublikovania postanovlenia ot 23 aprelya, vstrechals drug s drugom i radostno tseluyas, podobno obyvatelyam goroda Glupova, poluchivshim izvestie o smene gradonachalnika, govoryat: 'Vot teper my pokazhem! . . .' Eto vylgarnoe ponimanie. Klassovaya borba prodolzhaetsya v strane, prodolzhaetsya ona i v muzykalnom iskusstve, potomu cht muzyka, konechno, otrazhaet vse priskhodyashchee v strane. . . . Besposhadno davaya otpor levakam, my ne dolzhny ni na odni moment zabyvat, ob opasnosti, ugrozhayushchei nam s pravovo flanga."

[53] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet music criticism is lagging), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 120-21. See Appendix 6 for the original text.

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the future.

Certainly, the Union of Soviet Composers must lead and take charge of all creative activity. It is a most important and serious task. The USC has many achievements in the field of consolidating creative energy, but the concreteness and thoroughness in the USC's work is still small. Take, for example, a serious question such as mastering the method of socialist realism in music. The USC responds to this question only in an article by V. Gorodinsky, printed in the first issue of the journal "Sovetskaya muzyka." The article made a bad impression on me. The gibberish phrases of this article unquestionably showed the author's erudition on a number of questions, but it was unclear to such a degree that it did not direct composers in the matter of mastering the method of socialist realism.[54]

To speak about the terrible state of this most important area of musical life is to repeat myself. Once I heard the following "aphorism" (I do not remember who said this or where I read it). "Critics are such people who for a lack of gift, or another reason, have not been included among those who were criticized." When reading the music section of such organs of the press as "Rabochii i teatr" and "Vechernyaya krasnaya gazeta" [Evening Red Gazette], one is unintentionally reminded of the aforementioned sad aphorism: When a critic writes that in such-and-such symphony, the Soviet civil servants are depicted by oboes and clarinets, and soldiers of the Red Army are depicted by the brass section, then one wants to cry out: "Untrue!" It is possible to find more examples of the same type. Rarely in the press does one find highly-qualified persons such as Sollertinsky, Iokhelson, and Gorodinsky. And Igor Glebov [pseudonym of Boris Asafiev] is still almost nowhere to be found. "Sovetskaya muzyka" must provide models of highly-qualified criticism. The USC must have an influence on the restructuring of the music section of periodicals.

In conclusion, some words about myself. I have been experiencing a great creative revival in the recent past. I finished the opera "Lady Macbeth of

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[54] The editor of Sovetskaya muzyka inserted the following footnote here:

The article by comrade Gorodinsky, "Toward the problem of socialist realism in music," published in the first issue of our journal, was the first attempt to approach a resolution of the very complex problem of socialist realism in music. He did not raise, nor is one yet able to raise, the tasks at the present stage of the problem's development, its clarification, and the supervision of composers' creative practices. The meaning of it [socialist realism in music] relies on experience as the basis of a complete application of the slogan of socialist realism in such a complex and, it would seem, "abstract" art like music. By no means, in the opinion of the editor, were these "gibberish phrases" (the same, too, for "unquestionably showing the author's erudition"). Although a number of questions are debatable, he [Gorodinsky] takes the first step on the path toward achieving complete theoretical clarity in touching on these problems.

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> Mtsensk" and wrote twenty-four preludes for piano. At present I am writing a concerto for piano and orchestra, and "The Fairy Tale about the Priest and his Worker Blockhead" after Pushkin (an animated film). In the Leningrad USC I have found an attentive attitude. I have benefitted greatly from demonstrations given by the LUSC. All statements stood on a largely principled level. The LUSC must maintain this creative environment on a comradely and friendly basis, using strict self-criticism to raise up and move forward our creativity. Such a creative environment will be the best reply to the Central Committee Resolution of 23 April 1932.

Conclusion: battle lines are drawn

In this chapter I have examined a number of documents that show Shostakovich's position within the culture debates from 1927 through 1933. These documents reveal the extent to which Shostakovich dissented from the official policy of the Soviet government during a period of intense class struggle, his occasional cooperation with authorities he distrusted (and who distrusted him), his role in the reform movement of 1931, his response to the liquidation of RAPM's hegemony in the field of Soviet music, and his participation in the public debates about the restructuring of Soviet artistic life following the 23 April 1932 resolution of the Central Committee. Though he loved the theater, Shostakovich resented being forced to compose music exclusively for "proletarian" theater, ballet, and film--so-called applied music--during the proletarian episode. During this period, too, he clashed bitterly with music critics, primarily for their refusal to accept contemporary composition, and for their rejection of his own complex, modern, and highly individual style. When he could, he spoke out against state control of the arts and ideological orthodoxy, and spoke in favor of creative autonomy for Soviet artists. Though he hoped that the Central Committee's 23 April resolution 1932 ("On the

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restructuring of literary-artistic organizations") would help bring relief to himself and his colleagues, he sadly misread the nature of this "historic resolution." By early 1936 his honeymoon with both the stalinist restructuring and the Union of Soviet Composers had come to a bitter end.

Though it is clear that definite changes took place in Soviet musical life after 1932, Richard Taruskin is justified in referring to the *perestroika* as "phony."[55] Though the mid 1930s certainly saw the return of contemporary music on the Soviet music scene, western-influenced modernism was still taboo. Still, *perestroika* did allow the promotion of works from the nineteenth-century Russian classical tradition, a reestablishment of traditional music pedagogy, and the creation of a new, Party-directed Union of Soviet Composers.[56] For its part, the Composers Union, established in January 1933, assured its members the right to work and provided its members state patronage and other forms of material assistance. But at the same time the Union held the power to enforce conformity, which it did in Shostakovich's case in early February 1936, in the wake of Pravda's harsh reviews of his music. Though the restructuring of the arts was at first hailed as a liberalizing move, giving slightly greater freedom for artists, its eventual outcome was just the opposite. The 23 April 1932 resolution had in fact strengthened the Communist Party's grip on artistic life--a fact made brutally evident during the repression

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[55] Richard Taruskin, "Public Lies and Unspeakable Truth: Interpreting Shostakovich's Fifth Symphony," in Shostakovich Studies, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 17-56. See especially pp. 18-24.

[56] For a comprehensive overview of this period in English, see Chapters Six and Seven of Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, enlarged ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983).

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of the Great Terror period (1936-38). In the mid 1930s, before the Terror, Shostakovich continued to speak out forcefully in favor of creative autonomy and greater contact with western artists--and for this, he quickly became one of the most politically vulnerable members of the Union of Soviet Composers. In early 1936 the dam broke, and like many leading figures among the Soviet intelligentsia, Shostakovich was swept up in a torrent of antiformalist abuse. As we see in the next three chapters, his official censure by the Party and the Composers Union in 1936 resulted in part from the tremendous success of his second opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, his outspokenness on creative issues, his disagreements with influential critics, and his disregard for the Party's policy on socialist realism--a policy that demanded simple, optimistic, and propagandistic music from Soviet composers.

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Chapter Five
Diskussia o simfonizme:
Dmitri Shostakovich and the problem of Soviet symphonism

On 4-6 February 1935, the Union of Soviet Composers-Musicology Section conducted a *diskussia o simfonizme* (discussion on symphonism) that drew many composers and critics to Moscow. Reports of the conference proceedings, prepared by stenographers working for the USC, form the subject matter of this chapter.[1] These documents, published in three issues of Sovetskaya muzyka (1935, nos. 4-6), shed light on problems that faced Soviet composers during the mid 1930s, including demands by critics to create a uniquely *Soviet* symphonic practice with the use of Soviet themes and ideological content. Participants debated other issues concerning Soviet symphonism: the potential for creating a systematic musical language with so-called "concrete" ideas and "philosophically generalized images," the Soviet song-symphonic genre (or song symphony), the relationship between Soviet music and western music, and questions of "formalism" and "epigonism." At the conference, Dmitri Shostakovich led a group of dissenters who criticized those delegates who supported the Party's notion that ideological preconditions should be imposed on Soviet symphonies. A translation of Shostakovich's controversial speech is given as an Appendix 00.[2] In his speech,

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[1] For a list of speakers at the February 1935 *diskussia*, see Appendix 00.

[2] "Vystuplenie tov. Shostakovicha" (Speech of comrade Shostakovich), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33. The translation of Shostakovich's speech in the appendix is my own. All translations in this chapter are original unless otherwise noted. Fragments of materials from the 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme* have appeared elsewhere in English,;see especially Boris Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, enlarged ed. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 157-63; and Dmitri

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Shostakovich also displays a deep distrust of politically-charged slogans, openly questions the alleged successes of Soviet symphonism, and voices the controversial idea that Soviet composers might elevate the quality of their work by studying music of their western counterparts. Such ideas quickly placed Shostakovich in a politically vulnerable position and made him a convenient target for abuse over the next few years.

My examination of the *diskussia o simfonizme* is preceded by a brief biography of Shostakovich in the early to mid 1930s, noting how the tremendous success of his opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk placed him at the forefront of Soviet composers and raised his authority in the eyes of his colleagues during the *perestroika* period (1932-35).[3] Following a discussion of "symphonism" and "Soviet symphonism" as terms of discourse during the 1920s and 1930s, the remainder of this chapter explores a number of issues

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Shostakovich, Dmitry Shostakovich - About Himself and His Times, ed. I. Grigoryev and Ya. Platek, trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1981), 54, 58.

[3] Despite the relative liberalism of the *perestroika* period in the arts (1932-35), political realities in Soviet Russia were far from free and open. The opposition to Stalin that broke into the open at the Sixteenth Party Congress in early 1934 precipitated a brutal purge in which thousands were stripped of their party membership, exiled, imprisoned, and executed. Sergei Kirov, the popular Leningrad party boss tapped by oppositionists as a possible successor to Stalin, was assassinated on 1 December 1935, in an act likely sanctioned by Stalin. Stalin used the Kirov murder as a pretext to systematically eliminate oppositionists--first within the Party in 1935, then throughout Soviet society for the next three years. The brutal campaign that began in 1936 against the political, military, and intellectual elite resulted in several high-profile show trials, thousands of illegal arrests, and widespread executions. By 1937 the campaign against so-called enemies reached middle- and working-class citizens; millions were affected by the excesses of the Stalin regime during the Great Terror period (1936-38). In Chapters Six and Seven, I examine how the Terror touched Shostakovich directly (i.e., the Lady Macbeth affair, arrests of friends and family, and the withdrawal of his Fourth Symphony).

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arising from the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme*. In several areas, Shostakovich and his supporters (Sollertinsky, Shebalin, Litinsky, Braudo, Kabalevsky) clashed with critics and party activists who demanded that composers write politically inspired program symphonies. The degree to which Shostakovich spoke out in favor of creative autonomy for composers--and spoke out against state control and ideological orthodoxy--may have contributed to his official censure by the Communist Party in 1936.

A brief Shostakovich biography, 1932-1935

In previous chapters we saw that Shostakovich established himself as a staunch advocate of creative individuality during the proletarian episode in music (1928-early 1932) and emerged as one of the most outspoken members of the Union of Soviet Composers after 1932. With his role as a leader in the reform movement of 1931, Shostakovich moved into a more prominent position among the Soviet creative intelligentsia. He was named to the governing board of the Union of Soviet Composers-Leningrad section (August 1933) and was chosen to serve as a deputy to the Leningrad Soviet from the October district (November 1933). Though one can only speculate as to how he expressed himself privately, Shostakovich's *public* attitude toward Soviet musical life brightened considerably following RAPM's demise in April 1932. Shostakovich scored a number of professional successes during the *perestroika* period (1932-1935), including that of his second opera, Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, premiered in January 1934. With his growing reputation as the leading Soviet composer of his generation, Shostakovich found himself increasingly in demand as a speaker during the *perestroika*

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period. The rise in his stock as a public figure and authority on music may be illustrated by an abridged list of his speaking engagements from 1932 through 1935.[4] In addition, he served in an official capacity for prominent events in the Soviet musical calendar: adjudicator for a song contest celebrating the Komsomol (Communist Youth League, September 1933); commission member for a festival of international music in Leningrad (November 1934); and jury member for the Second All-Union Competition for Musician-Performers, a contest for Soviet Union's best young soloists (January and February 1935). His exposure in the Soviet press also skyrocketed in the early to mid 1930s, especially in conjunction with the great success of Lady Macbeth. Omitting articles and speeches already discussed in Chapter Four, I submit below an abridged list of his articles and interviews for the press from 1932 through 1935.[5]

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[4] Third Congress of Art Workers in Leningrad (early October 1932); board meeting of the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers (LUSC) regarding a symphony by V.M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky (11 December 1932); discussion of the LUSC regarding a ballet by Boris Asafiev (19 December 1932); board meeting of the LUSC commemorating the life and work of Anatoli Lunacharsky, former head of Narkompros (6 January 1934); board meeting of the LUSC regarding Lady Macbeth (February 1934); meeting at the Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater in Moscow concerning Soviet opera (13 April 1934); discussion at the Elektrosil Factory in Leningrad following a performance of Lady Macbeth (27 May 1934); discussion in Moscow on the joint work of Soviet writers and composers (8 December 1934); the *diskussia o simfonizme* speech in Moscow (5 February 1935, see Appendix 00); and discussion of the LUSC concerning Soviet opera (17 December 1935). See Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's early years) (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1980), 274-77.

[5] For the convenience of the reader, I am departing from the standard format for footnotes (i.e., I have omitted the original Russian titles and page numbers): "Speech of comrade Shostakovich," Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935); "Tragedy-satire" in Sovetskoye iskusstvo (16 October 1932); "To cry and to laugh," about the state of contemporary Soviet opera, in Sovetskoye iskusstvo (3 March 1933); "Operatic portfolio" in Rabochii i teatr (17 June 1933); interview "About the author of 'Katerina Izmailova'" in Sovetskoye iskusstvo (14 December 1933); interview about Lady Macbeth in Krasnaya

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Shostakovich's compositions from 1932 until 1936 may be divided into four categories: independently circulated music; *prikladnovo muzyka* (applied music) for film, theater, and ballet; the completion and production of Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk; and unfinished projects of various genres.[6] His independently-circulated concert works of the period include: Twenty-Four Preludes, op. 34 (1932-33) for solo piano; Piano Concerto No.1, op. 35 (1933) for solo piano, trumpet, and string orchestra; Cello Sonata, op. 40 (1934); and Five Fragments, op. 42 (1935), a suite of short orchestral works. To this list we could also add Suite for Jazz Orchestra No.1 (February 1934), a work that marked his return to the light-music genre.[7] Despite his stinging condemnation of the applied music

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gazeta (21 January 1934); "A composer's creative report" in Krasnaya gazeta (25 January 1934); "The joy of knowledge" in Sovetskoye iskusstvo (5 November 1934); co-signer of "Kirov is not with us," a tribute to Leningrad party boss Sergei Kirov (who was assassinated on 1 December 1934), in both Sovetskoye iskusstvo (5 December 1934) and Sovetskaya muzyka (1934, no. 12); "We must herald a great epoch" Leningradskaya pravda (28 December 1934); interview "A year after 'Lady'" in Krasnaya gazeta (evening edition, 14 Jan 1935); "All possibilities for work" in Literatura Leningrada (20 February 1935); "My creative path" in Izvestia (4 April 1935); "Ballet and music," on his ballet Bright Stream, in Vechernyaya Moskva (5 April 1935); "Against bad taste - on mass songs" in Literatura Leningrada (2 July 1935); "About 'Quiet Don'" in Leningradskaya pravda (15 October 1935); and "Thoughts on a musical spectacle" in Sovetskoye iskusstvo (5 December 1935).

[6] For descriptions of unfinished projects during the period 1932-35, see: Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography, 2nd ed. (Oxford/New York: Clarendon Press, 1991), 74-77; and Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (The early years of Shostakovich) (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1980), 273-279.

[7] The ban on light music was lifted following the Central Committee's 23 April 1932 *perestroika* resolution. Strict political conditions still prevented the wide dissemination and publication of jazz; only "approved" bands were permitted to record and perform. Despite the lifting of restrictions, Shostakovich found himself vulnerable to attack at the *diskussia o simfonizme* for his return to light music. The Suite was finally published in 1941.

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industry in his November 1931 essay "Declaration of a composer's responsibilities" and his announcement of a five-year moratorium on writing such music, Shostakovich rescinded his self-imposed ban and continued to write applied music during the *perestroika* period.[8] The reasons for this change of heart were two-fold. First, the dissolution of proletarian arts groups in April 1932 allowed composers to be more selective in the projects they worked on. Second, in comparison to the years 1930-32, composers were allowed after 1932 to keep more of the royalties gained from publication and performing rights. Simply put, composers could earn more money writing applied music than they could from writing concert music on grants, contracts, and commissions from the Union of Soviet Composers.

On the operatic front, the success of Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk is without parallel in the early history of Soviet music, and may be without parallel in the history of twentieth-century Russian music.[9] The opera is important, too, for the development of

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[8] Incidental music to Hamlet, op. 32 (1932); Hamlet suite for orchestra, op. 32a (1932); music for the film Counterplan, op. 33 (1932), from which "Song of the Meeting" achieved tremendous popularity; music for the unfinished animated film The Tale of the Priest and his Servant Blockhead, op. 36 (1933-34, reorchestrated 1935); incidental music for the play The Human Comedy, op. 37 (1933-34); music for the film Love and Hate, op. 38 (1935); the ill-fated, three-act ballet Bright Stream, op. 39 (1934-35); the prologue for the highly successful Kozintsev-Trauberg film The Youth of Maksim, op. 41 (1934-35); and three preludes for the film Girlfriends, op. 41a (1934-35). Though Shostakovich faced professional and personal ostracism in 1936 (see Chapters Six and Seven), he was invited to compose incidental music for Afinogenov's theater piece Salute to Spain, op. 44 (1936) and Kozintsev-Trauberg's film The Return of Maksim, op. 45 (1936-37).

[9] Recent leading articles in English on the history of Lady Macbeth include: Richard Taruskin, "Entr'acte: The Lessons of Lady M," in Defining Russia Musically (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 498-510; Laurel E. Fay, "From Lady Macbeth to Katerina: Shostakovich's Versions and Revisions," in Shostakovich Studies,

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Shostakovich's symphonic approach. In an essay he prepared for the premiere of Lady Macbeth, Shostakovich said repeatedly that he designed the opera's music "on a grand symphonic pattern."[10] Lady Macbeth received its Leningrad premiere on 22 January 1934 and its Moscow premiere (under the title Katerina Izmailova two days later. Artists, critics, and audiences alike greeted Shostakovich's opera enthusiastically. Over the next two years, Lady Macbeth received nearly 200 performances in Leningrad and Moscow alone, and was staged in cities throughout the Soviet Union, Europe, and the United States. In a reversal of fortune, however, Shostakovich was the subject of a harsh editorial in Pravda (28 January 1936), an attack that deeply humiliated him and led to a series of indignities at the hands of his opponents. As we will see in Chapters Six and Seven, the political difficulties created by the Party's rebuke of Shostakovich resulted in the withdrawal of his Fourth Symphony in November 1936.

As early as 1932 Shostakovich expressed a wish to write a Fourth Symphony. By that time, he had renamed his symphonic dedication To October and The First of May symphony as the Second and Third symphonies, respectively. He attempted to give new credibility to these works by affirming their status as symphonies, distancing himself from the "leftist" sound of the original titles ("To October" and "The First of May"). In 1932 Shostakovich completed one movement of a projected five-movement symphonic

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ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 160-88; and Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The *Lady Macbeth* Affair: Shostakovich and the Soviet Puritans," in The Cultural Front (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 183-215.

[10] Dmitri Shostakovich, "O moei opere" (About my opera), in Katerina Izmailova, libretto for the production at the Nemirovich-Danchenko Theater (Moscow, 1934), quoted in Victor Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich (New York, A.A. Knopf, 1943), 251.

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work entitled "From Karl Marx to Our Own Days," but he later abandoned the project. When he returned to the idea of writing a symphony two years later, he also returned to the idea of writing a symphony on a revolutionary topic. On 31 May 1934, Shostakovich announced that he would write a symphony based on the defense of Kronstadt, a key event of the 1905 Revolution.[11] He started drafting the first movement on 5 November 1934 but quickly abandoned the project, even after the Leningrad Philharmonic announced its intention to perform the work during the 1935/36 symphonic season. It is quite possible that Shostakovich's "Kronstadt" symphony was simply a political dodge, aimed at satisfying the Party's wish that composers write symphonic music based on political or historical themes.

In 1935 Shostakovich clearly stated his intention to write a purely instrumental, non-ideological Fourth Symphony--far different from his ideologically correct Second and Third symphonies. Shostakovich's supporters dropped hints along those line at the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme*--even though he had not yet started on the Fourth. In comments that ran counter to the authorities' wishes, Shostakovich argued at the conference that it was perfectly appropriate for Soviet composers to write "lyrical" symphonies--meaning purely instrumental, non-texted, and non-ideological works. Ivan Sollertinsky, a longtime friend and supporter of Shostakovich, expressed great anticipation over his new symphony, and predicted that it would send Soviet symphonism in new directions: "we eagerly await his Fourth . . . it will be strongly distinguished from the first three."[12] Commenting on Shostakovich's highly

[11] Khentova, Molodye gody, 277.

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individualistic approach at the *diskussia*, the musicologiest Evgeni Braudo said, "in one of the conversations regarding the construction of a symphonic work, Shostakovich said to me that it was no longer necessary for him to write in sonata, rondo, and other forms."[13] Braudo's words, as we will see in the next two chapters, proved to be prophetic. Composed from 13 September 1935 until 20 May 1936, Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony became his musical "credo," a symphony that did not adhere to any preconceived formal models.[14] Despite the composer's political troubles in 1936, the Leningrad Philharmonic made good on an earlier promise by scheduling the premiere of the Fourth for its upcoming 1936/37 season. On the eve of its premiere, however, Shostakovich withdrew the work from performance, in part because of pressure placed on him by party officials, the Union of Soviet Composers, and the director of the State Philharmonic Orchestra. (For an account of the circumstances surrounding the withdrawal of the Fourth Symphony, see Chapter Seven.)

Boris Asafiev and the idea of symphonism

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[12] I. I. Sollertinsky, "Vystuplenie I.I. Sollertinskovo" (Speech of I.I. Sollertinsky), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1935): 31. "Skazhu v poryadke i svoikh lichnykh chayanii, chto s ochen bolshim interesom ozhidaetsya nami poyavlenie 4-i simfonii D. Shostakovich. Dumayu, chto eto proizvedenie budet silno otlichatsya ot tekh trekh simfonii, kotorye Shostakovich napisal ranshe."

[13] E. M. Braudo, "Vystuplenie tov. Braudo" (Speech of comrade Braudo), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 44. "V odnoi iz besed so mnoi po povodu postroenia simfonicheskovo proizvedenia D. D. Shostakovich ukazal, chto dlya nevo forma sonatnovo allegro, rondo i pr. ne imeet sushchestvennovo znachenia."

[14] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Moi tvorcheskii puti" (My creative path), Izvestia, 4 April 1935. See Chapter Six for an examination of this article.

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Before I address the changing views of the symphony among Soviet composers and critics in the mid 1930s, and analyze the debates at the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme* itself, it is perhaps necessary to define what was meant by "symphonism" and "Soviet symphonism." The musicologist and composer Boris Asafiev coined the term *simfonizm* (symphonism) in 1917 to denote the highly developmental compositional process exhibited by many symphonies since the time of Beethoven.[15] Symphonism is an evolutionary, dialectical process in which new themes arise from a synthesis of both new and old material. Despite being rooted in the symphonic tradition, Asafiev said, symphonism may be also found in non-symphonic works. He cited Mussorgsky operas, Bach fugues, and Beethoven chamber music as examples of non-symphonic symphonism. (The transference of language between different fields of creativity was common among Russian intellectuals during the 1920s.) By the mid to late 1920s new uses of the term *symphonism* began to gain currency among Leningrad and Moscow musicians, some of which strayed from Asafiev's original conception. By 1930 the term was being used by Russian musicians and critics to denote a variety of ideas: 1) an analytical tool for use in describing musical form and process; 2) a marxist, semiotic-interpretive tool for use in describing a musical work's relationship to outer realities; 3) a compositional-pedagogical method for use in writing highly developmental music; and 4)

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[15] For a detailed account in English of Asafiev's conception of symphonism, see James R. Tull, B.V. Asaf'ev's Musical Form as a Process: Translation and Commentary. Ph.D diss., Ohio State University, 1977; David Haas, "Boris Asafyev and Soviet Symphonic Theory," The Musical Quarterly 76 (1992): 410-32; and Gordon D. McQuere, "Boris Asafiev and Musical Form as a Process," in Russian Theoretical Thought in Music, ed. Gordon D. McQuere (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Research Press, 1983), 217-52.

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the idea of "symphonic practice" (as in Beethoven's symphonism, Chaikovsky's symphonism, Soviet symphonism, western symphonism, and so forth).

In previous chapters I discussed briefly how Asafiev distinguished himself in the 1920s both as an advocate of modernism and as a political activist. One of the first members of the musical intelligentsia to cooperate with bolsheviks following the October Revolution, he wrote many influential articles that encouraged composers to incorporate contemporary, revolutionary, or social themes into their work. In the late 1920s, Asafiev changed his stance on symphonism to accommodate the increasing hard line in Soviet music; in short, he moved away from a formal-developmental model of symphonism he established in the late 1910s and 1920s and embraced the politically safer, semiotic-analytical model rooted in marxist theory. In Musical Form as a Process (1929), for example, the growth of musical ideas in first-movement sonata form is seen as a reflection of social contradictions and conflicting political ideas evident in the social-democratic West. Chapter Twelve of Musical Form as a Process is devoted to marxist interpretations of music by Russian composers, Beethoven, and Brahms. Despite his marxist leanings, Asafiev suffered abuse during the proletarian episode in music for being a member of the intelligentsia, an expert on western music (past and present), and an fierce supporter of modernism. Asafiev was forced to leave musicology in 1929 and spent much of the remainder of his career composing ballet music.

Dmitri Shostakovich formed a close relationship with Asafiev in the 1920s. Asafiev was a kind of mentor to Shostakovich during the 1920s; together they shared many professional, aesthetic, and compositional interests--especially in the field of

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experimental musical theater. Shostakovich dedicated his first opera The Nose to Asafiev, and originally intended to dedicate Lady Macbeth to him as well (Shostakovich changed the dedication in 1933, giving it instead to his wife Nina Varzar). In 1928 Shostakovich described his recently-completed, modernist opera The Nose as one in which a symphonic process developed the musical and dramatic content of the opera: "I symphonized [*simfonizirovaI*] the Gogolian text not in the sense of the 'absolute' or 'pure' symphony, but rather nearer to a theatrical symphony [*teatralnoi simfonii*] similar to the work of Meyerhold."[16] In 1934, too, he invoked the term "symphonic" to describe the music of his opera Lady Macbeth:[17]

> The music progresses always on a symphonic plan and in this respect the opera is not a repetition of the old operas which are built on separate numbers. The music flows without a break, being checked only at the end of an act; it is not built of small bits, but is developed on a grand symphonic pattern. . . . Scenes are not designated mechanically by pauses, but by musical entr'actes, which allow for the change of scenery. These musical entr'actes . . . are a continuation and development of the musical thought, and play a very important part in the exposition of what happens on the stage.

In my opinion, Shostakovich's view of a symphonic approach to "non-symphonic" symphonism is similar to Asafiev's original conception of symphonism: a highly developmental compositional process, or a kind of dialectical materialism in music, irrespective of genre. Such a process is illustrated by the principle of continuous

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[16] Manashir A. Yakubov, "Ya pytalsya peredat pafos borby i pobedi" (I attempted to depict the zeal of struggle and victory), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 10 (1986): 54.

[17] Dmitri Shostakovich, "O moei opere," quoted in Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich, 249-55. The translation above is taken from Seroff.

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variation in Shostakovich's Third Symphony (see Chapter Two). The Shostakovich-Asafiev relationship, however, came under great strain during the late 1930s and late 1940s, two periods of terrible political repression for Soviet artists and intellectuals. In 1936 Asafiev rejected Shostakovich's bid for support during the Lady Macbeth affair and lent his name to the antiformalist campaign against Shostakovich.[18] In 1948, when he was seriously ill, Asafiev publicly supported the Central Committee in its public rebuke of leading Soviet composers and musicologists, including Shostakovich. In my opinion, it is unlikely that Asafiev denounced Shostakovich freely during these episodes; like many artists during these difficult times, he regrettably succumbed to political pressure.

The case of comrade Popov's symphony

Asafiev, among others, frequently wrote in the 1920s about the exclusively Soviet qualities of Russian symphonic music since the Revolution. During the early stages of the proletarian episode in music (1928-32), critics began to urge composers to create

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[18] Boris Asafiev, "Volnuyushchiye voprosi" (Troubling questions), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1936): 24. This article, in support of Pravda's condemnation of Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth and ballet Bright Stream, represented an about-face for Asafiev. In 1934 Asafiev wrote a laudatory essay for the program book accompanying performances of Lady Macbeth in Leningrad: Boris Asafiev, "O tvorchestve D. Shostakovicha i evo opera 'Ledi Makbet Mtsenskovo Uyezda'" (On Shostakovich's creativity and his opera "Lady Macbeth"), in Ledi Makbet Mtsenskovo Uyezda, libretto for the production at the Malyi Theater (Leningrad, 1934). The debate over Shostakovich's relationship with Asafiev was reopened with the publication of Solomon Volkov's Testimony (New York: Limelight Editions, 1979/1984). According to Volkov, Shostakovich never forgave Asafiev for his lack of support. For a *glasnost*-era evaluation of the Asafiev-Shostakovich relationship, and one that is more sympathetic to Asafiev, see Sofia Khentova, "Dva imeni" (Two names), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1985): 75-80.

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"Soviet symphonism," an exclusively *Soviet* symphonic practice distinguishable from all others.[19] Public debate on the issue of Soviet symphonism was largely halted during the proletarian episode, when the musical press concerned itself with the production of utilitarian music. The question of Soviet symphonism surfaced again in 1933, when substantial articles on the subject were published by two of Shostakovich's closest associates: the composer Gavriil Popov, and the critic Ivan Sollertinsky. At a time when many critics and party activists considered the use of "Soviet themes" and vocal music necessary components of Soviet symphonism, Popov and Sollertinsky rejected these ideas, saying that Soviet composers should have the option of using purely instrumental music in creating Soviet symphonism.[20] Popov nonetheless conceded in his article that vocal music is a major component of Soviet symphonism. Their positions were supported by the critic-composer Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovsky (also a longtime friend of Shostakovich), who also wrote an influential article on Soviet symphonism in 1934.[21] Three years later, Bogdanov-Berezovsky wrote a definition of Soviet symphonism that

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[19] As far as I can tell, the term "Soviet symphonism" seems to have appeared in print for the first time in S. I. Korev, Muzyka i sovremennost (Music and the present) (Moscow: Muzsektor, 1928). Chapter Ten of Korev's study is entitled "Pervye shagi sovetskovo simfonizma" (The first steps of Soviet symphonism). This information is supplied by I. I. Startsev, Sovetskaya literatura o muzyke, 1918-1947 (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1963), 97.

[20] Gavriil Popov, "K voprosu o sovetskom simfonizme" (Toward questions about Soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 114-18; Ivan Sollertinsky, "Zametki o sovetskom simfonizme" (Notes on Soviet symphonism), Rabochii i teatr, no. 11 (1933): 8-9.

[21] V. M. Bogdanov-Berezovsky, "K probleme sovetskovo simfonizma" (Toward the problem of soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1934): 29-44.

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harkened back to Asafiev's original formulation.

> The symphony as a genre is nothing but a sonata for orchestra. . . . Symphonism, on the other hand, is the definition of a creative method, a definite procedure for the development of musical material. . . . Symphonism is becoming the leading and dominant method of the Soviet composer, independent of the genres and forms he uses.[22]

Meanwhile, Gavriil Popov put his ideas to the test in his First Symphony, op. 7 (1928-34). Each movement carries a general title on themes relating to socialist ideals, though not an explicitly *Soviet* title: I. Allegro energico, "Struggle and failure"; II. Largo con moto e molto cantabile, "Humanity"; III. Finale-Scherzo e coda, "The energy, will, and joy of the hard-working victor." In a contest to commemorate the fifteenth anniversary of the October Revolution (1932), Popov's First Symphony shared second prize with works by Yuri Shaporin and Vissarion Shebalin (no first prize was awarded). Popov spent the next year revising the symphony. Premiered on 22 March 1935 (State Philharmonic Orchestra, Leningrad, Fritz Stiedry conducting), the work was hailed as an achievement of Soviet symphonism by many leading Soviet musicians, including Shostakovich.[23] In addition, several prominent conductors (Malko, Klemperer, Scherchen, Kleiber) sought the right to conduct the symphony in the West. But the lack of an explicitly *Soviet* topic, coupled with the symphony's complexity and modernist style, quickly landed Popov in the kind of political trouble that foreshadowed

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[22] Quoted in Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 159.

[23] Per Skans, Brochure notes for Gavriil Popov, Symphonies Nos. 1 and 2, Moscow State Symphony Orchestra and USSR Radio and Television Symphony Orchestra, Gennady Provatorov, Olympia compact disc OCD 576, pages 3-4.

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Shostakovich's censure in 1936. Critics and party activists who demanded Soviet topics for all new musical works used Popov's symphony as a test case for a new round of censorship in the arts. An anonymous critic in Krasnaya gazeta, a leading newspaper, condemned Popov's work as formalist and "alien to the Soviet order."[24] The director of the Leningrad Bureau for the Control of Cultural Events and Repertoire (B. Obnorsky) issued a decree banning all future performances of Popov's symphony, denouncing it for reflecting the ideology of "classes hostile to us."[25] Following debates in the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers, however, the ban on Popov's First was overturned by Glavrepertkom (the Main Committee for Repertoire), the government's main censorship agency in charge of the performing arts. But with the harsh crackdown in the arts that began in 1936, no one dared to play Popov's condemned symphony. The symphony remained unperformed in Russia until the end of the Soviet period; in 1989 the Moscow State Symphony Orchestra became the first orchestra to record Popov's First Symphony, nearly sixty years after its completion.

A summary of the Union of Soviet Composers' diskussia o simfonizme: *Moscow, 4-6 February 1935*

The *diskussia o simfonizme*, one of a series of meetings organized by the Union of Soviet Composers in the years 1934-35 to chart the direction of Soviet music, took place two months before the row over Popov's symphony broke into public view. Other

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[24] Quoted in Skans, 3.

[25] Ibid., 3.

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meetings sponsored by the USC during this period focused on mass song, opera, and folk music. The discussion on symphonism, as reported by the USC journal Sovetskaya muzyka, consisted of long papers by three featured speakers (the musicologists A. A. Ostretsov, K. A. Kuznetsov, and I. Ya. Ryzhkin), five- and ten-minute speeches by composers and critics, a brief period at the end for speakers to amend and extend their earlier remarks, and a summary of the proceedings given by N. I. Chelyapov (the first chairman of the Union of Soviet Composers). The three featured speakers--all professors of music history at the Moscow Conservatory--set the agenda for the discussion by presenting party sanctioned views concerning symphonism in general and Soviet symphonism in particular. Their reports received favorable and extensive coverage in Sovetskaya muzyka but drew negative reactions from a number of composers, including Shostakovich.

The papers by Ostretsov and Kuznetsov occupied much of the conference's first day (4 February). In the opening address, Ostretsov reported on Soviet symphonic creativity by drawing a contrast between alleged achievements of Soviet symphonism and the so-called crisis in contemporary bourgeois symphonism.[26] For Ostretsov, composers who fused revolutionary themes with symphonic music in the 1920s initiated the formation of Soviet symphonism. He then elaborated on ways in which both the incorporation of revolutionary themes and the development of the song-symphonic genre (song symphony) reflected the *tvorcheskaya perestroika* (creative restructuring) of

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[26] A. A. Ostretsov, "Sovetskoe simfonicheskoe tvorchestvo" (Soviet symphonic creativity), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1935): 3-21.

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composers since the October Revolution. After Ostretsov spoke, the critic Kuznetsov delivered a stinging critique of western contemporary music; this truly awful paper gravely misrepresented the subject.[27] As a result, Kuznetsov was roundly criticized by a number of the conference participants. Yet his speech was given prominent attention by the editors of Sovetskaya muzyka, an indication that his views were supported by the party controlled Union of Soviet Composers.

On the second day of the conference, the last of the three featured speakers, Ryzhkin, gave a detailed report that echoed many of the sentiments expressed by Ostretsov regarding the development of Soviet symphonism.[28] Ryzhkin's report provided a brief history of symphonic music from a marxist-leninist perspective, an overview of Soviet symphonic music, a discussion of what he called the *bytovaya simfonia* (everyday-life symphony), an analysis of two types of *syuzhetnoi simfonii* (subject symphonies), and the problem of so-called pure music. In his conclusion, he argued that the *syuzhetno-istoricheskaya simfonia* (subject-historical symphony) should be the leading approach for Soviet symphonists; he also gave a strong endorsement of the song-symphonic genre. I will return later in this chapter to the various types of symphonism Ryzhkin discussed.

In contrast to the uniformity of opinions given by the featured speakers, the short

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[27] K. A. Kuznetsov, "O sovremennom simfonizme na zapade" (On contemporary symphonism in the West), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 23-27. Kuznetsov's report provided a very poor and incomplete account of recent symphonic works by western composers. He focused primarily on what he saw as the lack of symphonic production among composers in France, England, and the United States.

[28] I. Ya. Ryzhkin, "Zadachi sovetskovo simfonizma" (Tasks of soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1935): 3-27.

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speeches given by critics and composers offered a broader range of perspectives.[29] At the end of the first day of the conference, A. S. Abramsky outlined problems that Soviet composers faced when incorporating Soviet themes into their symphonies. When the discussion continued on the following day (5 February), L. Danilevich pointed out the necessity for Soviet composers to focus attention on *konkretnye metody* (concrete methods) of symphonic development and musical form. (Shostakovich also used the word "concrete" in his speech but not in the same sense as Danilevich and others used it; see Appendix II) The composer A. P. Gladkovsky complained about the "individualism" and "intuitivism" that still existed among the work of Leningrad composers. He upbraided composers who he felt relied too much on individual tastes, failed to incorporate Soviet themes and subjects, and created music that is difficult for the general public to understand. The composer A. S. Ogolevets spoke vaguely on the issue of Soviet themes and other sources of inspiration available to the Soviet symphonist.

Shostakovich and Sollertinsky delivered speeches at the end of the second day that strongly rejected the featured speakers' simplistic solutions to questions of Soviet symphonism. Shostakovich pointed out that musical creativity is a complicated and difficult matter, and that Soviet song symphonism had led to over-simplified musical ideas among Soviet symphonists. To improve the quality of Soviet symphonism, he

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[29] See Appendix I. For a summary of the *diskussia*, see Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1935): 101-106. For stenographic reports of the speeches by comrades Gladkovsky, Shostakovich, Belyi, Kabalevsky, Shebalin, Braudo, and Zimin, see Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 27-45. For stenographic reports of the speeches by comrades Sollertinsky, Khubov, Ogolevets, and Litinsky, see Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1935): 28-43. Unfortunately, not all of the speeches from the discussion were published by Sovetskaya muzyka.

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argued, Soviet composers must acquire a better knowledge of contemporary western symphonism. In view of the increasing xenophobia in stalinist Russia, Shostakovich's plea for increasing the level of contact with western music was politically risky indeed. Sollertinsky, an expert on the music of western symphonists, seconded Shostakovich's remarks on the need to study western music of the past and present, but insisted that symphonists in Leningrad have written a number of fine works that deserved to be studied in depth and played often.

The final day of the conference began with a speech by one comrade Zimin, who encouraged composers to explore all possible resources of the orchestra, but warned against pursuing the kind of "extremism" found in Prokofiev's work. Braudo then called for composers to acquaint themselves more fully with the folklore of the union republics as a means of achieving Soviet symphonism. The critic V. A. Belyi, however, argued that Soviet symphonism did not really exist: "We must be modest and recognize that we do not yet have musical works in an extensive form, reflecting the stylistic, ideo-emotional contexts of our lives."[30] As a former leader of RAPM, Belyi not surprisingly called for more *partiinost* (which may be translated as "partyness," party spirit, or party loyalty) and ideological *pristrastia* (passion) in the fields of composition and music criticism. G. N. Khubov, another former leader of RAPM, disagreed with a number of points raised at the *diskussia*, but like many other delegates, he warned composers to

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[30] V. A. Belyi, "Vystuplenie tov. Belovo" (Speech of comrade Belyi), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 34. "Nado byt skromnymi i priznat, chto my ne imeem eshche muzykalnykh proizvedenii, v razvernutoi forme otrazhayushchikh stilevye, ideino-emotsionalnye razrezy nashei zhizni, prichem otrazhayushchikh v *prekrasnoi* forme" [emphasis in the original].

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avoid two fundamental dangers to the health of Soviet music: "epigonism" and "formalism," which will be discussed later.

In contrast to the positions espoused by Belyi and Khubov, Dmitri Kabalevsky agreed with Shostakovich on the need to raise the quality of Soviet symphonism and criticism. Kabalevsky, too, rejected the ideologically correct premise that Soviet symphonies must necessarily reflect Soviet topics--an issue he had raised before in the pages of Sovetskaya muzyka.[31] He further argued that composers should be allowed to guide the development of Soviet symphonism more freely and called for critics to place less emphasis on the so-called "creative restructuring" of composers. Vissarion Shebalin concurred with the Shostakovich-Sollertinsky-Kabalevsky line by criticizing the overemphasis on song symphonies in Soviet music, calling for higher quality in criticism and greater experimentation in composition, and arguing that no shortcuts or recipes existed in the formation of Soviet symphonism. In the final speech of the *diskussia*, G. I. Litinsky evaluated Soviet symphonic style in general and discussed the need to improve the state of music criticism. Litinsky's comments on problems in the field of criticism come nearly a year after the critic Ostretsov, one of the featured speakers at the *diskussia*, publicly accused Litinsky of formalism.[32]

At the end of the final day, the floor was briefly thrown open for speakers to elaborate upon their previous remarks. Sollertinsky pointed out that no ideological

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[31] D.B. Kabalevsky, "O sovetskoi tematike, stile, i muzykalnoi kritike" (On Soviet themes, style, and music criticism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1934): 3-5.

[32] A. A. Ostretsov, "Protiv formalizma v muzyke" (Against formalism in music), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1934): 6-26.

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predposylki (preconditions or prerequisites) existed for composers in the West. The imposition of preconditions, he added, will continue to inhibit the creativity of Soviet composers. Like Shostakovich, Sollertinsky criticized the overuse of meaningless slogans at the discussion, equating it with "epigonism" (slavish adherence to ideas expressed by others). The *diskussia* ended with chairman Chelyapov's official summary-conclusion, an examination of which is given at the end of this chapter.

Soviet symphonism as a term of discourse

The discussion revealed differences in opinion concerning the nature and characteristics of Soviet symphonism. Although all delegates agreed that the term Soviet symphonism implied the existence of an exclusively Soviet symphonic practice, few delegates agreed on what that meant. The party line (so to speak) was given by the featured speakers, who argued that Soviet symphonism, as a reflection of Soviet life, must necessarily contain Soviet themes or topics. The programmatic aspect of Soviet symphonism, they argued, was the best way to attract the interests of the Soviet general public. Shostakovich, Kabalevsky, Shebalin, Litinsky challenged the party line directly by arguing that ideological content alone did not define Soviet symphonism. Soviet composers must write more symphonies in order for a uniquely Soviet approach to emerge, Kabalevsky said, and must be given greater creative freedom to develop new forms of Soviet symphonism. Likewise, Shebalin and Sollertinsky rejected the notion that ideological preconditions were needed for Soviet symphonism.

Other delegates seemed to define Soviet symphonism more broadly, seeing it as

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creative practices of Soviet composers in the field of symphonic music, or even using the term symphonism in a manner that recalled Asafiev's original concept--namely, a dialectical process irrespective of genre. As Asafiev did in the 1920s, Sollertinsky and Litinsky discussed the dialectical implications of symphonism, and mentioned the potential for non-symphonic music to exhibit symphonism. Braudo described the dialectical nature of symphonism as one in which "a single creative effort penetrates from the first sound until the last," and argued that the use of dialectical conflict as a musical principle should direct the continuing formation of Soviet symphonism.[33] He pointed to Shostakovich as a composer whose music best reflected such a compositional principle. Though Braudo did not cite Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies, my analyses in Chapters One and Two identified dialectical processes of continuous variation in these symphonies.

Soviet tematika *(themes) and ideological* soderzhatelnost *(content)*

The incorporation of Soviet themes in artistic creativity was a principal aim of socialist realism, the official artistic doctrine of the Communist Party. Socialist realism also compelled artists in all fields to abandon modern techniques and adopt a style akin to nineteenth-century Russian classicism. Soviet themes, as the major inspirational force of creative work, formed the ideological *soderzhatelnost* (content) of a work. Composers were expected to express Soviet themes by incorporating politically inspired titles,

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[33] Braudo, "Vystuplenie," 43. ". . . tem edinym napryazheniem tvorcheskoi mysli, kotoroe pronikaet dannoe simfonicheskoe proizvedenie ot pervovo evo zvuka do poslednevo."

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programs, and texts into their symphonic works. Such Soviet themes included revolutionary heros, revolutionary institutions, episodes in revolutionary history, scenes from "everyday life," celebration of labor, industrialization, collectivization, socialist construction, world peace, national defense, and so forth.[34] The Party's official support for socialist realism and Soviet themes demonstrates its real aim during the period of stalinist restructuring--to force the arts into a strictly propagandistic role. The party-directed artistic unions, established according to the Central Committee's *perestroika* resolution of 23 April 1932 restructuring, quickly usurped the program of the old proletarian cultural organizations like RAPP and RAPM. Crudely put, the Party advocated the use of Soviet themes in the 1930s to discipline the intelligentsia and indoctrinate the population. It is not surprising, then, that the musical intelligentsia sounded the alarm that an exclusive use of Soviet themes will lead to ideological preconditions that limit the creativity of composers. Dissenters from the party line (Shostakovich, Shebalin, Kabalevsky, Litinsky, Braudo) argued that composers should be offered choices from which to draw their inspiration and objected strenuously to the idea raised by the featured speakers and other critics that musical or programmatic formulae should be used to create Soviet symphonism.

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[34] A month before the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme* took place, Sovetskaya muzyka (1935, no. 1) published a report on the 1934 Congress of All-Union Writers, the conference at which socialist realism was endorsed by the Communist Party as the official creative method of Soviet writers--and by extension, all Soviet artists. The report in Sovetskaya muzyka contains excerpts from speeches by Maksim Gorky and Andrei Zhdanov (Stalin's cultural henchman, and successor to Sergei Kirov as Leningrad party boss), both of whom stressed the necessity of Soviet themes for all the arts. The report in Sovetskaya muzyka sent a clear message to composers that the Party expected them to embrace Soviet themes as the chief source of creative inspiration.

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Concrete ideas and philosophically generalized images

To counter criticism from skeptics that the exclusive use of Soviet themes might jeopardize the future of Soviet symphonism, some delegates (Ostretsov, Ryzhkin, Gladkovsky, Khubov) pointed to the use of so-called "concrete" musical ideas and "philosophically generalized images" as the proper means of creating Soviet symphonism. The featured speakers Ostretsov and Ryzhkin argued that Soviet composers were in the process of creating a compositional system in which music, without the aid of text or program, could represent *konkretnyi* (concrete) ideas. They further argued that a concrete method of composing music was a logical outgrowth of *filosofski obobshchenye obrazy* (philosophically generalized images), musical formulae that leave listeners with intonations (or general impressions) of a mood, character, or idea. The critic Khubov argued that concrete ideas and philosophically generalized images would eventually depict programmatic ideas the same way that writers and painters do. Not surprisingly, he offered no solutions. Although Khubov and others admitted that Soviet themes, concrete ideas, and philosophically generalized images still relied on programs and text, they predicted that if Soviet composers continued to use such devices, music would eventually arise in which tone and rhythm alone would somehow directly impart discursive meaning.

Arsenyi Gladkovsky, a composer from Leningrad, said that he was beginning to use the principle of "concreteness" in his music and urged his fellow composers to work with "concrete images," "concrete themes," and "concrete subjects." In an earlier opera, Red Petrograd (1925), Gladkovsky said that he had tried to represent the struggles of the

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Civil War by composing a contrapuntal clash of two themes--the "Internationale" to represent the Red Army, and "Rule Britannia" to represent the western interventionists. Such musical depiction, he admitted, simply relied on known themes to bring about the idea of struggle in the listener's imagination. But in a symphony he was currently writing, Gladkovsky said, he was applying "concrete" principles of composition in which purely symphonic ideas of conception, growth, development, and synthesis would directly impart the idea of struggle to a listener.[35] Even general listeners would perceive the idea of struggle, he claimed, simply by listening to the music--no program or text would be needed.

The implication that a system of composition could be developed in which pure musical tones could directly intone discursive meaning--advanced by Khubov, Gladkovsky, and others at the *diskussia*--met strong resistance from Shebalin and Kabalevsky. Shostakovich, too, disputed a number of ideas from Gladkovsky's speech, though he did not directly address the idea of concreteness in composition. In his speech, too, Shostakovich never openly opposed the idea of Soviet themes and concrete images in symphonic music, but he clearly resented the idea that critics demanded such things from composers. He joined Kabalevsky and Sollertinsky in arguing that the incorporation of topical, programmatic ideas had damaged the purity of the Soviet symphonic genre (see especially Shostakovich's comments in Appendix II concerning

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[35] Gladkovsky's comments are strikingly similar to what Shostakovich said about his own politically inspired Second and Third symphonies during the late 1920s (see Chapters One and Two) It is instructive to note that Shostakovich opposed Gladkovsky's speech, an indication of how much his own views on the symphony had changed since the late 1920s.

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Lev Knipper's symphonies). Shebalin pointed out that the "abstractness" of musical sound prevents music from operating at an ideological level, and that the systemization of musical language was a flawed and dangerous idea.[36]

The debates over concrete ideas and philosophically generalized images also touched upon disagreements at the *diskussia* over music's relationship with other creative activities (literature, drama, painting, and dance). Ryzhkin compared the principle of symphonic development to the development of ideas and characters in novels, adding that music should guide the listener like stage directions guide the dramaturgy of a play or the script guides a film.[37] Khubov and Ostretsov, too, also drew similar direct comparisons between the creative processes in music and the other arts. Ogolevets and Shebalin in particular were adamant that musical tones cannot function the way that words and images operate in poetry and painting. Braudo criticized Ryzhkin's comparison between symphonism and literature, pointing out that the idea of comparing contemporary symphonism with classic literary works was arbitrary and flawed. Rather, Braudo wished to hear more comparisons of how Soviet symphonism related to contemporary Soviet literature. By incorporating Gorky's ideas on the "reality" and "active emotions" of Soviet drama, Braudo concluded, Soviet composers would naturally create a symphonic practice that ran counter to bourgeois, non-programmatic symphonism.

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[36] V. Ya. Shebalin, "Vystuplenie tov. Shebalina" (Speech of comrade Shebalin), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5: 42.

[37] Ryzhkin, "Zadachi sovetskovo simfonizma," 18.

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Soviet song symphonism

The application of Soviet themes to symphonic music dates back to the early 1920s, when Anatoli Lunacharsky, then-commissar of Narkompros (People's Commissariat of Public Enlightenment), encouraged composers to write symphonies that made explicit references to revolutionary ideology. A program financed by the Propaganda Division of the State Publishing House (Agitodel) in the mid 1920s gave commissions to any composer who wrote a cantata-like orchestral work based on texts related to revolution, the Civil War, socialism, industrialization, or similar themes. Such texted symphonic works often incorporated solo songs, ensembles, and choral songs, giving rise to the terms *pesnaya simfonia* (song symphony) and *pesnyi simfonizm* (song symphonism).[38] The featured speakers and their supporters at the February 1935 *diskussia* applauded song symphonism for representing a new, uniquely Soviet synthesis of vocal and instrumental genres (solo song, choral song, cantata, suite, symphony, symphonic poem, and oratorio). Proponents of song symphonies were led by Ostretsov and Ryzhkin, who devoted much of their reports on the origins, characteristics, and

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[38] For a discussion in English of Soviet symphonic music during the 1920s and 1930s, see Schwarz, Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia, 75-87 and 157-74. The best known "actualized," or song symphonies of the 1920s include: Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies (1927, 1929), Kastalsky's Agricultural Symphony (1923), M. F. Gnessin's Symphonic Monument, 1905-1917 (1926), A. A. Krein's Mourning Ode to Lenin (1926), M. Ippolitov-Ivanov's Hymn to Labor (1927), and N. A. Roslavetz's October (1927). Selected song symphonies of the 1930s include L. K. Knipper's Third and Fourth symphonies (1932-33, 1933-34), K. A. Korchmarev's three Vocal Symphonies (1931-35), A. S. Zhivotov's The West (1932), V. V. Shcherbachev's Fourth Symphony (1932-35), V. Ya. Shebalin's Lenin symphony (1931), V. A. Belyi's March of Hunger (1931), D.M. Kabalevsky's Third Symphony ("Requiem for Lenin," 1933), A. A. Krein's Symphonic Dithyrambus (1932), Y. S. Meitus's Dneprostroi (1929-32), L. A. Polovinkin's Red Army Symphony (1933), and A. M. Veprik's Funeral Song (1932).

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merits of song symphonism and related programmatic works. By incorporating leninist principles of *massnost* ("massness," or mass character) into a genre long associated with the bourgeois classes, Ryzhkin said, Soviet composers had created a "Soviet-democratic symphonism," one that is accessible to the masses. The song symphonism that Ryzhkin and Ostretsov advocated, of course, relates directly to the sort of illustrative music preferred by RAPM during the proletarian episode. Both Ryzhkin and Ostretsov cited Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies as excellent examples of the Soviet song-symphonic genre, despite their rejection of the modernism displayed by these works. In advocating song symphonism, Ryzhkin and Ostretsov argued that it should be the leading method for Soviet composers, citing Lev Knipper's Third, Fourth, and Fifth symphonies as models from which Soviet composers should organize their work (technically, Knipper's Fourth is not a song symphony, but they approved of it on the basis of its detailed program).[39] According to the featured speakers, the inclusion of mass songs, solo songs, and choral music were necessary for Soviet symphonists to reach a broader audience. In addition to song symphonies, Ryzhkin also encouraged composers to concentrate on developing what he called *bytovaya simfonia* (the everyday-life symphony), a genre that reflects "the best features of our life." (*otrazhayushchie luchshie*

[39] Knipper's Third Symphony ("Far Eastern Symphony," 1932-33) is scored for symphony orchestra, military band, vocal soloists, chorus, and accordion. Knipper's Fourth Symphony ("Poem about the Fighting Komsomol," 1933-34) is scored for symphony orchestra and multiple male choruses. After his purely instrumental Fifth Symphony ("Lyric Poem," 1935), Knipper returned to the song-symphonic genre for the last time in his Sixth Symphony (1936).

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storony nashevo byta).[40]

Despite the strong support for song symphonies on behalf of party activists and critics within the Union of Soviet Composers, a number of composers and critics voiced displeasure at the overabundance of song symphonies in contemporary music. Sollertinsky rejected the idea that Soviet song symphonism represented anything new or revolutionary, citing the combination of vocal and orchestral resources in music stretching back to the seventeenth century. Shostakovich, Shebalin, Sollertinsky, and Kabalevsky argued that the overemphasis on the Soviet song-symphonic genre had led to symphonic works that were lower in quality compared to western symphonies. Therefore, they rejected the notion that song symphonism should be deemed the leading approach for Soviet symphonists. They complained that the combination of symphonic and vocal components in song-symphonic works damaged the "purity" of symphonic language. Many composers and critics, too, disputed the featured speakers' notion that Knipper's symphonies should be emulated by other symphonists; Shostakovich was particularly outspoken on this point. In elaborating on Shostakovich's remarks, Shebalin criticized Knipper's work for its stylistic diversity, use of clichés, and carelessness in composition. Even several supporters of the party line refused to endorse the featured speakers' contention that Knipper's song symphonies should serve as models for other composers to follow. Georgi Khubov, for example, pointed out that Knipper's Fourth

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[40] "Diskussia o simfonizme," Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3: 102. Ryzhkin here quotes the words of A. Avidenko, a writer who addressed the 1934 Writers Congress. Ryzhkin's idea of the "everyday-life symphony" stems directly from Soviet literature of the period--classical in approach, but incorporating themes of "everyday" Soviet life.

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Symphony lacked symphonic development and profundity. Victor Belyi, also a supporter of Soviet themes and song symphonism, complained about the *rasnostilnost i eklektichnost* ("multistyleness" and eclecticism) of Knipper's Third and Fifth symphonies, and pointed to the creative gap between the orchestral and vocal passages--a common criticism of song symphonism in general (and one that has been repeatedly applied to Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies). With the widespread rejection of Soviet song symphonism by most critics and composers at the *diskussia o simfonizme* and elsewhere, it should not be surprising that song symphonies largely disappeared from the Soviet repertory by the end of the 1930s.

"Other" symphonisms: folkloristic symphonies and pure symphonies

I have already noted the many uses of the term *simfonizm* at the 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme*: Soviet symphonism, western bourgeois symphonism, song symphonism, and so forth. Delegates spoke of many other types of symphonism as well, many of which elaborated on the conventional division of program music and absolute (or pure) music.[41] I.I. Ryzhkin, in his historical survey of symphonism, divided symphonic music into two main types: "subject-narrative symphonism" (the programmatic symphonism of the late-

[41] Among the types of symphonism mentioned at the *diskussia*: western bourgeois symphonism, program symphonism, pure symphonism, subjective symphonism, objective symphonism, subject-narrative symphonism (also called subject-historical symphonism), subject-logical symphonism, descriptive symphonism, decorative-ornamental symphonism, ideo-emotional symphonism, folkloristic symphonism, everyday-life symphonism, demagogic symphonism, democratic symphonism, thematic symphonism, lyrical symphonism, non-symphonic symphonism, and adventure-novel symphonism (!).

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nineteenth century, which he also called "subject-historical" symphonism), and "subject-logical symphonism" (the symphonism of what he called purely musical ideas, characteristic of the Viennese masters). Ryzhkin expressed his preference for the subject-narrative type because it narrates a program, making it easier for general audiences to follow. He further subdivided the subject-narrative type into "song symphonism" and "everyday-life" symphonism. After surveying a long list of song symphonies and everyday-life symphonies in his report, Ryzhkin cited symphonies by Shebalin, Popov, and Myaskovsky--with their use of classical models and developmental complexity--as examples of contemporary subject-logical symphonism. Ryzhkin's typology of symphonism, of course, left much to be desired in terms of a historical model of symphonic music, and it failed to account for other major trends in Soviet music--including the imitation of folk culture, or so-called "folkloristic symphonies." Many Soviet composers of the 1930s, especially those from the union republics, incorporated nationalistic and folkloristic materials in their symphonies.[42] Many folkloristic symphonies placed modally inflected melodies and harmonies within a colorful symphonic medium reminiscent of the Mighty Handful. Braudo, as noted earlier, wanted composers to use more folk materials in developing Soviet symphonism, and lamented

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[42] M. Ippolitov-Ivanov's Turkish Fragments (1930), On the Steps of Turkmenistan (1934), and Musical Pictures of Uzbekistan (1934), S. N. Vasilenko's Turkmenian Pictures (1931), and the orchestral suite Soviet East (1932), M. Shteinberg's Fourth Symphony (Turk-Sib, 1933), N. I. Rakov's Mari Suite (1931), B. Shekhter's Turkmenia (1932). Other Soviet composers in the 1930s who explored folk idioms in their orchestral music included Kara Karaev of Azerbaijan, Fikret Amirov of Georgia, Edward Mirzoyan of Armenia, Aram Khachaturian (an Armenian born in Georgia), and Konstantin Dankevich of Ukraine.

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the fact that Soviet musicians knew very little about the music of the so-called brotherly republics.

On the issue of so-called pure symphonism and its role in Soviet music, debate at the *diskussia* centered on the work of Nikolai Myaskovsky, perhaps the most respected Russian symphonist of the early twentieth century. Several critics noted that Myaskovsky had made the switch from pure symphonies to programmatic symphonies as part of his "creative restructuring," citing his Twelfth Symphony ("Kolkhoz"). Completed in 1932, Myaskovsky's Twelfth supposedly depicts life in a Russian village before, during, and after collectivization. Many critics, including the featured speakers, recommended the Twelfth as a model for young composers to follow, though others objected. Prior to the "Kolkhoz" symphony, Myaskovsky had concentrated his efforts in the production of pure symphonies, prompting several delegates to argue that his earlier symphonies stand at a higher artistic level than the Twelfth. Kabalevsky, for example, said that the Twelfth was simplistic work that pales in comparison to Myaskovsky's great Sixth Symphony (1921-24), whose tragic nature reflected the despair of post-Civil War Russia. Myaskovsky's Sixth Symphony left a deep impression on its listeners in the 1920s, but the work had a somber ending, and for that reason it was gradually removed from the repertory of Soviet orchestras after 1927. In Stalin's Russia, the work was rarely heard.

Kabalevsky further complained that critics' praise of Myaskovsky's Twelfth Symphony showed that they cared too much about "creative restructuring" (i.e., turning toward the exclusive use of Soviet themes) and failed to recognize the value of pure

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symphonies. In response, he added, composers are simply attaching an ideologically correct title to a pure symphony for mere political gain--the music and title bear little relation to one another. In an earlier article for Sovetskaya muzyka, Kabalevsky argued that the distrust of purely instrumental music was a remnant of RAPM policies.[43] His defense of pure, non-topical Soviet symphonies at the *diskussia* was echoed by a number of delegates, including Shostakovich, Sollertinsky, and Shebalin. Sollertinsky spoke highly of several Soviet composers--Popov, Shcherbachev, Shebalin, Timofeev, and Pashchenko--whose pure symphonies were deliberately ignored by critics. To Sollertinsky's list, Braudo also added Polovinkin and Krein, as well as composers in Ukraine and Tbilisi (but no names were given). As mentioned earlier, Sollertinsky and Braudo hinted that Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony might be a purely instrumental, non-topical symphony that would alter the direction of Soviet symphonism--thus offering a direct challenge to critics. For his part, Shostakovich agreed in principle with Ryzhkin's assertion that Soviet composers should write everyday-life symphonies and works for the mass repertory, but he added that Soviet composers should also turn their attention to symphonic works of a *lyrical type*: "how wonderful it would be to write such a symphony."[44] Though Shostakovich did not directly address his plans for the Fourth Symphony at the *diskussia*, he spoke about them two months later in an article for Izvestia (see Chapter Six) that in effect confirmed the views of his colleagues

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[43] Dmitri Kabalevsky, "O sovetskoi tematike, stile, i muzykalnoi kritike" (On Soviet themes, style, and music criticism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1934): 3-5.

[44] Shostakovich, "Vystuplenie," 33. See Appendix 00.

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Sollertinsky and Braudo.

Soviet composers and the problem of western symphonism

If "Soviet symphonism" is to be based on the idea of a unique Soviet symphonic practice, distinguishable from all other symphonic practices, what should be its relation to western symphonism? This question was an important point of debate throughout the 1930s. Most critics, like the featured speakers, felt that Soviet composers should write music that runs counter to western symphonism. Others, like Shostakovich and his supporters, called for closer creative ties between Soviet and western practices, arguing that Soviet composers should learn from western styles (both past and present). The question of western versus Soviet symphonism also extended to problems of the symphonic heritage of the West. Though the featured speakers expressed admiration for the craftsmanship of the Viennese masters (Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven), they rejected the ideological values it supposedly embodied. Thus critics demanded that Soviet composers not imitate what they called the neoclassical tendencies of contemporary western composers. Many delegates interpreted the so-called "decline" or "crisis" of contemporary western symphonism as a reflection of the social, political, and moral decay in the West. Examples of this decline, according to Ostretsov, included Milhaud's "colonial exoticism," Honegger's celebration of "mystical cult of the machine," Schoenberg's "ultra avant-gardism," Strauss's "banal-pathetic eccentricities," and Weill's

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"ideological program of lumpenproletariat nihilism."[45]

K. A. Kuznetsov, in his paper on western contemporary symphonism, reported that western symphonists were merely infatuated with the past, resulting in an increased interest in music of the Classical period, contemporary composers of the older generation (Sibelius and Jánaček), and folk music. At the same time, he said, western composers have rejected exaggerated modernism and moved toward a greater simplicity of musical language. With all these factors in mind, Kuznetsov continued, one might think that western symphonism could flourish. But an increase in the production of theater, film, and ballet music in capitalist countries, he said, had led to a decrease in the number of symphonies *per se*. Quoting Honegger, Kuznetsov said that the decline in pure symphonism lowered the quality of contemporary western music and reduced the composer's role in society to one of a sonic "wallpaperer."[46] He further claimed that this trend was particularly evident in France (Honegger, Milhaud, Stravinsky) and concluded that symphonic music was no longer a priority in America and England--mostly due to a lack of interest by concert institutions, audiences, and composers.

Despite the potential political repercussions, a number of delegates among the musical intelligentsia (Shostakovich, Shebalin, Sollertinsky) strongly challenged the negative, one-sided discussion of western symphonism given by the main speakers. In raising the quality of Soviet music, Shostakovich and Sollertinsky argued, it was

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[45] A. A. Ostretsov, "Sovetskoe simfonicheskoe tvorchestvo" (Soviet symphonic creativity), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1935): 3-4.

[46] Kuznetsov, "O sovremennom simfonizme na Zapade," 24.

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important to learn about successes in the field of western symphonism--both past and present. The Sollertinsky-Shostakovich-Shebalin faction challenged critics to broaden their knowledge of past symphonists beyond the limits of Beethoven, Chaikovsky, and Liszt. Shebalin wanted to hear more discussion about Mahler and Bruckner; Sollertinsky concurred, adding Brahms and Sibelius to the list. Sollertinsky and Shostakovich also lamented Soviet critics' lack of knowledge about contemporary western symphonism, singling out Berg as the most brilliant representative of the western compositional intelligentsia and calling for more performances of music by Hindemith, Stravinsky, and other contemporary western composers. Shostakovich further proposed that the Union of Soviet Composers should organize a seminar on the music of Berg, Weill, and other leading contemporary composers of the West--a risky proposition in view of the increasing xenophobia in Soviet Russia during the mid 1930s.

Formalism and epigonism

At the *diskussia* and elsewhere in the press, Soviet music critics warned composers to avoid two creative tendencies that were supposedly threatening the health of Soviet music: formalism and epigonism. At the *diskussia*, delegates on all sides were united in distancing themselves from these creative sins. Even those who largely dissented from the party line were careful to recite the mantra denouncing formalism and epigonism. Still, there was no agreement as to what either term actually meant. (How could there be?) Epigonism vaguely denoted any slavish adherence to an idea, model, approach, or style. Formalism basically meant adherence to western-style modernism, a

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highly individualistic style, a reliance on classical forms, or an absense of ideological content. In Chapter Three, we explored how formalism entered the Soviet lexicon as a term of derision in the early 1920s, noting its use throughout the history of the Soviet Union as a term of abuse against members of the creative intelligentsia who did not conform to Soviet-style conservative artistic values.

Extremely vague formulations of formalism had circulated in the Soviet press since the mid 1920s. During the 1930s and 1940s, any work of music (or any artist) that did not uphold ideological principles acceptable to the Party (i.e., accessible music for the masses) was vulnerable to the accusation of formalism. Despite the universal condemnation of both epigonism and formalism, no one formulated a precise definition of either term, nor had clear directives been made on how composers and critics were to avoid these creative sins. In the face of such vagueness and confusion, a number of composers turned the debate on formalism and epigonism into a referendum on the quality of Soviet music criticism. Shostakovich spoke on the issue of formalism, countering claims by critics that purely instrumental music is formalistic:

> It is difficult for me to speak out in this respect using definite thought, since this issue [formalism] is complicated and unclear to me. For a time it was too simple: add some verses [to your music], that's content; no text--that's formalism. Now they are beginning to talk seriously about it being a question not of text, but of music. I repeat: the issue is too complicated, and it is impossible to give recipes for writing music with content.[47]

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[47] Shostakovich, "Vystuplenie," 31-32. "Takim obrazom, mne trudno vyskazyvat na etot schet opredelennye mysli, tak kak etot vopros dlya menya slozhen i neyasen. Bylo vremya, kogda on silno uproshchalsya. Zapishesh stikh, kak budto, vot tebe i soderzhanie, ne zapishesh--vot tebe i formalizm. Teper stali govorit seriezno, chto delo ne v odnikh stikhakh, no i v muzyke, no, povtoryayu, vopros etot slishkom slozhen, i

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Shostakovich, like his supporters at the *diskussia* (Shebalin, Kabalevsky, Sollertinsky, Braudo, and Litinsky), recognized that the overemphasis on vague terms such as formalism and epigonism had led the overuse of clichés, slogans, and formulas in Soviet music criticism. The use of clichés and vulgar slogans, they maintained, showed how ignorant critics were about the creative issues that composers faced. Sollertinsky, himself a critic, claimed that real epigonism was rife among critics, resulting in the deplorable state of music criticism. Critics, he said, were often afraid to give their own opinions and simply copied what the leading critics said. To demonstrate his point, Sollertinsky read excerpts from five reviews of Shostakovich's Cello Sonata, op. 40 (1934), all of which are nearly exact copies of one another.

Without resorting to the accusation of epigonism, the composer Litinsky also complained about the low standards in the field of music criticism. Critics simply do not work hard enough to understand contemporary music, he argued, and often rush to judgement about new works with superficial and unintelligible assessments. Litinsky was speaking here from personal experience; in 1934 he was accused of formalism in a stinging attack by Ostretsov published in Sovetskaya muzyka.[48] At the *diskussia*, too, Litinsky boldly accused Sovetskaya muzyka of suppressing articles of a high quality in favor of lower quality articles that reflected the editors' positions. Litinsky also decried

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retseptov, kak pisat soderzhatelnuyu muzyku, dat nelzya."

[48] A. A. Ostretsov, "Protiv formalizma v muzyke" (Against formalism in music), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1934): 6-26.

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the reception that Shostakovich's music was receiving in the press, where terms such as formalism and epigonism were being used uncritically. It is nearly impossible for critics to come up with definitions of formalism and epigonism, Litinsky added, because such creative errors were different for each composer.

Conclusion: the "results" of the diskussia o simfonizme

The discussion on symphonism ended on 6 February 1935 with a summary-conclusion by N. I. Chelyapov, the first chairman of the Union of Soviet Composers. Chelyapov, an obscure lawyer with no prior musical experience, served as the chair of the USC from its inception in January 1933 until 1937, when he was purged from his position and disappeared in the Great Terror.[49] As chair, Chelyapov oversaw the Union's administrative functions and edited its journal Sovetskaya muzyka. In addition, he wrote numerous editorials on ideological issues and presided over Union meetings. Although one might expect Chelyapov's conclusions about the *diskussia o simfonizme* to represent an official party position, his comments exhibited a surprisingly tolerant view toward non-party ideas--an approach that strayed from the increasingly hard line taken by the Party on all artistic matters in 1935.[50] Despite complaints to the contrary, Chelyapov cheerfully concluded that the discussion was a successful endeavor because a number of important questions were addressed. Many of his ideas were predictably bureaucratic,

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[49] Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," in The Cultural Front (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), 196. For a description of Chelyapov's work as the USC chair, M. Grinberg, "V Puti" (On the path), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 12 (1966): 5-6.

[50] "Diskussia o simfonizme," Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1935): 103-106.

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especially with respect to the issue of "creative restructuring" and the formation of Soviet symphonism. We encounter statements such as: "Questions about *perestroika* must be set broadly and sharply. It is necessary to pay attention to this issue, so that composers are trained to create a new, artistically socialized genre, . . . reforging it in the furnace of real Soviet reality."[51] The early stages of Soviet symphonism, he remarked, were necessarily linked to the use of both Soviet and nationalistic themes. In order for Soviet symphonism to complete its final stage, he said, composers must struggle for artistic excellence and against formalism and epigonism. This process required the assistance of critics, whom Chelyapov accused of both knowing little about Soviet musical practice and not engaging in "proper criticism" (*na pravilnuyu kritiku nikto ne obiditsya*).[52] To better improve the formation of Soviet symphonism, Chelyapov continued, composers and critics alike must become better acquainted not only with Soviet music, but also with western music--a surprising view coming from a party official. His view toward western music showed a rather conciliatory line toward the intelligentsia, and a rebuff of those who adopted a hard line against artistic cooperation with the West. Nonetheless, Chelyapov said that the crisis in the West had created an atmosphere in which artistic creativity had completely vanished. Still, the conciliatory attitude later proved to be a costly misstep for Chelyapov personally and the Union of Soviet Composers as a whole.

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[51] Ibid., 105. "Vopros o perestroike nado stavit shire i rezche. Nado obratit vnimanie na to, chtoby kompozitor byl tekhnicheski, ideino i politicheski podgotovlen k sozdaniyu novovo khudozhestvenno obobshchayushchevo zhanra, . . . perekovaz evo v gornile realnoi sovetskoi deistvitelnosti."

[52] Ibid., 105.

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At a time when the Party demanded both a greater unity of purpose among the creative intelligentsia and the application of socialist realism in all artistic disciplines, party officials could not have been pleased by the lack of real results of the *diskussia o simfonizme*: the idea of socialist realism came up very rarely (even in the official reports given by featured, party-approved speakers), non-party opinions were expressed, little unity was shown among critics and composers, and many leading figures of the Union were calling for closer contact with the West. In comparison with other creative fields, dissension seemed rife within the USC. Delegates at the February 1935 *diskussia*, composers and critics alike, repeatedly expressed great dissatisfaction with the organization of the discussion; many argued that the idea of Soviet symphonism was a topic simply too large and vague on which to hold a single meeting. They challenged the USC to hold conferences on narrower topics such as works of a selected composer (or selected composers), the formation of a "concrete" musical language, the use of folk music, and the significance of western symphonism for the development of Soviet symphonism. Unlike the Union of Soviet Writers at their famous 1934 Congress, the Union of Soviet Composers failed to pass any resolutions on creative questions at this or any other meeting--until February 1936, when the USC officially supported Pravda's censure of Dmitri Shostakovich.

In 1935, as the Great Purges gained steam, the Party launched a new campaign to eliminate the "reconciliation line" (i.e., tolerance toward the intelligentsia, cooperation

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with the West) within the party hierarchy, intelligentsia, military, and general public.[53] At this time, too, accusations of formalism were beginning fill the newspapers and specialized press. The fact that party activists looked with disfavor at the slow pace at which Soviet symphonists embraced socialist realism is demonstrated by the harassment of Gavriil Popov following the premiere of his First Symphony in May 1935. The campaign of harassment against intellectuals and artists accelerated on 17 January 1936, when a powerful All-Union Committee for Art Affairs was legislated into existence, headed by Platon Khersentsev, a former supporter of militant proletarian culture.[54] Within two weeks of the committee's establishment, harsh articles appeared in Pravda and other leading organs in the press against leading members of the creative intelligentsia. In late January and early February 1936, thirty year-old Dmitri Shostakovich, the most visible and successful Soviet composer of his generation, was publicly vilified in two articles published in Pravda. It is widely acknowledged that Shostakovich was publicly censured by the Communist Party and the Union of Soviet Composers in 1936 for the complex style of his opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk and the lack of folk materials in his ballet Bright Stream. But as we will see in the next chapter, Shostakovich's political troubles at this time were also a consequence of his public outspokenness over questions of creative autonomy for Soviet artists, state control of the arts, and the incorporation of socialist realist principles in music.

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[53] On Stalin's elimination of the "reconciliation line" from party politics in the mid 1930s, see Chapters Eleven through Fourteen of Robert C. Tucker, Stalin in Power (New York: W.W. Norton, 1990), 238-365.

[54] Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 198.

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Chapter Six
The Lady Macbeth affair (1936): prelude to Terror

The final two chapters of this study examine Dmitri Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, op. 43 (1935-36). The aim of this chapter is to establish a political context from which the Fourth may be better understood. In 1936 Shostakovich's reputation as the Soviet Union's greatest young composer was tarnished by two inflammatory articles in Pravda (28 January and 6 February 1936), the newspaper of the Communist Party's Central Committee.[1] With its uncompromisingly difficult musical language, grotesque march images, episodic form, dance-like passages, and fade-out ending, the Fourth Symphony proves to be a deliberate rebuff of the Party's demand for simple, optimistic propaganda. In composing this remarkably complex symphony, he committed a daring act of political defiance during the early stages of the Great Terror (1936-38), the worst period of political repression in Soviet history.[2]

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[1] "Sumbur vmesto muzyki--ob opere 'Ledi Makbet Mtsenskovo uezda' D. Shostakovicha" (Muddle instead of music), Pravda, 28 January 1936, 3. "Baletnaya falsh--balet 'Svetlyi Ruchei,' libretto F. Lopukhova i A. Piotrovskovo, muzyka D. Shostakovicha. Postanovka Bolshovo Teatra" (Balletic falsity), Pravda, 6 February 1936, 3. For a translation of "Sumbur vmesto muzyki," see Victor Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich: the Life and Background of a Soviet Composer (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1947), 204-207, repr. as "Chaos Instead of Music," in Leo Treitler et al, eds., Strunk's Source Readings in Music History (New York: W. W. Norton: 1997), 1397-99.

[2] Russians refer to this terrible period as *Yezhovshchina* (the Yezhov phenomenon), after N.I. Yezhov, who from September 1936 until November 1938 served as director of NKVD, the state security organ in charge of purge activities. The term Great Terror was coined by Robert Conquest in his 1968 book The Great Terror, since revised as The Great Terror: A Reassessment (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). In deference to Conquest and others who use the term Great Terror (or simply Terror) to denote a specific period in history, I retain its capitalization throughout this study.

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Pravda's negative review of Shostakovich's wildly successful opera Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk, op. 29 (1930-32), had an immediate and lasting effect on Soviet music. The attack on Shostakovich was a calculated move to discipline the field of music as a whole by unleashing a campaign of slander against its most famous and politically vulnerable member. After all, he held a number of non-party views: criticizing the idea of socialist realism as early as 1933, arguing in favor of creative freedom for Soviet artists, and rejecting critics' demand that composers write program music with Soviet themes. Through its press and organizational structures, the Party had been demanding conformity from Soviet artists since the 1932 *perestroika*, which liquidated all independent creative societies and established a single, Party-directed union for each artistic discipline. Though the Union of Soviet Composers had largely shielded Shostakovich from his critics from 1933 until 1936, it quickly fell in line behind the Party's position in the wake of the Pravda editorials.

In the previous chapter, we saw how Lady Macbeth made a dramatic impact on critics and audiences after its premiere in January 1934. For the next two years, it received numerous performances worldwide. But the official censure of Lady Macbeth led to a series of devastating events for the composer: "creative discussions" at which he was repeatedly denounced as a formalist, a campaign of slander in the press, and the cancellation of the premiere of his Fourth Symphony. In the face of harsh criticism by colleagues and threats of political violence by party activists, he refused either to speak publicly or to acknowledge errors in judgement. Galina Vishnevskaya writes:

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> It was a heroic silence, a symbol of disloyalty and resistance to the regime. And very few would have been able to do as he did. Shostakovich kept quiet and to himself, not speaking his mind until two years later. He finally made his statement on November 21, 1937, in Philharmonic Hall in Leningrad with his Fifth Symphony, that extraordinary masterpiece, which, as our Dmitri Dmitrievich told us, was autobiographical.[3]

But Shostakovich was indeed willing and prepared to speak his mind long before November 1937. With his Fourth Symphony, perhaps even more than the Fifth, Shostakovich bravely answered his critics by rejecting socialist realism.

Shostakovich had planned to write a Fourth Symphony as early as 1932, announcing to the world on several occasions, perhaps obligingly, that he wished to write symphonies based on political themes. After abandoning a symphony entitled "From Karl Marx Until Our Own Time" in late 1932,[4] he waited until 1934 before taking up a new symphonic work, on the theme of the Kronstadt uprising of 1905. A note in the June 1934 issue of Sovetskaya muzyka announced that Shostakovich is finally "getting down to writing his Fourth,"[5] but over the next year he gave conflicting accounts on the content and progress of his new symphony.[6] By 1935 he turned his attention to writing a purely

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[3] Galina Vishnevskaya, Galina: A Russian Story (London: Sceptre, 1986), 223-24.

[4] Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), 75-76.

[5] Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 6 (1934): 65

[6] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Schastie poznania" (Joy of knowledge), Sovetskoye iskusstvo, 5 November 1934, quoted in editor's note to D. Shostakovich, Sobranie sochinenii (Collected Works), vol. 2 (Moscow: Muzyka, 1982); Dmitri Shostakovich, "Budem trubachami velikoi epokhi" (We must herald a great epoch), Leningradskaya Pravda, 28 December 1934, quoted in Dmitri Shostakovich, Dmitry Shostakovich: About Himself and His Times, trans. Angus and Neilian Roxburgh (Moscow: Progress

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instrumental, nonprogrammatic symphony. In January 1935 he wrote, "I hope that with the assistance of the community, especially the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers, I will be able to concentrate on my main task--working on an opera (the second in a tetralogy) and my Fourth Symphony."[7] The Fourth became a topic of discussion at the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme* in Moscow, as shown by comments made by E. M. Braudo and Ivan Sollertinsky (see pp. 000-000). At the *diskussia*, too, Shostakovich made a number of controversial remarks--rejecting critics' contention that Soviet symphonism must necessarily reflect Soviet themes, disputing their definition of formalism, and arguing in favor of close contact with western compositional trends.

The Fourth Symphony brought these dissenting ideas to life. For this reason perhaps, Shostakovich continued to be guarded about his plans for the Fourth Symphony, both at the February *diskussia* and in an interview published in late March 1935.[8] But in an article published in early April Shostakovich made a dramatic and decisive announcement:

> I am presently standing at the beginning of the Fourth Symphony, which will be the credo of my musical work. . . . I have rejected all previous musical material

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Publishers, 1980), 50.

[7] Dmitri Shostakovich, "God posle 'Ledi Makbet'" (A year after Lady Macbeth), Krasnaya gazeta, 14 January 1935, quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2. "Hadeyus, chto s pomoshchyu obshchestvennosti i v pervuyu ochered leningradskovo Soyuza sovetskikh kompozitorov ya smogu sosredotochitsya na osnovnoi zadache--rabote nad operoi (vtoraya iz tetralogii) i nad Chetvertoi simfoniei."

[8] Dmitri Shostakovich, "D.D. Shostakovich o cvoem tvorchestve" (About his creativity), Sovetskoe iskusstvo, 29 March 1935, quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2.

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> for this work. The symphony will be written anew. Because this is an extraordinarily complicated and crucial task for me, I first want to write some works in a chamber and instrumental style. . . . The main task is to find my own musical idiom, one that is simple and expressive. Struggling toward simplicity is sometimes understood somewhat superficially. Often "simplicity" turns into epigonism. But to express oneself in a simple way does not mean using language that was used fifty or one-hundred years ago. This is precisely the mistake made by many composers who are afraid of reproaches for formalism. Formalism and eclecticism are the worst enemies of Soviet musical culture.[9]

It would be easy to conclude that Shostakovich's dutiful comment denouncing formalism and eclecticism is a function of the mask of loyalty he was increasingly forced to wear. But I believe that he had a far different conception of formalism and eclecticism than most members of the Union of Soviet Composers, especially critics. While critics used the term eclecticism to denote ideologically unsound music that takes its inspiration from a number of creative sources, instead of the themes prescribed by socialist realism, Shostakovich used it in a far different way. At the *diskussia o simfonizme*, he complained that the eclecticism of the Soviet song symphony--with its suite-like hodgepodge of orchestral music, choral songs, solo songs, military bands, and the like--

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[9] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Moi tvorcheskii put" (My creative path), Izvestia, 3 April 1935, quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2. Despite the increasingly xenophobic, antiwestern political environment in Soviet Russia during the 1930s, Shostakovich speaks favorably of western modernists in this article (e.g., Hindemith, Krenek, Stravinsky, Berg). "V nastoyashchee vremya ya vplotnuyu podoshel k napisaniyu Chetvertoi simfonii, kotoraya budet svoevo roda credo moei tvorcheskoi raboty. Kakie osnovnye zadachi ya stavlyu sebe v nastoyashchee vremya? . . . Seichas peredo mnoi stoit osnovnaya zadacha: naiti sobstvennyi, prostoi i vyrazitelnyi muzykalnyi yazyk. Inogda borba za prostoi yazyk ponimaetsya neskolko poverkhnostno. Chasto 'prostota' perekhodit v epigonstvo. No govorit prosto--eto ne znachi govorit tak, kak govorili 50-100 let tomu nazad. Eto oshibka, v kotoruyu vpadayut mnogie kompozitory, boyas uprekov v formalizme. I formalizm i epigonstvo--zleishie vragi sovetskoi muzykalnoi kultury."

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damaged the purity of symphonic music.

In my view Shostakovich saw "formalism" for what it was: a catch-all term of denunciation to slander artists and works that did not reflect the Party's demand for simplicity. Even though he conveniently mouthed the proper platitudes, we can see a dissenting view peeking through his speech at the *diskussia* and statements he made to the press. In the same article from April 1935 quoted above, for example, he vigorously protested the overuse of formalism as a term of abuse:

> In the past, I have been subjected to powerful attacks from critics, mainly for formalism. I did not accept those reproaches then, nor do I accept them now. I have never been a formalist, and I shall never be one. To defame any work as formalist on the grounds that the idiom of that composition is complex and sometimes not immediately understandable, is to be unconscionably frivolous.[10]

Shostakovich's comments are remarkable because the charge of formalism lies at the heart of the Party's attempt to exact conformity among Soviet artists; "formalism" became the leading term of abuse during the Party-directed cultural purges of the late 1930s and late 1940s. Shostakovich's outspokenness on the issue of formalism during the mid 1930s contributed to his official rebuke at the start of the Terror. In order to further draw a connection between Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony and the political environment in Russia, I now turn to the terrible events of the Great Terror. Afterwards, I discuss Pravda's hostile reviews of Shostakovich's music, analyze the impact of the Lady Macbeth affair, and place the ordeal in the broader context of antiformalism during the Terror. By surveying how the Lady Macbeth affair changed the political landscape

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[10] Shostakovich, "Moi tvorcheskii put," quoted in Vishnevskaya, Galina, 220.

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for Soviet musicians, especially Shostakovich, I set the stage for Chapter Seven, where I argue that the Fourth Symphony was a deliberate (and dangerous) repudiation of the Party's repressive policies.

Life, Terror, and Yezhovshchina

The Great Terror was a time of broad-based political horror and repression carried out by the Soviet regime from 1936 until 1939. Intraparty purges of 1935-36 led to thousands of arrests, prompting considerable resistance to purges at the local level, where officials sometimes refused to sanction arrests of so-called enemies. Resistance to the purges was occasionally conducted out in the open: local officials expressed dismay over losing key appointments, citizens circulated petitions of protest, and distraught family members passed out leaflets on the street. Resistance shown by many party members in the mid 1930s, including those closest to the leader, convinced Stalin and his most loyal followers that a massive anti-Soviet conspiracy existed in the country. In response to the continued opposition, Stalin ordered a broader, more ruthless purge that would reach into every level of Soviet society. Despite access to recently-opened party and government archives, or perhaps because of it, historians hold different opinions concerning the Terror--its sources, the toll on the country, the extent to which it affected people's lives, the number of citizens affected, and accountability for political crimes.[11]

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[11] Robert W. Thurston, Life and Terror in Stalin's Russia, 1934-1941 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996); Robert C. Tucker, Stalin in Power - The Revolution From Above, 1928-1941 (New York: W. W. Norton, 1990); and Robert Conquest, The Great Terror: A Reassessment. For a post-Soviet Russian view of the Terror, see O. V. Khlevniuk, 1937-i: Stalin, NKVD i sovetskoe obshchestvo (Stalin, NKVD, and Soviet

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Most historians, like Robert Tucker and Robert Conquest, place blame for the Terror directly on Stalin and his immediate entourage, arguing that they carefully prepared and carried out the purges with the aid of police, courts, and informants. But Robert Thurston recently contends that Stalin and his closest advisers did not engineer the Terror process as commonly believed. More often than not, he claims, they reacted to events and acted on information they received from below. Thurston places accountability for the Terror on Stalin, too, but he also implicates broader segments of the population, including the police, secret police, the courts, and informants from the general population.

Like earlier periods of harsh repression in Soviet Russia--such as the Civil War (1918-21) and the First Five-Year Plan (1928-32)--the Great Terror was largely directed at repressing people already stigmatized as enemies of the Revolution, including former and current oppositionists, kulaks, nationalists, criminals, supporters of the former regime, old Bolsheviks, church officials, the intelligentsia, and the middle class. Stalin enlisted the country's help to rid itself of his opponents and other perceived enemies, capitalizing on the widespread belief that enemies, conspiracies, terrorism, and sabotage were pervasive in Soviet society. Political repression during the mid 1930s gradually trickled down from the party elite to encompass rank-and-file communists and suspect intellectuals in 1935-36. By mid 1937 the Terror enveloped the non-communist majority. Like all members of the intelligentsia, Shostakovich, his family, friends, and

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society in 1937) (Moscow: Russian Press Service, 1992), and Amy Knight's review of Khlevniuk in Slavic Review 54 (1995): 1099-1100.

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colleagues were victims of the Great Terror. Shostakovich himself was subject to public humiliation following the Pravda editorials in early 1936, and his sister, father-in-law, mother-in-law, and uncle were arrested and imprisoned during the late 1930s. During the Terror, countless millions of Soviet citizens from all walks of life suffered threats, blackmail, denunciations, false accusations, exile, arrest, murder, torture, execution, starvation, humiliation, and other acts of repression. Historians agree that millions were repressed, but figures vary widely, due in part to problems of record keeping.

Despite Stalin's defeat of oppositionists in the late 1920s, and the growing cult of personality surrounding himself as *vozhd*, disaffection with his leadership was rife in the country by 1933. The disaster of the First Five-Year Plan overshadowed whatever positive effects the Soviet Union achieved in accelerating the pace of industrial, agricultural, and social reforms. A new wave of opposition to Stalin's rule emerged at the Seventeenth Party Congress (January-February 1934), and many disaffected communists tapped Sergei Kirov, a popular Politburo member, to be a possible replacement for Stalin as the Party's General Secretary. When the vote for the Party's General Secretary was taken, Stalin came in second place--behind Kirov. The vote was suppressed behind the scenes and Stalin managed to come out on top, with Kirov resuming his post as party chief in Leningrad, away from the central authority of the Kremlin.[12] In late 1934, with an eye toward purging opponents, Stalin signed new criminal codes that strengthened the police, security agencies, and courts in prosecuting so-called terrorist and treasonous acts.

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[12] On the Seventeenth Party Congress, see Tucker, Stalin in Power, 238-68.

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On 1 December 1934, Kirov was assassinated in Leningrad, in an act widely believed to have been orchestrated by Stalin.[13] The assassination served as a pretext for widespread political violence against oppositionists and free-thinking intellectuals. Within weeks of his murder, thousands were arrested and imprisoned without due process as accomplices in Kirov's death and other alleged counterrevolutionary activities. Over the next four years, Conquest writes, "the most prominent political leaders of the Revolution were shot for direct responsibility for the assassination, and literally millions of others went to their deaths for complicity in one or another part of the vast conspiracy which allegedly lay behind it."[14] Still, according to Thurston, the repression was largely limited to party members and intellectuals in 1935: "Nothing in the press, the major speeches of the day, the debates over judicial policy, or the overall atmosphere of 1934-35 suggested that the regime intended to repress anyone but a relatively small number of terrorists and former oppositionists."[15] As prosecutors in Moscow convicted dozens of prominent party officials by mid 1935 for allegedly operating terrorist "centers," the Party stepped up its program of checking the credentials of each party member; any reference to illegal or oppositionist activity led to expulsion, arrest, imprisonment, or execution. The party purges of 1935-36 sent the first massive wave of prisoners to Siberian prison camps (called Gulag), turning them into places not only for common

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[13] For a detailed analysis, see Robert Conquest, Stalin and the Kirov Murder (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

[14] Conquest, The Great Terror, 37.

[15] Thurston, Life and Terror, 23.

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criminals, but also party officials, military officers, writers, industrial managers, collective farm chairs, and other purge victims. At the same time, new and opportunistic party members were recruited, securing Stalin an even more devoted party apparatus.

In 1936 reports of arrests filled the newspapers, and the Party intensified its campaign to silence debate and dissent among the intelligentsia by purging non-party influences in all fields of intellectual activity. The pressure intensified against the intelligentsia in 1936, when leading writers, artists, historians, scientists, and other intellectuals were censured and began to disappear. The death of Maksim Gorky in June 1936, after months of house arrest, was a blow to the intelligentsia, because the popular writer actively spoke out against state terror and often defended harassed intellectuals, including Shostakovich. Though never arrested, Shostakovich feared arrest in 1936 during the Lady Macbeth affair, and the following year, after the arrest and execution of his friend and political patron, Mikhail Tukhachevsky. A number of Shostakovich's friends and family were arrested during the Terror; his longtime mentor and friend, Vsevolod Meyerhold, was executed in prison in 1939.

The number of political arrests and trials--some secret, others public--increased dramatically in 1936, the year of the Lady Macbeth affair and Fourth Symphony. Fueled by accusations of alleged conspiracies against Stalin, widespread purges took place in the vast network of party organizations and government agencies. Local officials feared losing key people to the purges and dragged their feet on rooting out so-called enemies of the people, creating further suspicion in Moscow. This dynamic stepped up the level of Terror even further. Evidence against the accused was often fabricated, and confessions

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exacted under torture or other acts of coercion (threats against family, friends, and associates). Among the series of well-publicized show trials in Moscow, the August 1936 trial of the so-called "trotskyite-zinovievite terrorist center" was the first to mark a sharp deterioration in the political atmosphere for the country as a whole. This trial featured seventeen high-ranking oppositionists (Leon Trotsky, Grigori Zinoviev, Lev Kamenev, among others) who stood accused of treasonous acts, including plots to murder leading figures in the Party. Following the conviction and sentence of the accused (all were shot immediately after the trial, except for Trotsky, who was tried *in absentia*), we see an upsurge in arrests and executions, as well as acts of class warfare that echo similar tactics of the Civil War period, the party leadership struggles of 1924-25, and the period of the First Five-Year Plan: harassment at home, job, and school; accusations of "wrecking" and "counterrevolutionary activities"; concerns over espionage; trials and witchhunts; informing; and denunciations. Editorials and articles in the newspapers sent a clear warning to both the intelligentsia and the middle class that holding conciliatory attitudes toward enemies of the people and western values would lead to grave reprisals. Such sentiments led to an avalanche of denunciations against intellectuals, who had been already linked historically with so-called class enemies and bourgeois values. Any contact with foreigners was greeted with suspicion.

In the tense and rapidly deteriorating environment of late 1936, artists and intellectuals lost nearly all political support. Works of art, literature, theater, and music by politically suspect artists were increasingly censored by authorities; self-censorship, too, became the norm. Considering the extreme political violence in the country at that

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time, it is almost understandable that officials in the government, Party, and Composers' Union pressured Shostakovich to withdraw his controversial Fourth Symphony in December 1936. By February 1937, in the wake of another major show trial in Moscow, the country was gripped by a pandemic of plots and conspiracy theories. At the Central Committee plenum of February-March 1937, comrades Stalin, Molotov, and Yezhov spoke forcefully on liquidating all so-called trotskyists and other enemies.[16] Stalin declared alarmingly to the plenum that wreckers, spies, murderers, and terrorists had infiltrated all levels of Soviet society, and were conspiring with German, Japanese, and western agents to subvert communism, restore capitalism, and dismember the Soviet Union.[17] Several leading party officials, including Nikolai Bukharin, were formally condemned at the plenum and arrested shortly thereafter. Purge quotas were enacted immediately after the plenum, and the Terror soon enveloped the entire society.

Arrests of upper- and mid-level Russians between March 1937 and 1939, in the words of Conquest, "took on epidemic proportions."[18] It was relatively easy for zealous security organs to convert one "enemy" into hundreds of arrests. The web of Terror reached broader levels of Soviet society in an exponential fashion, touching innocent family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors, students, teachers, fellow officers, and

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[16] Conquest, The Great Terror, 173-81; Tucker, Stalin in Power, 420-30; Thurston, Life and Terror, 43-50.

[17] Josef Stalin, ""On Inadequacies of Party Work and Measures for Liquidating Trotskyists and Other Double-Dealers" (Speech to the Plenum of the Central Committee of the CPSU, 3 March 1937), Pravda, 29 March 1937, quoted in Robert V. Daniels, ed., A Documentary History, 205-08.

[18] Tucker Stalin In Power, 441-42.

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subordinates. Acts of informing and denunciation, common during the Terror, were motivated by widespread beliefs in conspiracies, fear of authorities, torture and coercion, personal dislike, vengeance, ambition and opportunism, and material gain. For voicing unpatriotic sentiment or opposition to the regime of any sort (even jokes), citizens at every level were accused of high treason, arrested, interrogated, imprisoned, and sometimes executed. As the Terror broadened in early 1937, Pravda cynically criticized the practice of indiscriminate denunciation and called for restraint in the expulsion of Party members.[19] Frantic calls in the newspapers to punish so-called enemies intensified in mid 1937, after high-ranking Red Army officers, including Mikhail Tukhachevsky, were arrested, convicted in a show trial, and executed for treason.

Despite the horrible events of the Terror, as Robert Thurston reminds us, people of all types defended those who had fallen under suspicion: "These cases depended on the presence of brave people willing to resist the police. Although defiance was difficult, such incidents could and did take place."[20] By early 1938, during the height of the Terror, Soviet citizens widely protested the abuses of the security forces. According to Thurston, the Party reacted to the swell in criticism by slowing the Terror.[21] On 26 January 1938, Pravda called for the rehabilitation of those unjustly expelled from the

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[19] Ibid., 463.

[20] Thurston, Life and Terror, 97.

[21] Ibid., 107-117. For a selection of letters from this period (citizens' letters of protest, informing, denunciations, among other types of communications with authorities), see Sheila Fitzpatrick, "Supplicants and Citizens: Public Letter-Writing in Soviet Russia in the 1930s," Slavic Review 55 (1996): 78-105.

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Party (nothing, of course, was said of non-party victims); even the infamous State Prosecutor Andrei Vyshinsky spoke out against mass political arrest, torture, and slander. Still, executions continued at a ferocious pace, especially after the last major Moscow show trial in March 1938. This trial of the so-called "bloc of rights and trotskyists" ended with the conviction of Nikolai Bukharin, former NKVD director Genrikh Yagoda, and other former high-ranking party officials for espionage, wrecking, and plotting to murder leading figures of the Revolution (Lenin, Stalin, Kirov, and Gorky). On 17 November 1938, the Central Committee--now purged of all opposition to Stalin--passed a resolution condemning massive and groundless arrests, quotas, and treatment of suspects. The following week, Yezhov was ousted as head of NKVD and arrested several days later (he was shot in 1940). Though the worst of the Terror had abated for the population at large in 1939, repression of suspect citizens continued with full force into the period of the Great Patriotic War.

On the significance of the Lady Macbeth *affair*

Though the Great Terror affected members of the creative intelligentsia with a powerful blow in 1936, its seeds were sown four years earlier with the Central Committee resolution of 23 April 1932 ("On the restructuring of artistic-literary organizations"), a resolution that ensured the Party's control over artistic life. As noted in Chapters Four and Five, the new policy directives were at first hailed as a liberalizing move, because they signalled the Party's rejection of the repressive proletarian episode in Soviet arts. Following *perestroika*, the Party's control over artistic production rested with

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the fact that artists could legally practice their profession only by being a member of newly-established, Party-directed creative unions. In addition, all materials and outlets necessary for artistic expression were in the hands of the state. The "critical section" of each creative union was responsible for politicizing art by commenting on such issues as ideological content and artistic language. In the wake of the stalinist *perestroika*, the Party endorsed socialist realism as the leading method for creative work, guided by the words of the newly-rehabilitated writer Maksim Gorky, whose return from exile in 1931 was a much-celebrated event for the Soviet propaganda machine. Discussion of socialist realism began in earnest in 1933, when congresses and meetings were held in each creative society to debate how to incorporate socialist realism into the various arts. As part of the socialist realist aesthetic, the Party demanded that all creative activity be directed toward a greater propagandistic function, couched in a style accessible to the masses. Musically, socialist realism amounted to nineteenth-century conservatism mixed with optimistic propaganda. Modernistic traits, condemned as "bourgeois formalism," were deemed incompatible with the Soviet paradise envisioned by propagandists. Soviet themes and revolutionary heroism were major components of the stalinist cultural aesthetic and formed the proper basis for Soviet creative inspiration.

The Party publicly expressed its pleasure with the events of the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers (August 1934) with great fanfare, trumpeting the achievements of the Congress in a series of articles in Pravda and other major

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newspapers.[22] Many prominent figures of the Writers Union (party and non-party alike) publicly embraced socialist realism, and the Union as a whole passed resolutions establishing socialist realism as the accepted method of creative activity. But the picture was quite different in the field of music, where several leading figures, including Shostakovich, were far less enthusiastic about socialist realism. The disunity among composers and critics is illustrated by the debates over socialist realism in the first issues of Sovetskaya muzyka, the journal of the newly-formed Union of Soviet Composers. The critic Viktor Gorodinsky, in his essay "On the problem of socialist realism in music," offered unclear guidelines for composers; other union members could not agree on the precise meaning of socialist realism.[23] Shostakovich dismissed Gorodinsky's formulation of socialist realism as "gibberish," prompting a sharp rebuke from the editors of the journal.[24] (The exchange between Shostakovich, Gorodinsky, and the editors of Sovetskaya muzyka is given in Chapter Four.) Most critics and composers, however, followed the party line by supporting a clear and accessible style. In the field of symphonism, as seen in the previous chapter, most critics demanded that composers

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[22] From the time of the Writers Congress in 1934, Pravda played an increasingly larger role in shaping public debate on the arts, especially in the field of literature. See Jeffrey Brooks, "Socialist Realism in *Pravda*: Read All About It," Slavic Review 53 (1994): 973-91. For materials in English from the First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, see H. G. Scott, ed., Problems of Soviet Literature (New York: International Publishers, 1935).

[23] Viktor Gorodinsky, "K voprosu o sotsialisticheskom realizme v muzyke" (On the problem of socialist realism in music), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 1 (1933): 6-18.

[24] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet music criticism is lagging), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 120-21.

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write song symphonies, topical symphonies, descriptive tone poems, and folkloristic symphonies in the style of the Mighty Handful. Likewise, critics propagated the Party's demand for operas on Soviet themes, with folk-like melodies, colorful orchestration, and optimistic finales. In this atmosphere, most composers were bullied into abandoning western-style modernism and embracing commonplace and inoffensive music.

With the Writers Union seemingly in check on the issue of socialist realism in 1934, the Party shifted its attention to other fields of creative activity in 1935. The Union of Soviet Composers held a series of meetings in 1935 that were designed to issue party guidelines on topics such as symphonism, folk song, music for children, and opera. In preparation for the 1935 discussions in the Composers Union, the January issue of Sovetskaya muzyka gave extensive coverage to the Writers Congress, with particular attention to the speeches of comrades Maksim Gorky and Andrei Zhdanov. At this time, the infamous Zhdanov was both Kirov's replacement as Leningrad party boss and Stalin's newly-appointed cultural henchman. In addition, the editorial staff of Sovetskaya muzyka wrote essays exhorting composers to abide by the resolutions passed by the Writers Union. The Party used the Writers Congress, with its "unanimous" approval of resolutions, as a model from which other creative unions should organize their discussions. During the February 1935 discussion on symphonism, the idea of socialist realism was hardly raised, and this fact undoubtedly disappointed the Party. N. I. Chelyapov, head of the Composers' Union, faithfully praised socialist realism to the skies, but the administrative body of the Union failed to take action against dissenting members--and this is no small point. Though officials of the Composers Union and

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Communist Party members demanded conformity, many members of the musical intelligentsia, led by Shostakovich, strongly resisted attempts to legislate socialist realism as the approved method of the Composers Union. The resistance to socialist realism was on display most forcefully during the February 1935 *diskussia o simfonizme*, at which many leading delegates opposed ideas raised by ideologues within the Union (see pp. 000-000). Compared to the Writers Union, composers seemed in open rebellion.

The Party took decisive action against the creative intelligentsia as a whole on 17 January 1936, when a government resolution established a new, powerful All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs (*Vsesoyuznyy komitet po delam iskusstv*, later called the Ministry of Culture), which was a sub-division of the Sovnarkom, the Council of People's Commissars. The new committee assumed broad censorial powers by adding a new layer of bureaucracy and diminishing the role that the creative unions played in approving new works. The creative unions themselves now reported directly to the Committee for Artistic Affairs's hard-line chief, Platon Kerzhentsev, a longtime proponent of proletarian culture. The Committee began work immediately by soliciting Stalin's opinion of two operas specially chosen for a ten-day cultural festival taking place in Moscow. On the evening of 17 January 1936, top members of the Central Committee (comrades Stalin, Molotov, Zhdanov, Bubnov, among others) attended a production of Ivan Dzerzhinsky's opera The Quiet Don, based on a Civil War novel by Mikhail Sholokhov.[25] According to reports published in the daily press and reprinted in

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[25] Dzerzhinsky's The Quiet Don, completed in 1931, had been entered in a contest to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of the Revolution in 1932, but it did not impress the judges. To improve the work's quality, Dzerzhinsky enlisted the help of Shostakovich,

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Sovetskaya muzyka, Stalin and Molotov personally congratulated the composer Dzerzhinsky, conductor Samuil Samosud, and director Nikolai Smolich.[26] During their conversation, Stalin spoke of the importance of creating new Soviet classics in the field of opera and expressed pleasure with Dzerzhinsky's clear and accessible style, simple melodies, folk-like songs, mass songs, revolutionary folklore, and inspiring finale.

By contrast, the same leaders attended a performance of Shostakovich's Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk on 26 January and were dismayed with what they saw and heard. Despite the international acclaim the opera received, or perhaps because of it, the opera and its composer were harshly criticized by the authorities. In addition to Lady Macbeth's complex style--as opposed to the simple tunefulness of Dzerzhinsky's The Quiet Don--other factors motivated the party elite to unleash an attack on Shostakovich: the work's international acclaim, the lurid plot, and the politically suspect composer's growing reputation at home and abroad. Complicating matters, party officials attended a performance given by the Bolshoi Theater's Second Company, rather than a performance by the Malyi Opera, Leningrad's leading company, which had just completed a successful run in Moscow.[27] Though summoned to the theater in preparation for a possible meeting

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who reorchestrated a number of passages.

[26] The news agency TASS published a bulletin on the conversation, quoted in "Beseda tovarishchei STALINA i MOLOTOVA s avtorami opernovo spektaklya 'Tikhii Don'" (Conversation of comrades Stalin and Molotov with the authors of the opera "The Quiet Don"), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 2 (1936): 3.

[27] Sheila Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair: Shostakovich and the Soviet Puritans," in The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 184. Fitzpatrick acknowledges the help of Dr. Laurel E. Fay, who supplied the information concerning the performances of Lady Macbeth.

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with Stalin *a la* Dzerzhinsky, Shostakovich was not invited to the official box.[28] The delegation left by the final act.

The reaction of the officials to Lady Macbeth, articulated in the infamous Pravda editorial of 28 January 1936 ("Muddle instead of music"), was swift and harsh. Less than two weeks later, Pravda published another stinging critique of Shostakovich's music ("Balletic falsity"), which attacked the lack of folk melodies in his ballet Bright Stream. The placement of the condemnation in Pravda, the organ of the Party's Central Committee, left no doubt that it represented the official view of the upper party echelon toward Shostakovich's music. The official censure of Shostakovich, unprecedented in the history of Soviet music, was meant not only to humiliate the composer personally, but also to discipline the artistic community as a whole. This point is confirmed in speeches given by Platon Kerzhentsev, head of the All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs.[29] The editorials had an even more sinister function--to frighten the artistic community into conducting widespread acts of censorship and self-censorship, as demonstrated by speeches given at the antiformalist debates in the Union of Soviet Composers (February 1936) and the Union of Soviet Writers (March 1936). Though it is widely believed that Andrei Zhdanov wrote the unsigned editorials, the question of authorship has never been resolved with certainty; other names have been suggested recently as the possible author, including David Zaslavsky, a high ranking party official

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[28] See Shostakovich's letter to Ivan Sollertinsky (dated 28 January, but written before Shostakovich read the Pravda editorial) in Lyudmila Mikheeva, "Istoriya odnoi druzhby" (The story of a friendship), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 9 (1986): 79.

[29] Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 199-200.

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and journalist.[30]

Party officials considered Lady Macbeth to be an intentional repudiation of what was demanded of Soviet artists. The music is highly complex and wickedly dissonant in many places, and the staging boldly depicts rape, lovemaking scenes, three murders, and a mocking characterization of the police. The fact that the tsarist police state was mocked was no cover for the composer, since the authorities interpreted the satire as poking fun at the current police state. In addition, the final act paints a sympathetic portrait of prisoners--a risky move considering how the jails were increasingly filling up with so-called enemies of the people. Prisoners were being sent to Siberian prisons by the thousands by 1936, and the Party seemed poised to step up the level of political terror. In his opera, Shostakovich attempted to elicit the audience's sympathy for the opera's murderous heroine, Katerina Izmailova, and her fellow prisoners.[31] But his

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[30] Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 109. In a personal conversation, the musicologist Vladimir Zak suggested that Stalin simply ordered Pravda to write a slanderous review of Lady Macbeth, whereupon an editor or editorial committee fulfilled the task.

[31] Shostakovich wrote an justification of Katerina's crimes in 1934 and published it as a program note to be distributed to audiences. Dmitri Shostakovich "O moi opere" (About my opera), trans. in Victor Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich: the Life and Background of a Soviet Composer (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1943), 249-55. A brief excerpt is given here:

> Why did I choose this particular subject for the opera? Because so far in the development of Soviet opera very little has been taken from our classical Russian literary heritage. Therefore my role as a Soviet composer consists in approaching the story very critically and in treating the subject from the Soviet point of view. My problem was to acquit Katerina Lvovna so that the spectator would be left with the impression of her as a sympathetic character. It would take a lengthy explanation for me to describe how I justify these acts--this is better accomplished by the musical material, which I consider plays the leading and

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justification for her crimes--that she was pushed to murder by the oppressive conditions of her life--simply did not hold water for the authorities. They resented the attempt to portray Katerina sympathetically:

> The predatory merchant woman who scrambles into possession of wealth through murder is pictured as some kind of "victim" of bourgeois society. The story of Leskov has been given a significance it does not possess. . . . The author has tried, with all the musical and dramatic means at his command, to arouse the sympathy of the spectators for the coarse and vulgar leanings and behavior of the merchant woman, Katerina Izmailova.[32]

The editorial "Muddle instead of music" not only indicted the composer for the Lady Macbeth affair, it also placed blame on the musical community as a whole, especially on music critics, because they were responsible for the ideological development of such a talented young composer. This point is driven home in the editorial's opening lines:

> Certain theaters are presenting to the new culturally mature Soviet public Shostakovich's opera Lady Macbeth as an innovation and an achievement. Musical criticism, always ready to serve, had praised the opera to the skies and given it resounding glory. The young composer, instead of hearing serious business-like criticism, which could have helped him in his future work, hears only enthusiastic compliments.[33]

> decisive part in an operatic work. . . . All of her music has as its purpose the justification of her crimes. There is no darker picture of the old times than Russian hard labor. . . . I felt such emotion toward the hard laborers when I composed the fourth act of this opera--they inevitably call for this sympathy.

[32] "Chaos Instead of Music," in Strunk/Treitler, Source Readings, 1398-99.

[33] Ibid., 1397.

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Thus by widening the scope of the criticism to include music critics, the editorial created a dynamic from which a campaign of slander and hostility against Shostakovich would result. Despite the musical community's collective lapse in judgement, performers were largely absolved of guilt, as shown by the editorial's closing lines:

> Our theaters have expended a great deal of labor on giving Shostakovich's opera a thorough presentation. The actors have shown exceptional talent in dominating the noise, the screaming, and the roar of the orchestra. With their dramatic action, they tried to reinforce the weakness of melodic content. Unfortunately, this served only to bring out the opera's vulgar features more vividly. The talented acting earns gratitude; the wasted efforts, regrets.[34]

The focal point of Pravda's attack on Lady Macbeth, however, centered on the opera's complex style and dramatic content.

> From the first minute, the listener is shocked by deliberate dissonance, by a confused stream of sounds. Snatches of melody, the beginnings of a musical phrase, are drowned, emerge again, and disappear in a grinding and squealing roar. To follow this "music" is most difficult; to remember it, impossible. Thus it goes practically throughout the entire opera. The singing on the stage is replaced by shrieks. If the composer chances to come on the path of a clear and simple melody, then immediately, as though frightened at this misfortune, he throws himself back into a wilderness of musical chaos--in places becoming cacophony. The expression which the listener demands is supplanted by wild rhythm. Passion is here supposed to be expressed by musical noise. . . .
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> Here we have leftist confusion instead of natural, human music. The power of good music to infect the masses has been sacrificed to a petty-bourgeois, "formalist" attempt to create originality through cheap clowning. It is a game of clever ingenuity that may end very badly. The danger of this trend to Soviet music is clear. . . . The author of Lady Macbeth was forced to borrow from jazz its nervous, convulsive, and spasmodic music in order to lend "passion" to his characters. . . . And all this is coarse, primitive, and vulgar. The music quacks, grunts, and growls, and suffocates itself, in order the express the amatory scenes as naturalistically as possible. And "love" is smeared all over the opera in

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[34] Ibid., 1399.

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> the most vulgar manner. The merchant's double bed occupies the central position on the stage. On it all "problems" are solved. In the same coarse, naturalistic style is shown the death from poisoning and the flogging--both practically on stage. . . . As though deliberately, he scribbles down his music, confusing all the sounds in such a way that his music would reach only the effete "formalists" who had lost their wholesome taste. He ignored the demand of Soviet culture that all coarseness and wildness be abolished from every corner of Soviet life. . . . Lady Macbeth is having great success with bourgeois audiences abroad.[35] Is it not because the opera is absolutely unpolitical and confusing that they praise it? Is it not explained by the fact that it tickles the perverted tastes of the bourgeoisie with its fidgeting, screaming, neurotic music?[36]

Lady Macbeth not only offended the simple musical tastes of party officials, but as we see in the previous passage, it offended their moral sensibilities as well. The production in many ways violated the new social ideal propagated by the Party in the mid 1930s, a campaign of morality that frowned upon sexual liberation as being bourgeois. "A virulent strain of puritanism," Sheila Fitzpatrick writes, "combining antimodernism and anti-westernism with concern about pornography and the debasement of public morals through art, was endemic in Soviet political culture from the early years after the

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[35] The author conveniently failed to mention that the opera was a great critical and financial success in Moscow, Leningrad, and other cities in the Soviet Union.

[36] Ibid., 1397-1399. From 1932 until 1936, music halls, dance clubs, and cafes were allowed to operate, and jazz enjoyed a rebirth throughout the Soviet Union. But during the Terror, jazz was again singled out for abuse, as it had during the proletarian episode in music, for supposedly reflecting bourgeois values. The enforcement of new moral codes in 1936 forced the closure of venues for jazz and light music. Jazz was a convenient target for abuse by authorities not so much because it was a product of the West, but for racial reasons as well. The roots of jazz are steeped in African-American musical traditions, and in Soviet Russia and Ukraine, many jazz musicians were Jews. For an examination of jazz during the Soviet period, see S. Frederick Starr, Red and Hot: The Fate of Jazz in the Soviet Union, 1917-1980 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985).

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Revolution until the end of the Stalin era and beyond."[37] Although Pravda intimated that all could end very badly for Shostakovich, the editorial also opened the door for him to reject his formalistic ways and embrace an ideologically correct path. That is what Platon Kerzhentsev, the powerful commissar of the All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs, reportedly told Shostakovich during a private meeting in Moscow shortly after the dam broke.[38]

Meetings, resolutions, condemnation, support

Even as friends shunned him, associates stopped calling, and the rhetoric sharpened in preparation for a public bloodletting, Shostakovich received needed support from inside and outside the field of music. The writer Maksim Gorky, a devotee of Lady Macbeth, wrote a letter to Stalin directly criticizing Pravda's position and defending Shostakovich. This gesture of support stands out all the more starkly coming from a man who condemned complex music and asserted that "healthy people" have a biological need for harmonious, melodically organized, and bright sounds.[39] The popular military commander Mikhail Tukhachevsky also wrote a letter of support to Stalin on Shostakovich's behalf; Tukhachevsky also met privately with Shostakovich on 19

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[37] Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 213.

[38] Isaak Glikman, Pisma k drugu (Letters to a friend) (Moscow: DSCH, 1993), 317, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 121.

[39] Gorky's letter to Stalin in support of Shostakovich has not been published. Maksim Gorky's essay "O formalizme" (On formalism) dates from August 1935 and was published by Pravda on 9 April 1936. The excerpt quoted above is in Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 198-99.

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February 1936, much to the relief of the composer.[40] Both Gorky and Tukhachevsky, however, were soon themselves victims of Stalin's purges (Gorky died under house arrest in June 1936 and Tukhachevsky was executed for treason in June 1937). The controversial theater director Vsevolod Meyerhold also gave Shostakovich unequivocal support during this difficult episode. Meyerhold himself was under intense political scrutiny for his trotskyist leanings and avant-garde productions in the 1920s and 1930s, but he still counted many of the party elite as his patrons. On 14 March 1936 he gave a famous speech, known as "Meyerhold against Meyerholdism," at a meeting on formalism in which he defended Shostakovich, "an act of daring that first stunned the hall and then provoked an outburst of applause. All eyes turned toward the composer, who sat sweating in the audience, nervously wiping his forehead with a handkerchief."[41] Like other public statements defending Shostakovich, Meyerhold's speech was never reported in the newspapers. He continued to repeat his defense of Shostakovich at similar meetings, despite intense pressure from the Party and the Committee for Artistic Affairs to recant his position.

Meyerhold not only supported Shostakovich publicly, he also consoled the composer and help him regain confidence. On 13 November 1936, he wrote to Shostakovich about the upcoming premiere of the Fourth Symphony:

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[40] Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life of Dmitri Shostakovich, trans. Graham Hobbs and Charles Midgely (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 77-78; Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's early years) (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1980), 279.

[41] Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 201. See also Khentova, Molodye gody, 279.

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> I was very upset to learn you don't feel well. My dear friend, be brave! Be strong! Do not give in to your sadness! Stiedry tells me that your new symphony is to be performed soon in Leningrad. I'm doing everything I can to be in Leningrad for that concert. I'm convinced that when you hear your new composition you'll rejoin the battle for new, monumental music, and that your ire will turn to ashes in the midst of your renewed endeavors.[42]

Meyerhold, though a dedicated communist, was a prime target during the Great Terror. Even so, he was able to hold onto his own theater until late 1937, when it was order closed by Platon Kerzhentsev, who rejected the director's plans for the twentieth anniversary celebration of the Revolution. With some irony, Kerzhentsev and his staff were themselves purged in early 1938 for not acting quickly enough against Meyerhold.[43] Meyerhold was left unemployed for nearly a year until the famed director Konstantin Stanislavsky, against direct party orders, hired him at the Moscow Art Theater. On 13 June 1939, the All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs opened the First All-Union Congress of Theater Directors. On the first day, State Prosecutor Andrei Vyshinsky repeatedly attacked Meyerhold. The following day Meyerhold mounted the podium, not to apologize for his alleged formalism, but to boldly deliver a stinging attack on artistic life under Stalin:

> What is socialist realism? Apparently socialist realism is orthodox antiformalism. I would like to consider this question in practical rather than theoretical terms. How would you describe the present trend in the Soviet theater? Here I have to be frank: if what has happened recently in the Soviet theater is antiformalism, ... I prefer to be considered a formalist. I, for one, find

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[42] Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life, 79.

[43] Tucker, Stalin In Power, 562.

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> the work of our theaters at present pitiful and terrifying. This pitiful and sterile something that aspires to the title of socialist realism has nothing in common with art. . . . Go to the Moscow theaters and look at the colorless, boring productions which are all alike and differ only in their degree of worthlessness. In your effort to eradicate formalism, you have destroyed art![44]

Meyerhold was arrested a few days later and jailed. Shortly after his arrest, his wife Zinaida Raikh was brutally murdered in their home. Tortured for months in prison, Meyerhold "confessed" to crimes of espionage and trotskyism, and was shot sometime in January or February 1940.[45]

The attack on Lady Macbeth in early 1936 was the first of a number of hostile articles in Pravda and other newspapers which unleashed a campaign of abuse against the country's creative intelligentsia. The Communist Party's network of creative unions held a series of discussions on the subject of formalism. The Union of Soviet Composers held the first set of meetings to discuss the merits and implications of Pravda's criticism of Shostakovich. These meetings began on 5 February in Leningrad and on 10 February in Moscow. Though Shostakovich refused to attend the so-called "creative discussions," Isaak Glikman recalls him keeping abreast of both the meetings and the general row in

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[44] Quoted in Tucker, Stalin In Power, 563

[45] A number of touching passages in Testimony are dedicated to Shostakovich's reminiscences of Meyerhold, see especially pp. 77-85. We can be pretty sure that Shostakovich discussed Meyerhold with Volkov because of an inscription he wrote on a photograph given to Volkov: "To dear Solomon Moiseyevich Volkov in fond remembrance. D Shostakovich. 13 XI 1974. A reminder of our conversations about Glazunov, Zoshchenko, Meyerhold. DSh." See the frontispiece of the English edition of Testimony.

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the newspapers.[46] The journal Sovetskaya muzyka published materials arising from the discussions, but to spruce up the Union's image in the eyes of the Party, the journal portrayed a greater sense of unity than really existed. Although union resolutions condemning Shostakovich were approved "unanimously," the notion that Shostakovich's condemnation was universal can be effectively challenged.

Though the critics of Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers issued a resolution supporting Pravda's position on Lady Macbeth on 7 February 1936,[47] Sheila Fitzpatrick reminds us that Shostakovich received more support at the composers' meetings than what is shown by the edited transcripts appearing in Sovetskaya muzyka. Several members of the Leningrad USC, including Ivan Sollertinsky, Aleksandr Rabinovich, Mikhail Druskin, and a young composer named Pustylnik came immediately to Shostakovich's defense, a fact demonstrated by reports of the daily paper Vechernyaya krasnaya gazeta (7 February and 16 February 1936).[48] Because of threats and intimidation, they were later forced to recant their defense of both Shostakovich and modern music in general. Fearing for their safety, Shostakovich encouraged his friends, including Sollertinsky, to vote for any resolution that supported Pravda's position, thus reducing the political cost on his most ardent supporters and closest friends.[49] A number

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[46] Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 10, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 111-12. During this period Glikman served as Shostakovich's personal secretary.

[47] Khentova, Molodye gody, 279.

[48] Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 202-03.

[49] Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 321-22, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 112.

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of speakers at the composers' meetings offered sympathetic words for Shostakovich at the creative discussions (e.g., Mikhail Chulaki, Lev Knipper, Ivan Dzerzhinsky, Maksimilian Steinberg, Andrei Balanchivadze, Aleksandr Veprik). At the same time, they carefully denounced Lady Macbeth, resolved to help the composer correct his past errors, and promised to work against formalist tendencies in Soviet music. It is noteworthy to recognize, too, prominent members of the USC who did not speak at the creative discussions (Shcherbachev, Myaskovsky, and Shebalin), because silence in this environment was tantamount to tacit support for the accused (luckily for Prokofiev, he was out of town). Alisa Shebalina, Vissarion's wife, recounts her husband's steadfast support for Shostakovich:

> Only Shebalin maintained silence throughout the meeting. But then he too was asked to speak; it was hardly a request but a demand; he refused all the same. A short while elapsed and again its was "suggested" that he should take the stand. Vissarion then got up, but remaining where he was without going up to the podium, he announced in a loud and clear voice for all to hear: "I consider that Shostakovich is the greatest genius amongst composers of this epoch." And with this statement he sat down. After this Shebalin was also persecuted; his music was no longer performed or printed and he was deprived of all material means of earning a living. For a certain time we lived in great poverty, and its wasn't until the war started that things started changing for the better.[50]

The support Shostakovich received from some corners during the Lady Macbeth affair diminishes only slightly the fact that speaker after speaker rose at the creative discussions to denounce him and his music. The February 1936 issue of Sovetskaya muzyka, a special edition containing official documents from Pravda and the Union of

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[50] Wilson, A Life Remembered, 114.

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Soviet Composers, further ignited the hostile campaign.[51] The March 1936 issue of Sovetskaya muzyka is almost entirely given over to the antiformalism debates and contains stenographic transcripts from meetings of the Moscow USC.[52] All but a few at the Moscow meeting were unequivocal in their condemnation of both Shostakovich and formalism in general. Members of the Moscow USC proved to be far less conciliatory than their Leningrad counterparts, perhaps because of their close proximity to the seat of Soviet power, and because a high percentage of former RAPMists were involved in the Moscow USC. It is important to recognize, too, that professional envy was at the heart of much of the criticism against Shostakovich in 1936, as it was during the antiformalism

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[51] Sovetskaya muzyka no. 2 (1936). "Beseda tovarishchei STALINA i MOLOTOVA s avtorami opernovo spektaklya 'Tikhii Don'" (Conversation of comrades Stalin and Molotov with authors of the opera "The Quiet Don"), p. 3; "Sumbur vmesto muzyki--ob opere 'Ledi Makbet Mtsenskovo uezda'" (Muddle instead of music--on the opera "Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District"), pp. 4-5; "Baletnaya falsh--balet 'Svetlyi Ruchei,' libretto F. Lopukhova i A. Piotrovskovo, muzyka D. Shostakovicha. Postanovka Bolshovo Teatra" (Balletic falsity--the ballet "Bright Stream," libretto by F. Lopukhov and A. Piotrovsky, music by D. Shostakovich. Performance of the Bolshoi Theater), pp. 6-8; "Rezolyutia obshchevo sobrania kompozitorov i muzykovedov, prinyataya 15/II 1936 g." (Resolution of the general meeting of composers and musicologists, passed 15 February 1936), without pagination, placed between pp. 8-9.

[52] Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1936) contains a number of materials, including transcripts from discussions at the Moscow Union of Soviet Composers. N.I. Chelyapov, "K itogam diskussii na muzykalnom fronte (On the results of the discussion on the musical front), pp. 5-9; G. Khubov, "Borotsya za pravdivoe realisticheskoe iskusstvo!" (Fighting for true, realistic art!), pp. 10-15; "Protiv formalizma i falsh--tvorcheskaya diskussia v Moskovskom soyuze sovetskikh kompozitorov" (Against formalism and falsity--creative discussion of the Moscow Union of Soviet Composers), pp. 16-60. In "Protiv formalizma i falsh" we have edited stenographic transcripts from the Moscow USC meeting held on 10, 13 and 15 February 1936: Chelyapov (opening and concluding words), Polyanovsky, Lebedinsky, Sezhensky, Knipper, Kabelevsky, Neigauz, Khavenson, Bruk, Belyi, Shteinpress, Chemberdzhi, Garbuz, Boroslovsky, Okaemov, Ryzhkin, Khrennikov, Brysova, Ferman, Fere, Binogradov, Gusman, Vasilenko, Kylakovsky, Veprik, Muradeli, Girinis, Neimark, Khubov, and Keldysh.

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campaign of the late 1940s.[53] Former members of RAPM were especially harsh in their criticism of Shostakovich; a few even claimed that the Party would reinstate RAPM as the leading force in Soviet music (see the comments of comrades Belyi, Lebedinsky, and Shteinpress).

The meeting of the Leningrad USC concerning the Lady Macbeth affair is summarized in the April issue of Sovetskaya muzyka,[54] and stenographic transcripts are printed in the May issue.[55] In the May issue, too, Boris Asafiev's public response is found (he apparently did not speak at the meetings). Although Asafiev did not entirely

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[53] I wish to thank Dr. Vladimir Zak for confirming this information.

[54] V. Iokhelson, "Tvorcheskaya diskussia v Leningrade (Creative discussion in Leningrad), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 4 (1936): 7-13. Iokhelson places the Leningrad meeting in context of the history of Soviet music since the 23 April 1932 *perestroika*, and singles out Shostakovich, Popov, Shcherbachev, Sollertinsky, Rabinovich, and Asafiev for criticism.

[55] Sovetskaya muzyka no. 5 (1936) contains a number of materials, including transcripts from discussions at the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers. L. Kulakovsky, "Zametki ob istorkakh formalizma' (Remarks on the history of formalism), pp. 5-15; P. Ryazanov, "Zadachi sovetskovo kompozitora--vystuplenie na tvorcheskoi diskussii" (Tasks of the soviet composer--speech at the creative discussion), pp. 16-23; B. Asafiev, "Volnuyushchie voprosy--vmesto vystuplenia na tvorcheskoi diskussii" (Troubling questions--in lieu of a speech at the creative discussion), pp. 24-27; "Protiv formalizma i falsh--tvorcheskaya diskussia v Leningradskom soyuze sovetskikh kompozitorov" (Against formalism and falsity--creative discussion at the Leningrad Union of Soviet Composers), pp. 28-73. In "Protiv formalizma i falsh" we have edited stenographic transcripts from the Leningrad USC meeting, which began on 5 February 1936: Kesselman, Gladkovsky, Shtreikher, Dzerzhinsky, Bukhshtein (director of the Leningrad Conservatory), Tyulin, Shapiro (director of the Kirov Theater), Pustylnik, Shteinberg, Fardi, Krutz, Sollertinsky (long essay in partial defense of Shostakovich), Shtein, Shteinman, Druskin, Rabinovich, Renzin (director of the Leningrad State Philharmonic), Kamensky (head of performers' section of LUSC), Gnesin, Levi, Budyakovsky (head of critics' section of LUSC), Chernetska, Korsunska, Ginzburg, Chulaki, Kushnarev, Zagursky, Gruber, Tomilin, and Glukh.

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reject Shostakovich, he refused to support his friend publicly, and this treachery drove a permanent wedge between the two. In the article, Asafiev admitted errors in judgement for his earlier enthusiastic support for Shostakovich's opera in particular and western-style modernism in general. Following the USC's creative discussions in February 1936, more meetings were held in March by both the Union and the Committee for Artistic Affairs. On 9 March, Shostakovich was criticized for his music to Mikhail Tsekhanovsky's animated film, The Tale of a Priest and His Servant Blockhead, op. 36 (1933-35); Shostakovich withdrew the music shortly thereafter.[56] By the end of the year, in the face of political harassment of Shostakovich personally and artists in general, he was forced to withdraw two more recent works: the Fourth Symphony, and the incidental music for Salute to Spain.

Although Shostakovich was the main target of abuse during the antiformalist campaign of 1936, he was by no means alone. At the Leningrad meeting, several other union members were assailed for their previous defense of modern music. I have already mentioned the critics Druskin, Rabinovich, and Sollertinsky, who were at first defiant in defending Shostakovich. They were also taken to task for their interest in western composers such as Schoenberg, Mahler, Strauss, Stravinsky, and Hindemith. Others who were strongly criticized during the antiformalism debates include the composers A.V. Mosolov, G.N. Popov, and G.I. Litinsky, all of whom were no strangers to controversy.

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[56] Khentova, Molodye gody, 279. Shostakovich arranged a suite from the film score and it was performed in the spring of 1935. Much of the film was destroyed in wartime bombings, though the music was restored as a two-act opera by Khentova in 1980. See Derek Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, 96-99.

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For his part, the chairman of the Composers Union, N.I. Chelyapov, dutifully criticized Shostakovich, but as Fitzpatrick points out, his response did not signal a public flogging of the composers: "[Chelyapov] seems to have had a personal commitment to cultural tolerance and to have disliked punitive political labeling, so the new militant line against formalism was likely to sit poorly with him."[57] It should not be surprising, then, that with such lenient attitudes, Chelyapov disappeared in the purges in 1937, presumably for not acting strongly enough to counter formalist influences under his watch.

Conclusion

The campaign against Shostakovich in 1936 was not simply about the Party's reproach of an isolated artist, nor was it restricted to the field of music,. The Lady Macbeth affair proved to be the opening salvo in a new round of antiformalism debates that engulfed the lives of the intelligentsia. While composers and critics were scrambling to shield themselves from political abuse in early 1936, the Party accelerated its campaign against non-Party influences in the arts, humanities, and sciences. The antiformalism debates quickly reached beyond the creative intelligentsia into broader intellectual circles. During the late 1930s, violent purges took place in every field of arts and sciences, especially agriculture, history, meteorology, astronomy, biology, linguistics, and literature.[58] In all universities, institutes, and professional unions, the

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[57] Quoted in Fitzpatrick, "The Lady Macbeth Affair," 204n.

[58] No creative group suffered more during the Terror than writers. Of the 2000 or so delegates at the Writers Congress in August 1934, ninety percent suffered repression of some sort, and nearly 1500 died in prison or in a concentration camp. Many leading

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Party conducted meetings at which denunciations were issued--with arrests usually following shortly thereafter. Those who tried to defend their friends were themselves accused of complicity, placed under surveillance, and arrested. As in the arts and humanities, formalism and leftism were often used as terms of abuse in the social and biological sciences. As badly as the Russian intelligentsia suffered during the late 1930s, their colleagues in the non-Russian "brotherly republics" fared even worse.

The broader purge in the intellectual world during the Great Terror was foreshadowed by 28 January Pravda editorial "Muddle instead of music," in which the reviewer compared the leftist and formalist trends in Shostakovich's music to the broader formalist problem in the Soviet Union:

> This music is built on the basis of rejecting opera--the same basis on which leftist art in the theater rejects simplicity, realism, clarity of image, and the unaffected spoken word--which carries into the theater and into music the most negative features of "Meyerholdism" [*Meyerholdshchina*, or the Meyerhold phenomenon] infinitely multiplied. . . . Leftist distortion in opera stems from the same source as the leftist distortion in painting, poetry, teaching, and science. Petty-bourgeois "innovations" lead to a break with real art, real science, and real literature.[59]

The association of modern art with "leftism" was particularly alarming in 1936, because many former leftist oppositionists were being arrested and charged with treasonous crimes; reports of these arrests and alleged plots filled the country's newspapers. Shortly

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writers, critics, and scholars were arrested in the 1930s and died while incarcerated (e.g., Averbakh, Babel, Pilnyak, Mandelshtam). The March 1936 creative discussion of the Writers Union was a particularly vicious affair; numerous writers accused each other of harboring counter-revolutionary or leftist sympathies.

[59] "Sumbur vmesto muzyki," trans. in Seroff, 207.

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after "Muddle instead of music" was published in late January, Pravda and other papers published numerous articles and editorials in which many prominent figures in the arts, humanities, and sciences were publicly rebuked.

With anti-intellectual sentiments on the rise in the country, works by suspect artists were routinely removed from the performing arts repertories. Two plays by Mikhail Bulgakov, for example, were abruptly removed from the stage of the Moscow Art Theater in 1936.[60] One of the offending plays, A Cabal of the Hypocrites, offered a pointed account of Moliere's political harassment under Louis XIV, a thinly veiled criticism of the inquisitions taking place in Soviet society. In late November 1936 Aleksandr Afinogenov's musical theater work Salute to Spain, with music by Shostakovich, was halted after a single performance. Also in November, the famed poet Demyan Bednyi (one of Stalin's favorite writers) was expelled from the Writers Union in connection with his libretto for The Bogatyrs, a new comic opera staged by Moscow's Kamerny Theater. Though Kerzhentsev's committee approved the production, Molotov stormed out of the hall during its premiere, prompting an immediate halt to the show.[61] All of those involved, including Kerzhentsev, were lambasted in the press by the Council of Peoples' Commissars (Sovnarkom).[62] As we see in the next chapter, censorship touched Shostakovich one final time in 1936. Pressured by party officials, union

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[60] Tucker, Stalin in Power, 560.

[61] Ibid., 269.

[62] The official resolution condemning The Bogatyrs (dated 14 November 1936) is published in Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 12 (1936): 93.

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representatives, and philharmonic management, he withdrew his Fourth Symphony from its scheduled premiere in December 1936. Though several attempts were made following the Great Patriotic War to secure a performance, the symphony did not receive its premiere until 30 December 1961--twenty-five years after its completion.

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Chapter Seven
"The credo of my musical work": Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, 1935-1936

The Lady Macbeth affair proved to be a dramatic reversal of fortune for Shostakovich. In addition to the public humiliation and private terror he suffered in 1936, his works were removed from the programs of opera companies, symphony orchestras, soloists, and chamber ensembles. Though deeply shaken by recent events, he remained silent publicly, even as many colleagues and friends abandoned his cause and urged him to issue a public apology. Despite profound political problems and the Communist Party's intimations that things might end badly for him if he did not reform his ways, he finished and circulated the Fourth Symphony--a purely instrumental, non-programmatic work that recalls the complex idiom of Lady Macbeth. In this chapter, after a brief discussion of the composition of the Fourth, I analyze ways in which the piece represents a bold statement in support of creative individuality, a defiant gesture in response to unjust criticism, an intentional repudiation of socialist realism, and a firm rejection of the Party's increasing control over Soviet arts. Following my analysis, I discuss the circumstances surrounding the aborted premiere of the Fourth Symphony in December 1936.

Far from the idea of socialist realist music outlined by the Party in the pages of Sovetskaya muzyka and Pravda, Shostakovich's Fourth is a gigantic, hour-long, untexted symphony that has no connection whatsoever to a political program or Soviet theme. The use of grotesque, parodistic, and funereal march images violates the expectations of

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the upper party echelon, who favored simple, tuneful, patriotic marches designed to unify the country. Orchestral resources are used at times to shock and confound the listener (e.g., extremely difficult parts, wide registral separation, deafening climaxes), quite the opposite of the Party's desire for inoffensive music. The contrapuntal and transformational complexities of the symphony, a hallmark of Shostakovich's style in general, conflicts with the straightforward patchwork of simple textures and melodies preferred by comrade Stalin and the party faithful. A technique of sophisticated thematic transformation--reinforcing the irony, contrast, and variety that already pervades the work--also clashed with the propagandistic simplicity of party art. In a direct rebuff of Pravda's 6 February 1936 negative review of his ballet Bright Stream, the inspiration for dance images in the Fourth is not drawn from the folk music of Soviet nationalities, but rather from nineteenth-century, bourgeois dances of the West (waltz, Ländler, polka, and galop).[1] Finally, the long, introspective fade-out at the end of the symphony offers an ambiguous conclusion--far removed from the heroic archetype of socialist realist art. My purpose in this chapter is not to provide a detailed formal analysis (there are a number of fine analyses already), but rather to bring attention to those aspects of the piece that represent an intentional repudiation of socialist realism.[2]

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[1] My use of the term galop here (with one l), denoting the nineteenth-century dance genre, should not be confused with the terms "rhythmic gallops" or "gallops" (with two ls), which I use to denote a repeating rhythmic pattern of two short notes followed a long. See my earlier discussion of "gallops" in The First of May symphony (Chapter Two).

[2] Leading analytical discussions of the Fourth Symphony include: Karen Kopp, Form und Gehalt der Symphonien des Dmitrij Schostakowitsch (Bonn: Verlag für Systematische Musikwissenschaft, 1990), 153-84; Richard M. Longman, Expression and

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The Fourth Symphony is divided into three movements: Allegretto poco moderato, Moderato con moto, Largo-Allegro. The first movement incorporates the sonata principle, the middle movement is in ABAB form (with a coda based on A), and the finale has an episodic form with thematic recurrence (see below for formal outlines of each movement). In numerous ways, the approach to symphonism in the Fourth recalls the work of Gustav Mahler--a fact not lost on a number of Shostakovich scholars.[3] Motives and themes are constantly shaped and reshaped according the principle of

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Structure: Processes of Integration in the Large-scale Instrumental Music of Dmitri Shostakovich (New York: Garland Press, 1989), 4-44; Marina Sabinina, Shostakovich simfonist: dramaturgiya, estetika, stil (Dramaturgy, aesthetics, style) (Moscow: Muzyka, 1976), 98-114; Klaus Körner, "Schostakowitschs Vierte Sinfonie," Archiv für Musikwissenschaft 31 (1974): 116-136, 214-36; Genrikh Orlov, "V Seredine Puti: K 30-letiyu sozdaniya IV Simfonii" (In the middle of a path: toward the 30-year creation of the Fourth Symphony), in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed. Lev Danilevich (Moscow: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1967), 166-87; Genrikh Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm: puti, problemy, dostizhenia (Russian Soviet symphonism: paths, problems, achievements) (Moscow: Muzyka, 1966), 106-44; and Marina Sabinina, Simfonizm Shostakovicha: put k zrelosti (Path to maturity) (Moscow: Nauka, 1965), 91-106.

[3] An in-depth discussion of the Mahler-Shostakovich connection lies outside the scope of this study. For a discussion of Mahler reception in Soviet Russia, see Inna Barsova, "Das Schaffen Gustav Mahlers im Spiegel der Russischen Kritik und Musikwissenschaft in der erster Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts," in Das Gustav-Mahler-Fest Hamburg, 1989: Bericht über den Internationalen Gustav-Mahler-Kongreß, ed. Matthias Theodor Vogt (Kassel: Bärenreiter, 1991), 267-77; and "A Summary of Sollertinsky's book on Gustav Mahler" and "Historical Types of Symphonic Dramaturgy by Sollertinsky," in Eric Roseberry, Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process in the Symphonies, Cello Concertos, and String Quartets of Shostakovich (New York: Garland, 1989), 508-39. A number of articles on compositional cross-currents in the work of Mahler and Shostakovich have been published, including Dorothea Redepenning, "Mahler und Schostakowitsch," in Das Gustav-Mahler-Fest Hamburg, 1989: Bericht über den Internationalen Gustav-Mahler-Kongreß, 345-62; Lutz-Werner Hesse, "Schostakowitsch und Mahler," in Bericht über das Internationale Dmitri-Schostakowitsch-Symposion, Köln 1985, ed. Klaus Wolfgang Niemöller (Regensburg: Gustav Bosse, 1986), 327-35; and Krzysztof Meyer, "Mahler und Schostakowitsch," in Gustav Mahler: Sinfonie und Wirklichkeit (Graz: Universal Edition, 1977), 118-32.

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continuous variation I outlined in connection with the Third Symphony (see Chapter Two). Each passage within a given theme group varies and transforms material from the previous passage, resulting in an ever-expanding web of melodic variants. Thematic recurrence, however, is more apparent in the Fourth Symphony than it is in the Second and Third, yet all themes in the piece are treated to variation and transformation to a great degree. Variation and transformational procedures in the Fourth, like the Second and Third symphonies, draw inspiration from conventional nineteenth-century procedures of motivic development and thematic transformation. Variation procedures in the Fourth include such techniques as altering the pitch or rhythm of a melody, melodic inversion, melodic permutation (shuffling the order of pitches in a theme), re-harmonization, and changes in timbre, register, orchestration, and dynamics. Thematic transformation, on the other hand, involves preserving much of a given theme's profile, but changing all other features, thus giving the symphony an even greater sense of variety and contrast.

Tension and emotional anguish in Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony (as well as much of his music in general) is often created by the semitonal, chromatic inflection of diatonic motives and themes (either triadic or stepwise). The same, too, made be said of Shostakovich's approach to harmony, which is often triadically based, but chromatically active. A common harmonic formation in this symphony involves a "triad plus a half step" tetrachordal sonority, such as the G minor chord with a superimposed A♭ at reh. 11, the *Schreckensakkord* at reh. 30 (F minor triad with superimposed G♭ and D♭), and the symphony's last sonority (C minor triad with a superimposed D clashing against the

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third of the chord). Other harmonic features of this symphony include harmonic ambiguity (or bipolar harmonies), quickly-shifting harmonies, major/minor conflicts, modal inflection, triadic successions, extended tertian chords, unprepared dissonances, pedal tones, and passages that withhold the tonic.

An answer to unjust criticism

In the previous chapter I outlined a number of symphonic projects Shostakovich worked on from 1932 until 1935, all of which could have been his Fourth Symphony if he had completed them. But the symphony he began on 13 September 1935, a piece he promised would be "the credo of my musical work,"[4] came to fruition as the Symphony No. 4 in C minor, op. 43 (1935-36).[5] Though the exact chronology of the composition of the Fourth is not fully known, it seems apparent that he completed the first movement just before the publication of Pravda's infamous editorials. Thus we read in the February 1936 issue of Sovetskaya muzyka, the same issue that featured official resolutions censuring him: "D.D. Shostakovich is writing a Fourth Symphony. The score of the first

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[4] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Moi tvorcheskii put" (My creative path), Izvestia, 3 April 1935, quoted in editor's note to Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2.

[5] Dates of composition according to Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's early years) (Leningrad: Sovetskii Kompozitor, 1980), 278. As we see later, however, her chronology is sometimes unreliable. For further information on the composition, performance, and recording histories of the Fourth Symphony, see Derek C. Hulme, Dmitri Shostakovich: A Catalogue, Bibliography, and Discography, 2nd rev. ed. (New York: Clarendon Press, 1991), 113-15.

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movement is already completed."[6] Though it is unclear when he began the second and third movements, he finished a short score of the entire symphony on 26 April and completed the orchestration on 20 May.[7] Considering the organized campaign against Shostakovich in 1936, it should not be surprising that precious little was published about the Fourth Symphony at the time, in stark contrast to the anticipation shown in the Soviet press a year earlier (see Chapters Five and Six). A terse note in the October 1936 issue of Sovetskaya muzyka simply reads, "D. Shostakovich finished the Fourth Symphony" (*D. Shostakovich zakonchil 4-yr simfoniyu*).[8]

The number of primary sources related to the Fourth is extremely small, too--understandably so, because most Russians were particularly cautious with their personal correspondences during the Terror. According to Isaak Glikman, Shostakovich asked friends to destroy communications they received from him, and he rarely preserved letters sent to him.[9] Greatly constrained by the political violence engulfing his world, he avoids discussing sensitive issues in a letter to longtime friend Vissarion Shebalin (dated 17 April 1936). Nevertheless, the strain of recent events is reflected in his anxious and evasive tone:

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[6] Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 2 (1936): 76. "D.D. Shostakovich pishet chervertuyu simfoniyu. Partitura 1-i chasti uzhe zakonchena."

[7] Khentova, Molodye gody, 279.

[8] Sovetskaya muzyka, no.10 (1936): 98.

[9] Isaak Glikman, Pisma k drugu (Letters to a friend) (Moscow: DSCH, 1993), 317, trans. in Elizabeth Wilson, Shostakovich: A Life Remembered (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 111-12.

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> As for me, I've almost finished my symphony. I'm now orchestrating the finale. When I finish, if possible, I'll come to Moscow to show it to you and a few others. I'm in a bitter mood. I don't really know what to do next. And so I am dragging out the end of the symphony. Working hard, I'd be able to finish it in five days. But since I'm working only a little bit, I'll finish it in about ten or fifteen days. In other respects, everything is the same.[10]

His mood is less sour after finishing the Fourth, as shown in two undated letters, written most likely in late April or early May. In a letter to the composer Andrei Balanchivadze, he dutifully notes: "I'm now finishing the Fourth Symphony. The composition part is done, and I'm now orchestrating. I think I'll be done in a week, since the music doesn't come to me much before the orchestration."[11] And in a letter to the cellist Viktor Kubatsky, he writes: "Yesterday I finished the symphony. I think that without a break, I'll set to writing a string quartet. Intensive creative work gives me joy."[12]

Quite proud of his newest work, Shostakovich immediately sought opinions from

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[10] A.M. Shebalina, "Eto byl zamechatelnyi drug: Iz pisem D.D. Shostakovicha k V. Ya. Shebalinu" (He was a wonderful friend: letters from Shostakovich to Shebalin), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 7 (1982): 77. "Chto zhe kasaetsya do menya, to ya pochti konchil svoyu simfoniyu. Seichas ya orkestruyu final (3-ya chast). Kogda zakonchu, to, esli budet vozmozhnost, priedu v Moskvu, pokazat tebe i eshche komu-nibud. Nastroenie kisloe. Uzh ne znayu, chto delat dalshe. Poetomu rastyagivayu okonchanie simfonii. Pri polnoi nagruzke mog by konchit dnei v pyat. A t. k. pabotayu malo, to konchu dnei cherez 10-15. B ostalnom vse po-prezhnemu."

[11] Quoted in Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life of Dmitri Shostakovich, trans. Graham Hobbs and Charles Midgely (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1980), 79. Like Shebalin, Andrei Balanchivadze (brother of George Balanchine) publicly defended Shostakovich earlier in the yeat at the Moscow USC "creative discussions" on Lady Macbeth.

[12] Quoted in Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde-Leningrade, 121. "Vchera zakonchil simfoniyu. Dumayu bez osobovo perepyva prinyatsya za strunnyi kvartet. Napryazhennaya tvorcheskaya rabota daet mne radost . . ."

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highly-respected musicians. Gavriil Popov, Ivan Sollertinsky, and Nicolai Myaskovsky all agreed that it was a work of genius.[13] In late May 1936, Otto Klemperer arrived in Leningrad to conduct a series of concerts and meet with leading musicians. According to Glikman, "the chief purpose of this visit was to acquaint himself with Dmitri Dmitrievich's newly-composed Fourth Symphony."[14] On 30 May the composer played the symphony for a number of invited guests, including Glikman, Sollertinsky, Klemperer, Fritz Stiedry, Aleksandr Gauk, Lev Oborin, and E. Nellius (secretary of the Leningrad Philharmonic board). Shostakovich's performance was complicated by a complete lack of sleep, because Nina, his wife, had just given birth to Galina, their first child, early that morning:

> Dmitri Dmitriyevich said that it would be a hard task for him to play this enormous and complex symphony, and to show it at its best. He had great hopes for this work, for which he nurtured a great love, all the more so as it was still fresh off the stands. . . . The symphony made an enormous impression (Sollertinsky and myself had heard it previously). Klemperer and Stiedry were fired with genuine enthusiasm, and they both scheduled the work for performance in the autumn of 1936, Klemperer in South America, the latter in Leningrad in his capacity as chief conductor of the Leningrad Philharmonic. But things turned out differently. Afterward, at dinner, Klemperer spoke with passion, saying that the heavens themselves had granted him a marvelous gift, the chance of conducting the Fourth Symphony. Delighted as he would be to conduct it, he nevertheless

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[13] Popov knew the Fourth by playing it in a piano four-hand arrangement. I wish to thank Dr. Laurel E. Fay for passing along this information. See also Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 11-12; and Nikolai Malko, A Certain Art (New York: Morrow, 1966), 224.

[14] Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 10, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 116. Greeted warmly by the public and press, Klemperer conducted Beethoven's Third and Fifth with the Leningrad Philharmonic. For an official perspective on Klemperer's visit, see Sovetskaya muzyka, no.8 (1936): 72-73. This article, of course, mentions nothing of the conductor's interest in Shostakovich's Fourth. According to Fay, however, Klemperer's positive impressions of the Fourth were mentioned in Leningrad newspapers.

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> had one humble request to make of the composer: to reduce the number of flutes, as by no means would it be possible everywhere to find six first-rate flautists while on tour. However Dmitri Dmitriyevich was adamant. Smiling he answered, "What is written with the pen cannot be scratched out with an axe."[15]

Despite intense public criticism of Shostakovich in 1936, an organized campaign of denunciations and threats, the overall deterioration of the political atmosphere in Leningrad, and the non-party nature of his work, the Fourth Symphony quickly and easily passed the formal peer review necessary to secure a public performance (of which the audition in his apartment was a part). But the country's slide into the Great Terror, especially in the wake of the first great Moscow show trial in August 1936, quickly swung conditions completely against Shostakovich and his new symphony. After all, the Lady Macbeth affair was still fresh on people's minds, censorship was on the rise nationwide, and the symphony clearly conflicted with the stalinist cultural order.

The Leningrad Philharmonic, under the direction of Fritz Stiedry, opened rehearsals on the Fourth in November 1936, with the premiere set for 11 December. Stiedry, who regularly conducted Shostakovich's music, had much skill and experience dealing with modern music and seemed up to the task. But the difficulty of the score disturbed some of the members of the orchestra and baffled the conductor, leading to problems during the rehearsal process. Trouble was in the air. Following a contentious rehearsal and a hastily-arranged meeting with union and party officials, the press announced that Shostakovich withdrew the symphony because he was dissatisfied with

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[15] Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 12, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 117-18.

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its quality and wished to revise it.[16] The public self-criticism, however, served as political cover; he had been pressured to cancel the performance by officials from the Soviet government, Communist Party, Union of Soviet Composers, and Leningrad Philharmonic. Later in this chapter, I return to the withdrawal of the Fourth Symphony and its return from non-existence twenty-five years later.

An unheroic approach to the march

Under the banner of socialist realism, the Communist Party encouraged composers to write music in which patriotic marches and stylized folk melodies expressed revolutionary heroism, unity among people, national identity, Soviet pride, and (increasingly) adulation for comrade Stalin. In Shostakovich's Second and Third symphonies, works that predate the imposition of socialist realism in Soviet music, marches were mostly used in positive contexts--i.e., as brash, heroic, pastoral, or spirited musical images. At times, however, march themes were presented in dissonant counterpoint in these works, supposedly to depict the struggles and battles of "October" and "The First of May," respectively. Far from engaging the Party's demand for simple, heroic marches that unify the people, Shostakovich offers parodistic, alienating, and unheroic marches in his Fourth Symphony. In this section, I analyze the two primary march themes of the piece--the sinister main theme of the first movement, and the funeral march of the finale--and discuss ways in which he transforms these themes to

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[16] The official announcement was first published in the journal Sovetskoe iskusstvo, 11 December 1936. Though I have not seen the article firsthand (because of its unavailability), I wish to thank Dr. Laurel E. Fay for providing me with this information.

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create grotesque musical images that conflict with the ideals of socialist realism.

The first movement of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony preserves the basic outline of sonata form with three primary theme groups:[17]

Formal outline: first movement (Allegretto poco moderato)

Introduction - up to reh. 1	A minor
Exposition - rehs. 1-50	
First theme group - rehs. 1-6	begins C minor, moves quickly away
Second theme group - rehs. 7-30	no fixed tonal center, rapid modulations
Third theme group - rehs. 31-50	begins E minor, moves quickly away
Development - rehs. 51-91	begins C minor, rapid modulations
Recapitulation - rehs. 92-105	
Third theme group - rehs. 93-100	begins C minor, moves quickly away
Second theme group - rehs. 101-102	no fixed tonal center, rapid modulations
First theme group - rehs. 103-106	C minor
Coda - rehs. 107-109	ends C minor

Following a shrill five-bar introduction, the movement's first theme--an angry, grotesque march--is forcefully stamped out, leading to a series of variants and a massive climax, the first of many deafening passages in the symphony. The first theme group is relatively short compared to the respective lengths of the second and third theme groups, because themes in those sections are varied, transformed, and restated in a network of quickly-changing episodes. Due to the extensive variation of melodic ideas in the second and third theme groups, the development section largely avoids lengthy treatment of these

[17] In this chapter, the music examples are quoted from Sobranie sochinenii, vol. 2.

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themes, concentrating its attention instead on material from the first theme group, newly-introduced themes, and unexpected episodic caveats. The compressed recapitulation, lacks the kind of intense continuous variation and episodic digressions of the exposition and development sections. All three theme groups are reprised in the recapitulation, though they reappear in reverse order (as in the first movement of his First Symphony) and with substantial transformation of their original character. The coda brings the movement to a strangely disturbing end with its obsessively repeated notes in the english horn (outlining a perfect fourth), mocking restatement of the first theme, dramatic sweep in the strings and harp, harmonic ambiguity, Mahlerian major/minor contrasts in the winds, and *morendo* fade-out that foreshadows the finale's coda.

In stark contrast to the first three symphonies, all of which open softly, the Fourth begins with a loud and alarming jolt. The five-bar introduction (Example 7.1) begins with a three-note, descending stepwise motive with upper neighbor grace notes (*ff*, high woodwinds); the passage's shrillness is reinforced by biting semitone clashes (strings and horns), loud cymbal crashes, and xylophone tremolos. A high sequential melody (winds and xylophone) hints at both A minor and C major before lurching clumsily to C minor at reh. 1. The rhetorical gesture of this opening passage--a loud and dissonant beginning that contrasts with a quiet ending--conflicts with the heroic, optimistic archetype sanctioned under socialist realism:

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Example 7.1: Fourth Symphony, first movement, introduction, mm. 1-5



With its brass-heavy theme, incessant pounding in the accompaniment, slow harmonic rhythm, and scalar melodic construction (with wide leaps upward), the march theme of the first theme group (Example 7.2) calls to mind the opening theme of Mahler's tragic Sixth Symphony.[18] Whether this allusive gesture is deliberate or whether it reflects a common approach for opening a minor mode symphony with a march, a similar sense of fright and trepidation arises from the loud dynamics, unexpected accents, and grotesque

[18] Gustav Mahler's Symphony No. 6 in A Minor (1903-04) coincided with several tragedies in his life: the three "blows of fate" in the finale supposedly expresses the composer's angst over recent events.

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orchestration in both passages. The heavily accented march theme in Shostakovich's symphony (trumpets, trombones, violins) is constructed from a stream of motivic ideas that are subsequently varied over the course of the first theme group, including ascending stepwise motion, halting agogic accent on F, triplet motive, repeated note figures, dramatic leap upward, and forcefully descending motion at the end:[19]

Example 7.2: first movement, main theme (grotesque march), reh. 1, mm. 1-4, strings only



The first theme group (reh. 1- reh. 5, m. 3) may be heard as one long, unbroken span, during which the melodic impetus never really pauses, creating an additional source of tension for the listener. The pounding, eighth-note rhythm here is relentless, propelling the energy ever forward. In this way, the opening differs from the opening of Mahler's

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[19] At reh. 2, for example, Shostakovich paraphrases, combines, reiterates, and sequences several motives from the march in an increasingly angular and mockingly exaggerated fashion (note the triplet motive, repeated note motive, and increasingly wider leaps). At reh. 3 we hear a restatement of the introduction's three-note descending figure, now cast as a descending minor third. The clashing semitones from the introduction return here, too, grunted out by eight horns (G♭/F). The descending three-note motive of the introduction is again heard two bars before reh. 4, now in a variant that simultaneously combines and transforms the triplet motive of the march theme. At reh. 4 the texture builds to a climax by varying motives from the first theme: repeated note figures, scalar melody (low winds, strings, and brass), triplet motive, and ever wider melodic leaps.

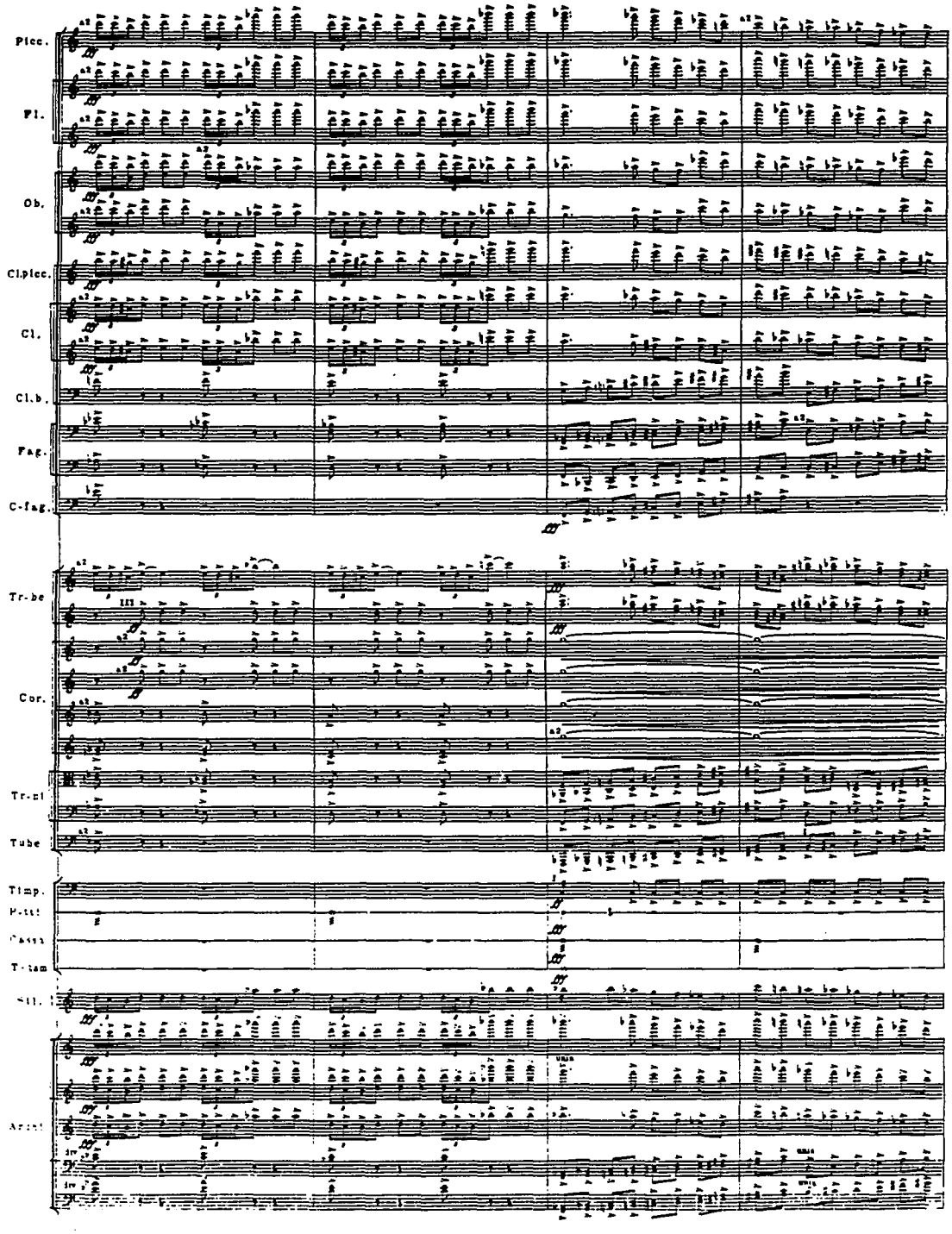
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Sixth, where frequent cadential figures arise from incessant motivic repetition. The frightening clash at the climax of the main theme group in Shostakovich's Fourth (Example 7.3, next page) literally screams at the listener with its *fff* dynamic level, searing dissonances, tension-laden registral wedge, and heavy percussive feel. Passages such as this violent climax clearly violate the Party's demand for reassuring, inoffensive music accessible to the masses. At a number of points in the rest of the movement, the march theme is restated in a modified form, either with an intensification of its original grotesque affect or with a dramatic transformation of character. These modified restatements and thematic transformations further add to the musical irony, variety, and contrast that Shostakovich creates in this piece. The theme is briefly reprised during the second theme group, for example, where it is heard canonically within a stunning, multi-layered climax. Following a brutal *Schreckensakkord* at reh. 19, the march is paraphrased in a two-voice canon, adding to the passage's polyphony and intensifying the dramatic effect. The complexity of the passage is further complicated by the rhythmic disturbance (triplets against duplets) of the canonic lines.

Though the march theme imparts an exclusively frightening quality in the exposition, it becomes transformed in the development and recapitulation, where it appears from time to time in strikingly different guises. At the beginning of the development section, for example, the brass-heavy, percussive pomposity of the original march is replaced by staccato chattering of high woodwinds (Example 7.4, page 308). Adding to the transformation, Shostakovich changes the meter from the original 4/4 to a sprightly 2/8, speeds up the tempo, and compresses the rhythmic values. The effect is

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Example 7.3: first movement, reh. 4, mm. 4-7



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one of distortion and alienation--taking an already odd theme and making it sound even more strange, and new:

Example 7.4: Transformation of the main theme, development section, reh. 51, mm. 1-8



Shostakovich playfully varies the material from Example 7.4 in the succeeding episode (rehs. 52-60), adding billowing scales (thirty-second notes), rhythmic "gallops," and jaunty syncopations to propel the musical energy. The march theme again returns briefly at reh. 61, this time with its original sinister affect.

Following another passage of complex imitative polyphony--a *moto perpetuo* fugue for strings (rehs. 63-71), and a fugato in stretto for brass (reh. 72)--the development surges to a massive climax that features the opening march theme in rhythmic augmentation (reh. 75, Example 7.5):[20]

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[20] The development's climax is created according to a technique he uses in the Second and Third symphonies: gradual accumulation of numerous layers of musical activity, often based on non-functional counterpoint of galloping rhythmic figures, scalar lines, dissonant (at times polytonal) harmonic formations, and marches.

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Example 7.5: Main theme in imitation, development, reh. 75, m. 2 - reh. 76, m. 7



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The use of the march theme in dissonant counterpoint here, as it had earlier during the exposition, intensifies its grotesque nature. When combined with the raucous, percussive quality of gallops, this march variant propels the energy to a frighteningly dizzying pace. After colliding violently into four loud, dissonant outbursts that recall the semitone clashes and stepwise descending figure of the introduction, the climax quickly disintegrates into a powerful barrage of ascending lines (strings and brass), scalar figures in contrary motion (upper woodwinds), and motivic references to the march theme.

The next two restatements of the march theme, like the one at the beginning of the development, offer substantially transformed variants. Shostakovich incorporates the march into the beginning of a waltz episode at reh. 80 (Example 7.6). The waltz-march variant retains the grotesque quality and melodic content of the original, but exhibits changes in rhythm, meter, and orchestration:

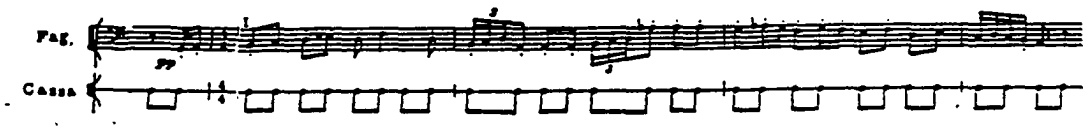
Example 7.6: Transformation of the main theme, development, reh. 80



Later, the recapitulation of the first theme group presents the listener with another transformation of the march (Example 7.7). The staccato pattering of a solo bassoon at this point creates a quietly somber, yet innocently *buffo*-like quality--far removed from the angry, sinister quality of the original:

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Example 7.7: Transformation of the main theme, recapitulation, reh. 103



Like the twittering, pastoral version of the theme that appears at the start of the development (Example 7.4), the transformation in the recapitulation here produces another layer of contrast and irony. We are left to wonder what to make of the innocuous transformation here, in contrast to the stomping agitation of the opening. Questions linger in the mind of the listener, too, regarding the harmonically ambiguous coda that immediately follows the bassoon's solo. During the coda, we hear a final, mocking reminiscence of the march theme, reprising the shrill, alarming quality of the movement's introduction (high woodwinds and xylophone). I will return later to the first movement with a discussion of how variation and transformational complexities of the second and third theme groups challenge the idea of socialist realist art.

The finale of the Fourth Symphony, like the first movement, confronts the listener with unheroic marches that do not conform to socialist realism. The primary march image, a somber funeral march, appears several times in the Largo introduction and is reprised in the first half of the coda. With its melodic structure, register, and subdued intonation, the initial presentation of this march (Example 7.8) suggests an affinity with the ironic funeral march in the third movement of Mahler's First Symphony:[21]

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[21] The funeral march that opens the third movement of Mahler's Symphony No. 1 in D Major (1884-89) is a minor mode paraphrase of the children's tune "Brüder Martin." The march was also inspired by a woodcut by Moritz von Schwind in which forest

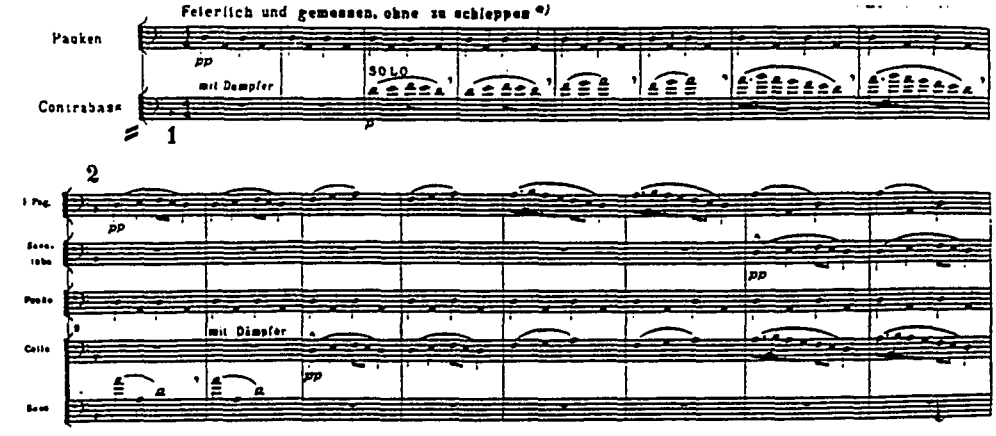
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Example 7.8

a) Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, reh. 152, mm. 1-7



b) Mahler's First Symphony, third movement, beginning-reh. 2, m. 6



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animals march in a funeral procession to mourn the passing of the hunter. The irony of Mahler's march is two-fold: a children's' song is used to intimate death, and the humorous irony of the hunted mourning the hunter. Musically, Mahler paraphrases himself in the march, borrowing the *alla marcia* opening of "Die zwei blauen Augen von meinem Schatz" from his Lieder eines fahrenden Gesellen (1884). In the song, sadness, engendered by departure and death, gives way to resignation and ultimately to resolution--hence the ironic turn to the major mode at the end.

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Modified restatements of the funeral march are placed in alternation with several other themes in the introduction of the finale. The second theme, first heard in the oboe, grows out the funeral march's dotted rhythm. With its wide leaps, ambiguous tonality, chromaticism, and "wandering" melodic structure, the anguished second theme intensifies the march's somber mood (I provide a formal outline of the entire finale later in the chapter):

Formal structure: third movement, introduction (Largo)

funeral march, C Minor - reh. 152 - reh. 153, m. 3
second theme and its development - reh. 153, m. 4 - reh. 156, m. 1
funeral march, modified return, C minor - reh. 156, m. 2 - reh. 157, m. 1
textural build-up, deafening climax, and third theme - reh. 157, m. 2 - reh. 160
fourth theme - reh. 161 - reh. 163, m. 3
second theme, modified return - reh. 163, m. 4 - reh. 165, m. 1
funeral march, modified return, C minor - reh. 165, mm. 2-8
transition to Allegro - reh 166

When the march returns in the introduction (Example 7.9), it is heard in a modified form--i.e., only the first four bars of the original remain intact, and changes are made to the orchestration:

Example 7.9: Third movement, return of funeral march, introduction, reh. 156, mm. 1-5



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As we see later, both the funeral march and the anguished second theme are paraphrased at the end of the movement (rehs. 243ff and 247, respectively). When the march returns as part of the first coda's catastrophic climax, the theme's character is transformed from a somber image to a murderously frightening one (see Example 7.18)--a most disturbing, unheroic approach to the march. The anguished second theme becomes a leading theme in coda II as the symphony draws to its *morendo* close: mournful restatements are heard in the horn (reh. 247) and flute (reh. 248), and motivic fragments quietly echo the theme in the strings (rehs. 250-254). I return to the finale later in the chapter, with a discussion of both the suite of "bourgeois" dances and the unheroic coda.

Variation and transformational procedures in the first movement

As he had in the Second and Third symphonies, Shostakovich uses a principle of continuous variation to generate networks of melodic variants in each movement of the Fourth. Like the unheroic handling of march images, the variation and transformational complexities of the Fourth Symphony clashed with party leaders' insistence on simplistic, tuneful music. Earlier I discussed the first theme group of the first movement, and noted ways in which Shostakovich both varied motives from the opening march to create new themes and transformed the march when it reappeared in the development and recapitulation sections. Now I would like to examine variation and transformational procedures as they apply to the second and third theme groups, pointing out again how the complex approach to composition violated the tenets of socialist realism.

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In the second theme group, Shostakovich creates an ever-evolving web of music from a theme that he states only once. The rest of the second theme group is dominated by quickly-changing episodes that constantly combine old and new material. In the third theme group, however, transformations of the third theme alternate ritornello-like with contrasting episodes that derive their material from the third theme--a different approach to thematicism than what is found in the first and second theme groups. The second theme begins quietly two bars after reh. 7 (Example 7.10) with complex, modulatory writing in the strings:

Example 7.10: Second theme, exposition, violins, reh. 7, mm. 2-8



The wandering melodic structure in rehs. 7-13, combined with the many changes of meter and key, reinforces a sense of continuous variation here. In the second theme group, Shostakovich varies the descending contour present in the second theme's opening bars by starting a number of themes with rhythmic and melodic variants of this basic shape.[22] As in the Second and Third symphonies, the climax of the second theme group

[22] Examples of melodies in the second theme group that contain an opening gesture with descending, stepwise motion include: viola, reh. 8, m. 10-reh. 9, m. 4; winds, reh. 10, mm.6-11; oboe, reh. 11, mm. 2-10; violin I, reh. 12, mm. 1-4 (descending contour with interpolated eighth-notes on an open A string); brass triplets, reh. 15, mm. 5-7; low register instruments, 5 bars before reh. 18; brass, reh. 22, mm. 1-5. In addition,

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is built by compressing durational values, accumulating new themes and rhythms, inserting and varying gallop rhythms, superimposing scalar melodies (both chromatic and diatonic), and employing registral expansion. From reh. 19 until reh. 23, new themes, related to previous themes by way of scalar content and rhythmic profile, rudely jostle for position (*fff*) in a massive climax that also features the movement's main theme. At the end of the second theme group, the orchestra plays a huge crescendo, peaking at reh. 30 with a colossal *Schreckensakkord* (f minor triad, plus D♭ and G♭, Example 7.11, next page). This frightening assault, only to be outdone by the first coda of this symphony's finale, contributes to the overall sense of tension and demonic energy of the work.

The fact that a number of deafening climaxes are strategically placed in Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony is in conflict with the inoffensive, predictable nature of socialist realism.[23] These events, as here at reh. 30, often round off a given section violently, leading immediately to a sudden change of direction, and adding to the disruptive discontinuity of the symphony's episodic construction. One of the most shocking and confounding climaxes comes at the end of the development section (reh. 90), where a gradual climax in the timpani and brass quickly takes us from *pp* to *fffff*!

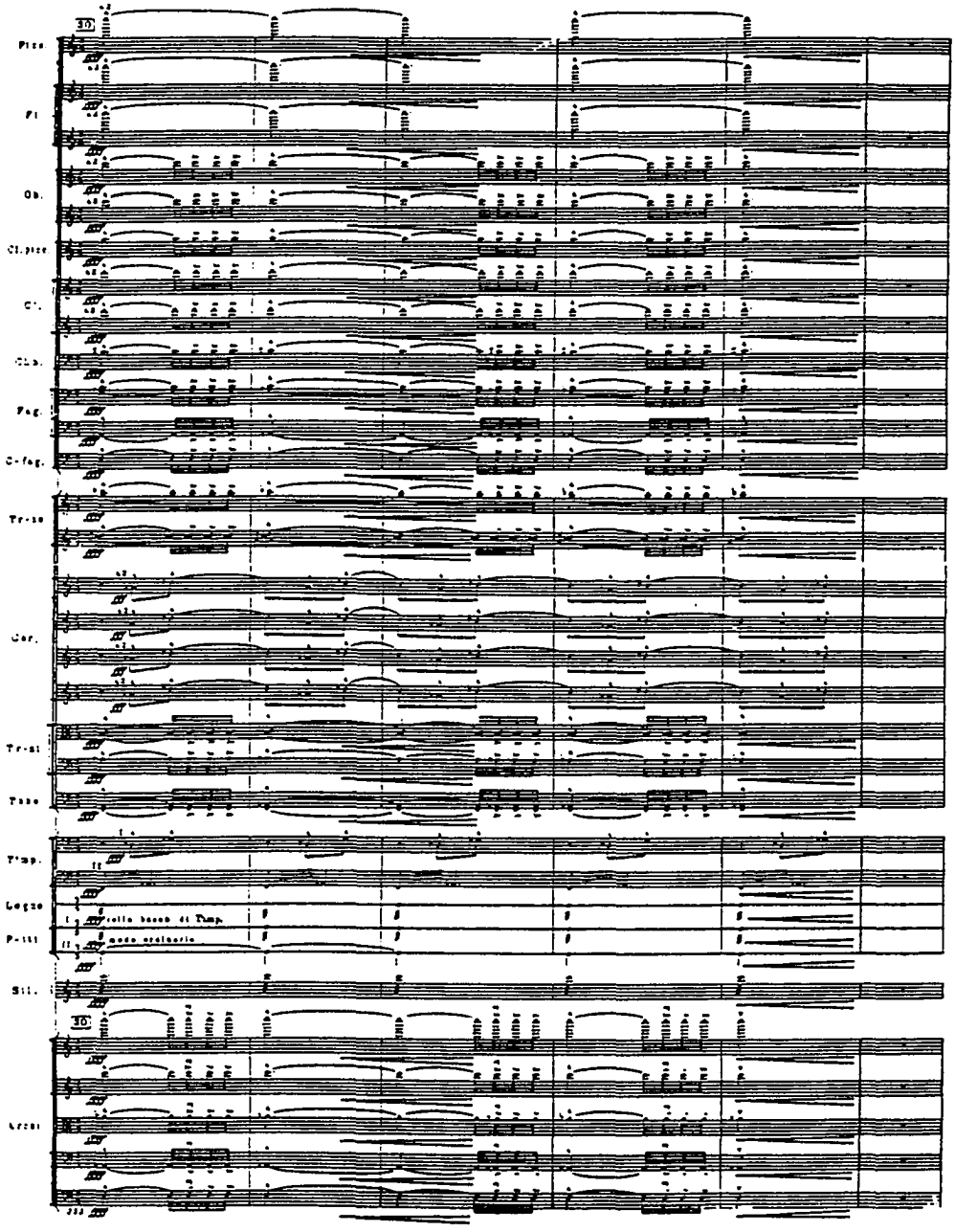
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a number of melodies in the group contain an opening gesture with ascending stepwise motion, reversing the descending shape of the second theme and providing balance and opposition between ascending and descending lines--a feature of the piece from the very start of the first movement.

[23] First movement - reh. 4, rehs. 16-22, rehs. 29-30, rehs. 46-47, rehs. 72-78, and reh. 90; second movement - reh. 121 (esp. the last 10 bars), and reh. 128; third movement - rehs. 159-160, reh. 172, rehs. 182-188, and rehs. 238-245.

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Example 7.11: End of second theme group, reh. 30



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As the dynamic level increases, new chromatic pitches are added to the sonority, culminating in a deafening, twelve-note chord. This ominous event is answered by the woodwinds (reh. 91), whose shrill, grotesque melody leads to the recapitulation.

Returning to the exposition, the third theme group begins quietly (Example 7.12). The sparsely scored, slowly unfolding bassoon solo provides dramatic contrast to the massive orchestral violence of the previous section:

Example 7.12: Third theme, reh. 31



Like many passages in the symphony, harmonic ambiguity is a feature of the third theme. The melody implies a tonal center on A, while the pizzicato accompaniment hints at E. Like the second theme group, the third theme group contains episodic writing. But in the third theme group, transformed restatements of the third theme (rehs. 36-37, 40-41, 46, and 48-49) alternate with episodes that provide thematic contrast (rehs. 32-35, 38-39, and 42-45). Each time the theme is restated, it is heard with modifications to melody, harmonic support, orchestration, and accompaniment. During the third theme group's

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climax (rehs. 46-50), we hear a drastically transformed restatement of the third theme, in an absurdly low register (two tubas and bass clarinet), accompanied by the shrieking, two-note motive first heard at reh. 40, m. 3. The contrasting episodes that lie in between modified restatements of the third theme begin by varying the melodic and rhythmic shape of the third theme and quickly adding new countermelodies. In this way, Shostakovich quickly accumulates a diverse repertory of themes and motives that are themselves continually varied.[24]

In the development section, the third theme is first transformed into a waltz-like melody (Example 7.13), followed by other variants in the bass clarinet and low strings (rehs. 86 and 88, resepctively):

Example 7.13: Variant of the third theme, development, strings, reh. 84, mm. 1-6



[24] Notice, for example, how the violas and cellos at reh. 32 start with the same *espressivo* quality of the opening bassoon solo, but quickly rise up in pitch and volume, compressing the rhythmic values in imitation of the flourishes that are heard the end of the earlier bassoon solo. These elaborate flourishes are then taken up by the violins at reh. 33, leading to complex, polyphonic writing for the strings.

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When the third theme returns in the recapitulation section, it appears at the beginning, before the second and first theme groups. The throbbing, martial quality of the original main theme is transferred to the third theme in the recapitulation (Example 7.14), now presented in muted French horns, creating yet another transformation of character:

Example 7.14: Return of third theme, recapitulation, reh. 93 (actual pitch)



Strengthening the musical irony: when the first theme is heard at the end of the recapitulation, it appears in a solo bassoon, like the original third theme. The second theme is presented in the recapitulation by a solo violin, which reshapes the metric, rhythmic, and melodic profile of the original theme, and largely avoids the highly episodic structure of the second theme group in the exposition. Thus by transforming the character of each theme group, Shostakovich reinforces a sense of musical irony, contrast, and variety--creative principles that clashed with the Communist Party's demand for a simple, straightforward presentation of melodies (see Chapter Five for party delegates' prescriptions for Soviet symphonism, and Chapter Six for Pravda's criticism of the complex idiom of Lady Macbeth).

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Variation and transformational procedures in the second movement

In the previous section, we saw how the second theme group of the first movement represents a thoroughly episodic approach, with its quickly-changing flow of events. The third theme group, though episodic, places modified restatements of the theme in alternation with contrasting material. Shostakovich combines both approaches in the second movement, where A and B themes serve as landmarks to guide the listener through diverse musical landscapes. When each theme reappears, it is heard in a modified form:

Formal outline: second movement (Moderato con moto)

A = rehs. 110-121 (transition: reh. 122)	begins D minor, moves quickly away
B = rehs. 123-128 (transition: reh. 129)	begins A minor, moves quickly away
A = rehs. 130-142	begins D minor, moves quickly away
B = rehs. 143-149	A minor/D major ambiguity, moves away
Coda based on A = rehs. 150-151	D minor

Despite the second movement's relatively straightforward design, each section allows significant variation of motivic ideas, episodic digressions, complex polyphony (especially imitative counterpoint), and juxtaposition of strongly contrasting characters--all of which violate the Party's emphasis on simple, straightforward presentation of tuneful melodies. The second movement's orchestration, organic construction, and episodic quality are quite similar to the scherzo of Mahler's Second Symphony, a point corroborated by Shostakovich's allusion to that movement at reh. 122 and to a lesser degree at reh. 129 (compare Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, second movement, reh.

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122 with Mahler's Second Symphony, third movement, opening measures).

The A section begins by presenting and varying two main melodic ideas (Example 7.15)--a four-note motive, and ascending melodic motion:

Example 7.15: Second movement, A theme, reh. 110, mm. 1-13



After varying these ideas and combining them with new ones in the strings (rehs. 111-113) and winds (rehs. 114-116), a more pointedly sinister image emerges (reh. 117) and leads to a stormy climax (rehs. 118-121) built from stepwise melodies and references to the opening motive from Example 7.15. The transition to the next section (reh. 122), with its forceful timpani part and low clarinet tremolos, recalls the opening measures of the third movement of Mahler's Second Symphony.[25]

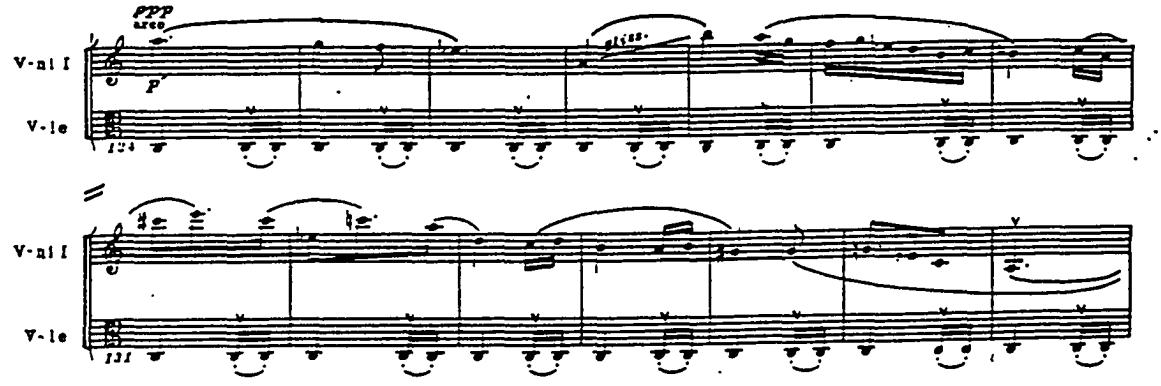
The first violins start the lyrical B theme at reh. 123 (Example 7.16). Related in shape and melodic content to the melody at reh. 111, the B theme is accompanied by a long-short-short rhythmic ostinato that permeates much of this movement:

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[25] In addition, the flowing sixteenth notes of the opening melody in Shostakovich's second movement strongly allude to the third movement of Mahler's Symphony No. 2 "Resurrection" (1888-94).

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Example 7.16: B theme, reh. 123, mm. 1-7



Following significant variation of the B theme, its variants, and countermelodies, the B section ends with a dramatic and frightening roar (just before reh. 129) that recalls the *Schreckensakkord* in the third movement of Mahler's Second. Both passages offer frighteningly violent musical images designed to jolt the listener out of any sense of ease or complacency.

The return of A (rehs. 130-142) presents the main theme in a remarkably polyphonic setting (strings: rehs. 130-139; winds: rehs. 139-142). Note, too, the use of fugue, canon, and polytonal effects in this passage--traditional approaches to counterpoint that are modernized and made dissonant. The kind of dissonant counterpoint and harmonic complexity displayed in Example 7.17, for example, could hardly have pleased the party faithful:

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Example 7.17: rehs. 139-140



In the return of B (reh. 143), the lyrical quality of the original is replaced by a tense, chromatic, dissonant quality somewhat akin to the grotesque march image of the first movement's main theme. The melody is first presented in quadruple horns, with the incessant long-short-short rhythmic accompaniment in a thickly scored texture of winds and brass. After the B theme is heard several times, each time reorchestrated, the solo bassoon restores the theme's original lyrical character (reh. 149). In the brilliantly conceived coda (rehs. 150-151), Shostakovich sets the movement's A theme in running

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thirty-second notes (violins), accompanied by a clock-like network of interlocking rhythmic ostinati (percussion).

An unheroic finale

In its 6 February 1936 review of Shostakovich's music for the ballet Bright Stream, Pravda singled out his failure to incorporate folk melodies from the Kuban region, the setting of the ballet, into the score.[26] The use of folk materials as a chief source of creative inspiration, as discussed in Chapter Five, fulfilled an important component of socialist realism, one in which national identity and Soviet pride were merged into a single value. Yet when Shostakovich turns to dance images in his Fourth Symphony, the first major work following the Pravda editorials, he does not choose Soviet national folk dances as the Party demanded, but rather western, "bourgeois" dances such as those in the finale's dance suite (waltz, polka, and galop). Other features of the finale also point to a break with socialist realism, including the treatment of the march (discussed earlier), the intensive motivic development of the Allegro, and the expressly unheroic ending--a long, slow, introspective fade-out. The ending, too, recalls orchestration techniques similar to the ending of a number of works by Mahler, in which a long drawn-out conclusion signifies death and departure. Does the haunting coda of the Shostakovich's Fourth--with its murderously loud coda I and its hushed, *morendo*

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[26] "Baletnaya falsh--balet 'Svetlyi Ruchei,' libretto F. Lopukhova i A. Piotrovskovo, muzyka D. Shostakovicha. Postanovka Bolshovo Teatra" (Balletic falsity), Pravda, 6 February 1936, 3. Pravda's review of Bright Stream, as discussed in the previous chapter, was a kind of companion piece to the more (in)famous "Muddle instead of music" editorial.

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coda II--likewise signify death and departure? Or does it signify something else, such as internal exile?

The third movement of Shostakovich's Fourth is divided into four main parts:

Formal outline: third movement (Largo-Allegro)

Largo introduction - rehs. 152-163	(see earlier chart)
Allegro - rehs. 167-191	begins D minor, passes through various keys
Dance suite - rehs. 192-237	
Waltz I - rehs. 192-201	begins D major, passes through various keys
Polka - rehs. 202-211	mostly in E minor and E major
Waltz 2 - rehs. 212-218	passes through various keys
Galop - rehs. 219-226	passes through various keys
Transition - rehs. 227-237	harmonically static and ambiguous, moves to C minor, then C major at end
Coda - rehs. 238-259	
Coda I - rehs. 238-245	begins C major, extremely loud and dissonant
Coda II - rehs. 246-259	C minor

Despite the overall fantasia-like construction, there is recurrence of themes in both the Largo and the dance suite sections. In addition, the emphasis on a minor third motive from the Allegro (Example 7.18) at numerous points in the dance suite (especially rehs. 198-99, 217, and 233) strengthens the overall sense of recurrence in the movement. As mentioned earlier, too, the funeral march and the second theme from the Largo introduction are reprised in the coda (compare rehs. 152 and 153-155 to rehs. 243-244 and 247-248, respectively). The episodic approach to the finale here again points to Mahler's influence, especially for its similar incorporation of diverse musical styles,

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dances, sounds, and characters (e.g., funeral march, waltz, polka, military march, sounds of nature, music hall song, references to life and death).

As in the first two movements, the compositional complexity and episodic construction of the finale conflict with the simple tunes and straightforward forms demanded by party ideology. The Allegro (rehs. 167-191), for example, obsessively varies a drooping, minor third motive shown in Example 7.18; it is a figure heard in a number of passages throughout the finale:

Example 7.18: Third movement, beginning of Allegro, reh. 167, mm. 1-4



In the sunny, rollicking dance suite that occupies the central position in the finale, themes are treated to the same kind of complex variation and episodic treatment of themes that characterizes the rest of the piece.

The two-part coda is one of the most remarkable passages in Shostakovich's symphonic output. In direct defiance of the heroic optimism demanded by the Party, he

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composed a most unheroic ending, one in which horrific violence gives way to the quiet introspection of a long fade-out. The tranquility of the transition is violently shattered by coda I (rehs. 238-245), one of the loudest passage in the history of symphonic music. Following an immense crescendo in the timpani (nine bars before reh. 238), the brass leads a series of loud and at times very dissonant outbursts. Outbursts grow increasingly louder and more frightening as more instruments are added and dissonances pile up. The first coda climaxes several times in a clash of four layers of activity (Example 7.19, next two pages); low register paraphrase of the Largo funeral march, high- and middle-register layer, horns in unison, and timpani ostinato.

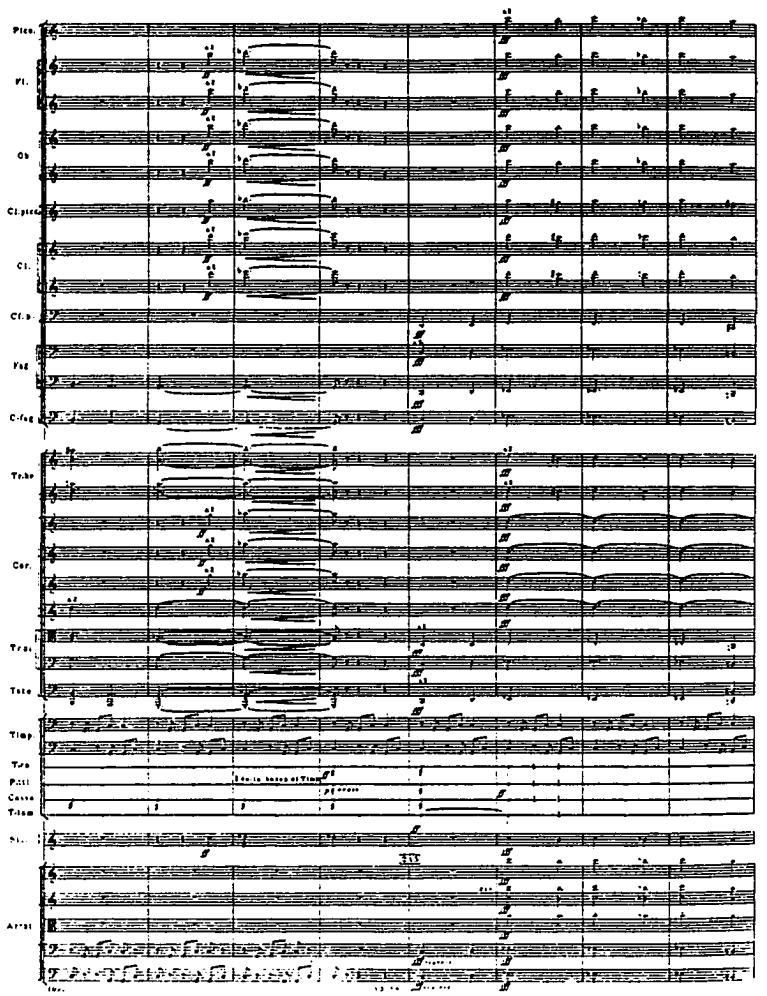
The Fourth Symphony is the first symphony by Shostakovich to end quietly. As coda I subsides, coda II (rehs. 246ff) begins with percussive thumps (timpani, low harp, and basses) in Example 7.20 (page 331)--like a beating heart recovering from the primal assault of the previous passage. More so than any other passage of his music, the extraordinary *morendo* fade-out of coda II subverts the Party's demand for optimistic and heroic art. The orchestration, mysterious shrouding of a long-held pedal, and melodic construction of the second coda impart a resigned, meditative quality that recalls Mahler's intimations of death and departure in the closing measures of "Der Abschied" (Departure) from Das Lied von der Erde, "Das himmlische Leben" from the Fourth Symphony, and the final songs from both Kindertotenlieder and the Rückert Lieder.[27]

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[27] In "Der Abschied," the finale of Das Lied von der Erde (1907-09), Mahler combined two different poems and added words of his own to create a text in which resignation gives way to resolution through death. The final lines read: "I will never roam in distant lands. My heart is still and awaits its hour. The beloved earth everywhere blossoms and greens in springtime anew. Everywhere and forever, forever,

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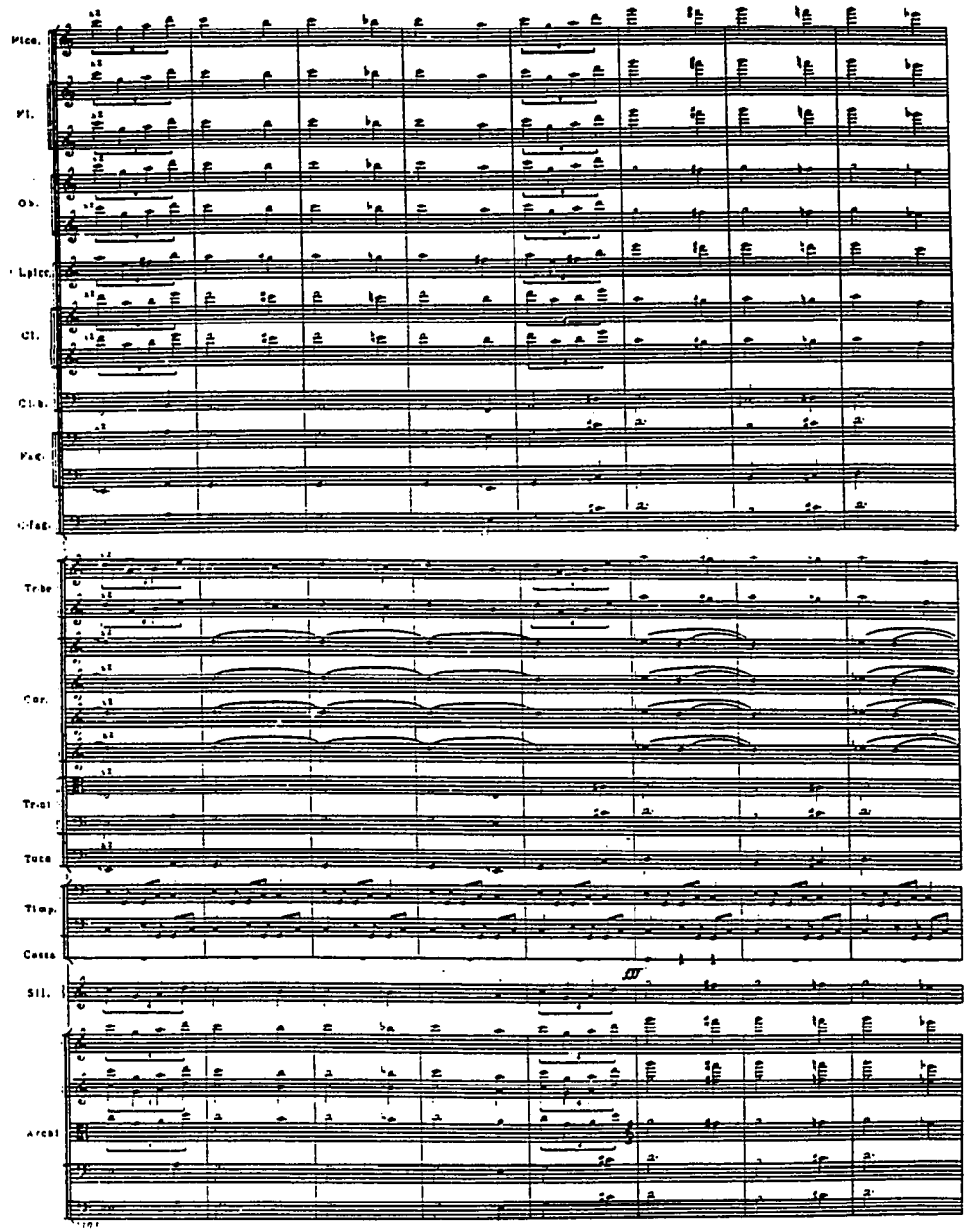
Example 7.19: Coda I, four bars before reh. 243 - reh. 243, m. 12
(note the return of the opening funeral march: low strings, brass, and woodwinds)



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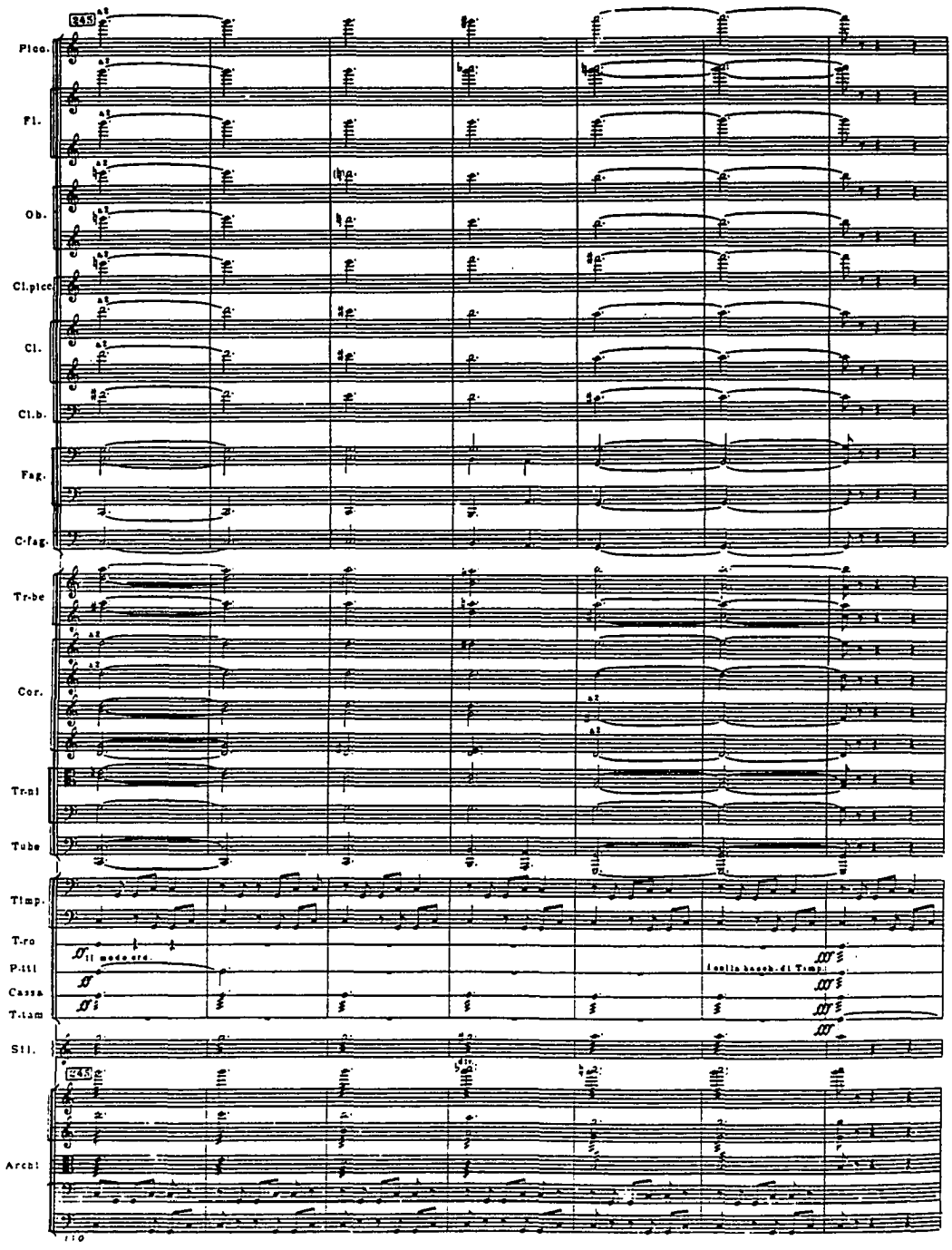
the distances brighten blue! Forever, forever, forever." The orchestral "death code" is marked by orchestration (celesta, harp, muted strings), static harmony (pedal tones), the repetition and increasing elongation of a simple motive, and dynamics (note, too, the indication *gänzlich ersterbend* [completely dying away] in the final six bars). The final section of "Das himmlische Leben," the finale of Mahler's Symphony No. 4 (1899-1900), also contains pedal tones, repeated notes, muted strings, low harp, and *morendo* fade out. Similar angelic references appear in "In diesem Wetter, in diesem Braus" the finale of Kindertotenlieder (1901-04). and in "Ich bin der Welt abhanden gekommen," the finale of Mahler's Rückert Lieder (1901-02).

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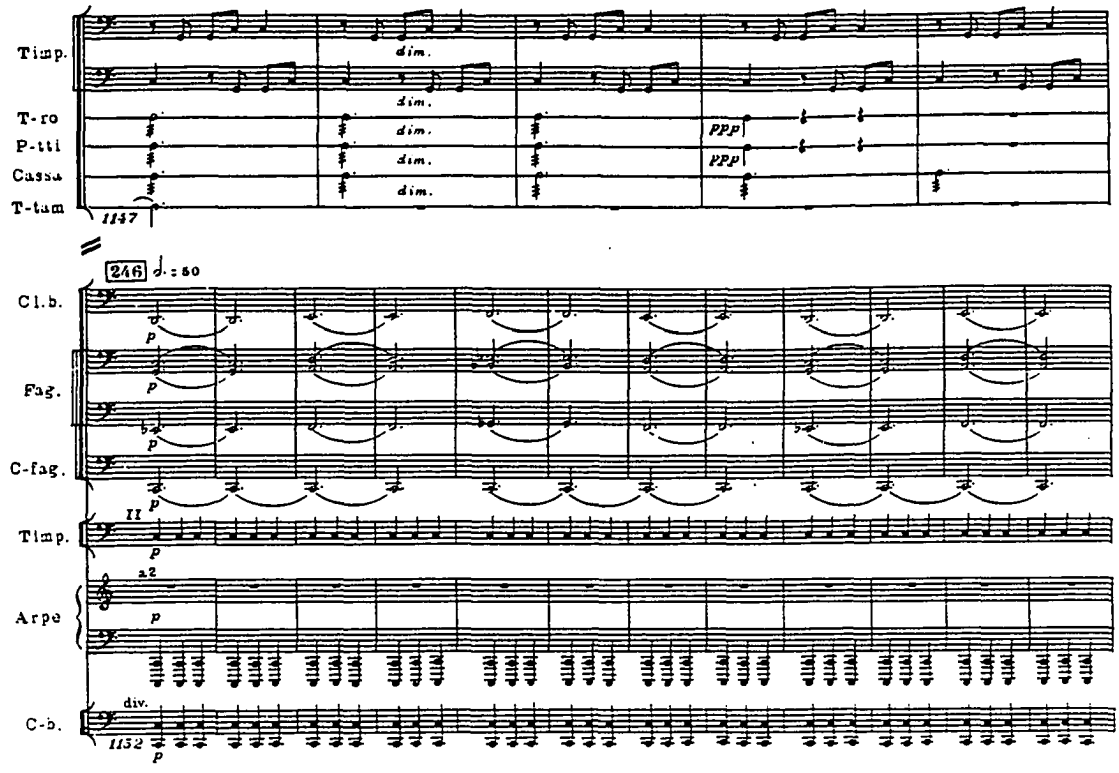


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Example 7.20: end of Coda I and beginning of coda II, reh. 245 - reh. 246, m. 12



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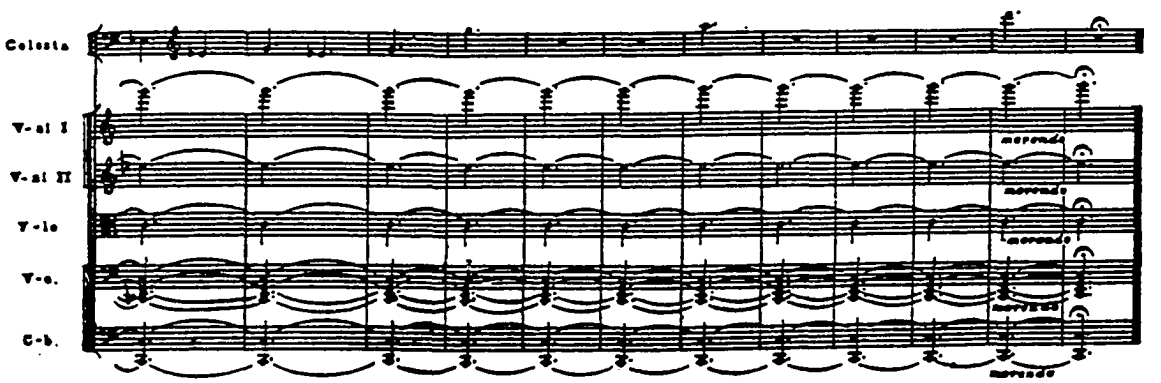


In Shostakovich's fade-out, a series of musical events slowly drifts by the listener: the anguished second theme of the opening Largo is quietly reprised by the french horn (reh. 247) and flute (reh. 248); long-held, widely-spaced chords are heard in the woodwinds (rehs. 249 and 253); the first violins intone augmented paraphrases from both the Largo second theme and music from the end of the dance suite (reh. 250). The second violins join at reh. 252, and along with the first violins, intertwine imitatively as the register continues to descend. Melodic energy slows even further at reh. 254 as the remaining strings form a mysterious sounding, widely-spaced C minor pedal. At reh. 255, a celesta plays an ascending E♭ arpeggio against the string pedal, again highly suggestive of "Der Abschied." A final reminiscence of the Largo funeral march is heard in augmentation

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(trumpet) at reh. 257. The celesta repeats its arpeggiated figure ten times, ever quieter (the last twelve bars of the symphony are given in Example 7.21). The final sonority of the Fourth Symphony, a high D in the celesta perched on top a widely-spaced C minor triad, offers a final note of resistance:

Example 7.21: final 12 bars



The refusal to resolve, the refusal to submit--perhaps this is the message of Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony.

The story of the withdrawal

Despite Shostakovich's sullied reputation in 1936, the Leningrad Philharmonic made good on its long-standing promise to premiere the Fourth Symphony.[28] Because of the work's difficulty, the Philharmonic devoted ten rehearsals to the symphony in

[28] On 28 December 1934 the Philharmonic announced its intention to program Shostakovich's Kronstadt symphony, which would have been the Fourth Symphony, but he abandoned the project shortly thereafter. See Khentova, Molodye gody, 277.

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November/December 1936; the premiere was scheduled for 11 December 1936, with Fritz Stiedry as conductor. The symphony's complexity galled some members of the orchestra and created problems for Stiedry, despite his enthusiasm for the score. Following a rehearsal on the eve of the premiere, Shostakovich withdrew the work and cancelled its premiere. The 11 December issue of Sovetskoe iskusstvo coldly announced the decision, remarking that the composer withdrew the piece for revisions.[29] The circumstances leading to the withdrawal, however, are a matter of debate. A number of questions are left unresolved: 1) Did the composer withdraw the symphony voluntarily, and if so, did he do so because he was dissatisfied with the score or upset with the musicians' performance in rehearsals? 2) Was he forced to withdraw the symphony because of political opposition to its aggressively complex style, or coerced to the point that he not so "voluntarily" withdrew the piece? 3) Was the symphony banned outright on orders from party activists and government officials, and if so, by whom? 4) Or, did the withdrawal result from a combination of factors listed in the previous questions, or from competing reasons not listed above?

Though Ian MacDonald correctly points out that "the question of whether Shostakovich withdrew the Fourth Symphony voluntarily or was ordered to do so cannot ultimately be resolved in the absence of official documentation of the affair,"[30] historians are still left to make judgements from existing testimonies, which offer contradictory

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[29] I wish to thank Laurel E. Fay for bringing this information to my attention.

[30] Ian MacDonald, "Recent Commentary on Symphonies 1-5," DSCH Journal 7 (1997): 11.

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evidence concerning the aborted premiere. In my view, Shostakovich was forced to withdraw the Fourth Symphony for several reasons, both musical and political: 1) the content of the music, as outlined above, did not conform to the demands of socialist realism in general, or to the expectations of high party officials who may have been waiting for Shostakovich's artistic response to the Lady Macbeth affair; 2) the rehearsals in preparation for the 11 December performance did not go well, and Shostakovich must have known that a poor performance of this wickedly complex work would have further agitated his critics; and 3) he realized, too, that going ahead with the performance would have created tremendous problems for himself and others during a time of unprecedented repression of artists and intellectuals. On the advice of a number of individuals, and the direct pressure applied by a few, he withdrew the symphony and publicly accepted responsibility for the debacle, thus saving himself from another dangerous scandal. The composer made no immediate public statement after the symphony was withdrawn--no apology, no confession, no finger-pointing. Though the symphony was removed from the public arena, it never disappeared from the composer's catalogue; his next symphony, after all, was the Fifth Symphony, not "the Fourth" or a "revised" Fourth. In statements to the press he perpetuated the myth that he was dissatisfied with the piece and had withdrawn it voluntarily, but many of the composer's associates knew that political factors had played a critical role in the decision to cancel the premiere and shelve the work.[31]

Isaak Glikman's testimony on the December 1936 withdrawal of the Fourth

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[31] Dmitri and Ludmilla Sollertinsky, Pages from the Life, 80.

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Symphony is crucial, because as the composer's secretary and confidant, he attended the Philharmonic's rehearsals of the Fourth, including the fateful last one. In his account, Glikman clearly states that the composer was forced from above both to cancel the performance and take responsibility for the action:

> Dmitri Dmitriyevich invited me to the rehearsal of the Fourth Symphony, of which there were an impressive number [sic][32] It goes without saying that Stiedry learnt the score of this massive-scale work, using all the resources of his masterful talent. I don't know how Dmitri Dmitriyevich felt, but I sensed an atmosphere of tension and caution in the hall. *The trouble was that rumors were circulating in musical circles that Shostakovich, in defiance of criticism, had written a work of devilish complexity that was chock-a-block full of Formalism."* . . . And one fine day a secretary of the Union of Composers, V.E. Iokhelson, and another official from Smolny [one Yakov Smirnov] appeared at a rehearsal; Dmitri Dmitriyevich was requested to report with them to I.M. Renzin, the director of the Philharmonic. They climbed up the inner spiral staircase to Renzin's office, and I remained in the Hall. About 15-20 minutes later Dmitri Dmitriyevich came to fetch me and we set off on foot to his flat at 14 Kirovsky Prospect. I was confused and upset by the long silence of my dejected companion, but finally he told me, in an even, expressionless voice, that *the Symphony would not be performed, that at the express recommendation of Renzin it had been cancelled, but that he had not wished to invoke his administrative authority and therefore had requested that the composer himself should take the decision for cancelling the performance.* Many years have since gone by, and a legend has grown up around the Fourth Symphony, which unfortunately has firmly established itself in all that has been written about Dmitri Dmitriyevich. *Essentially the rumor is that Shostakovich, being convinced that Stiedry could not cope with the Symphony, decided to cancel its performance. It would be hard to*

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[32] Glikman's statement on the number of rehearsals is confirmed by Victor Seroff, who wrote in 1943 that Shostakovich withdrew the Fourth after the tenth rehearsal; see Victor Seroff, Dmitri Shostakovich: the Life and Background of a Soviet Composer (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1947), 230-31. These figures contradict Sofia Khentova's contention that Shostakovich withdrew the symphony after only two rehearsals. Sofia Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde-Leningrade (Shostakovich in Petrograd-Leningrad) (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1979), 123; Sofia Khentova, Molodye gody, 169.

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invent anything more absurd and unfair [emphasis added in each case].[33]

Though the director of the Philharmonic, according to Glikman, made the decision to cancel the performance, the presence of party and union officials, including a frequent critic of Shostakovich (Iokhelson), casts a decidedly political shadow on the proceedings. Others who have corroborated Glikman's assertion that Shostakovich was pressured to withdraw the Fourth include the conductor Yevgeni Mravinsky, the composer Venyamin Basner, and the musicologist Lev Danilevich.[34] According to Danilevich, the party and union officials who convinced Shostakovich to withdraw the symphony were acting in his interest, because arts commissar Platon Kerzhentsev viewed the situation unfavorably and threatened to take punitive action.[35]

The rumor about which Glikman speaks--that the rehearsals were of poor quality and contributed to Shostakovich's decision to withdraw the symphony--finds its way into many Russian accounts of the events, including those attributed to the composer himself. Glikman's claim that Stiedry was "genuinely fired with enthusiasm" and used "all the resources of his masterful talent" differs significantly from the picture Sofia Khentova paints of the rehearsal process:

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[33] Glikman, Pisma k drugu, 12-13, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 119. Like Glikman, Leningrad Philharmonic violinist Mark Reznikov recalls that Stiedry rehearsed the symphony thoroughly. See Wilson, A Life Remembered, 115-16.

[34] Wilson, A Life Remembered, 123, 139.

[35] Lev Danilevich, Dmitri Shostakovich: Zhizn i tvorchestvo (Life and work) (Moscow: Sovetskii kompozitor, 1980), 87. See also Lyudmila Mikheeva, Zhizn Dmitria Shostakovicha (Shostakovich's life) (Moscow: Terra, 1997), 196.

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> Quite unexpectedly for the composer, however, Fritz Stiedry announced that he had never encountered such a score in his life, and conducted the rehearsals very reluctantly. To the astonishment of the orchestral musicians, the rehearsal began with a string sectional, not with the common run-through of the score. . . . The second rehearsal went no better; in the lobby of the Philharmonic [Stiedry] said that the orchestra is being forced to play "muddled" music [*"sumburnuyu" muzyku*]. On the following day, Shostakovich asked the symphony to withdraw the work. . . . Sensing the unwillingness of the conductor and the resistance of the orchestra, he did not want to risk it.[36]

Though Khentova did not see these events firsthand, and despite the fact that her chronology is flawed, her assessment of the rehearsals is corroborated by a number of important testimonies. The conductor Aleksandr Gauk, for example, describes a chaotic scene during the Philharmonic's rehearsals for the Fourth: "They were rehearsing the first movement. It was a shambles. Stiedry obviously did not understand the music, and the orchestra played messily, It was quite depressing."[37] M.S. Shak, a violinist with the Philharmonic, recalls the atmosphere of the first rehearsal. Despite the tension, he

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[36] Sofia Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde-Leningrade (Shostakovich in Petrograd-Leningrad) (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1979), 123. "Odnako sovsem neozhidanno dlya kompozitora Fritz Stiedri zayavil, chto 'takuyu' partituru on eshche nikogda v zhizni ne vstrechal, i provodil repetitsii ochen neokhotno. K udivleniyu orkestrantov, repetitsii nachalis ne s oznakomlenia s neznakomoi muzykoi, kak predposylki dalneishevo razuchivania, ne s obshchevo proigryvania partitury, a s raboty strunnoi gruppy. Btoraya repetitsia proshla ne luchshe; v kuluarakh filarmonii stali govorit, chto orkestr zastavlyayut igrat 'sumburnuyu' muzyku. Na sleduyushchii den Shostakovich poprosil simfoniyu s programmy snyat: v tvorcheskikh delakh on deistvoval bez kolebanii. Oshchushchaya nezhelanie dirizhera, soprotivlenie orkestra, riskobat ne khotel, da i sam ne byl uveren v svoevremennosti takovo emotsionalnovo obnazhenia." See also Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha, 169, trans. in Wilson A Life Remembered, 115.

[37] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 115. According to Solomon Volkov, Shostakovich did not like Gauk, who lost the manuscripts of the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth symphonies in a fire during the siege of Leningrad. Solomon Volkov, ed., Testimony (New York: Limelight, 1984), 39.

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mentions nothing about the musicians actively rebelling against the composer, as both Glikman and Khentova allege:

> Our acquaintance with the score started with a string sectional, rather than a play through with the whole orchestra. In the hall sat a thin young man who in our eyes still had not got much authority as a symphonist. Even in later years, when he had reached a position of world fame, he preferred not to interfere with the orchestra's work. But in the tangibly tense atmosphere of those time he sat there timidly and quietly. Bent low over the score, Fritz Stiedry pointed at it with his finger. Checking the text, he impatiently demanded of its author: "Is it correct? Is this how it should go?" The orchestra would stop and a quick answer would follow: "Correct, correct."[38]

The conflicts and contradictions among the accounts I have quoted leave us with many unresolved questions about what happened during the rehearsals, and whether the musicians' performance contributed to the withdrawal. Without the reliable evidence necessary to make final judgements about the rehearsal process, is it possible to reconstruct what Shostakovich thought of the rehearsals, or more importantly, what motivated him to withdraw the symphony? *If* one believes Solomon Volkov's testimony, Shostakovich told him that the rehearsals went very badly in 1936:

> And what would have happened if the Fourth had been performed then too? Who knows, perhaps no one would have said a word, and my song would have been sung for good. The conditions were grave, fatal. There's no point in thinking about it. Besides, Stiedry's rehearsals weren't merely bad--they were outrageous. First of all, he was scared to death, because no one would have spared him either. . . . Secondly, Stiedry didn't know or understand the score, and he expressed no desire to grapple with it. He said so straight out. And why be shy? The

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[38] Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha, 169, trans. in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 115.

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composer was an exposed formalist. Why bother digging around in his score?[39]

Whether or not Volkov is a reliable witness in this case is a matter left to the individual reader, but his account seems to be corroborated by Flora Litvinova, who also reports that Shostakovich expressed dismay over the rehearsals:

> Shostakovich stated that Stiedry had not prepared for the rehearsals, that he and the musicians were at sea and could not cope with the complexities of the score. He himself said to Stiedry that he needed to re-work the symphony before it could be performed, ostensibly to save the face of the conductor and musicians.[40]

The decision to withdraw the Fourth Symphony may have been motivated in part by the poor state of the rehearsals, but the primary motivation seems to have been political--an act of self-preservation that may have also saved his colleagues, his family, and his associates' families. The composer Venyamin Basner alludes to this point:

> But Shostakovich did also show great courage, particularly during 1936. He would never have cancelled the performance of the Fourth Symphony if it had not been for the heavy-handed hints that were dropped by 'the bosses'. After all it wasn't only Dmitri Dmitriyevich that was threatened; it was insinuated that all the performers would live to regret the day if the performance of the symphony went ahead.[41]

In my opinion, the musical and political factors that prevented Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony from being performed in December 1936 were not mutually exclusive.

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[39] Volkov, ed., Testimony, 119-20.

[40] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 115-16.

[41] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 123.

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Some orchestra members, it is clear from Glikman's account, resisted playing an extremely difficult symphony by a recently disgraced young composer. Some of these musicians rebelled, I suspect, because of sheer dislike for the music, while others may have not wanted to appear politically suspect during a very trying time. It is quite possible that Stiedry's "genuine enthusiasm" was tempered by external political pressures and that he succumbed to party scrutiny by openly questioning Shostakovich's music from the podium, thus adding to the ill feelings among the musicians. If it is true that directors of the Philharmonic planned to fire Stiedry in 1936, as Khentova claims, he may have believed that he was forced to conduct a piece he knew would bring public disgrace.[42] Even if there had been no problems during the rehearsal process, and even if the conductor and composer resisted party pressure, it is quite likely that the premiere would have been stopped by the authorities anyway. In the end, a negative reaction by Platon Kerzhentsev, head of the powerful All-Union Committee for Artistic Affairs, sealed the symphony's fate.[43]

Conclusion: the return from non-existence

From the time that Shostakovich withdrew the anti-socialist realist Fourth Symphony until its premiere twenty-five years later, he publicly accepted responsibility

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[42] Khentova, Molodye gody Shostakovicha, 168; Khentova, Shostakovich v Petrograde-Leningrade, 122.

[43] Danilevich, Dmitri Shostakovich, 87; Lev Danilevich, Nash sovremenniki: tvorchestvo Shostakovicha (Our contemporary: Shostakovich's creativity) (Moscow: Muzyka, 1965), 49.

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for the debacle of the failed premiere and told the press that the Fourth was a flawed work.[44] In 1956 he wrote: "My Fourth Symphony, which has yet to be performed by an orchestra, is also unsuccessful. The work is very imperfect in form, long-winded, and I would also say, suffers from a 'mania of grandiosity'. In this score, I am pleased with some things."[45] Indeed he was pleased with the score--very pleased. Many of Shostakovich's closest advisers and colleagues knew full well that he was pressured to withdraw the symphony, and that the public self-criticism was mere political cover for his true feelings about the piece.

In 1946 he quietly supervised the publication of a two-piano reduction of the Fourth Symphony. This lithograph was likely put together for two reasons: 1) the original manuscript was lost during the siege of Leningrad, and 2) plans were made in the heady days that followed the Great Patriotic War to resurrect the symphony.[46] The performance never took place, in large part because of *Zhdanovshchina* (the Zhdanov phenomenon, after the Leningrad party boss who directed the postwar cultural purges)--a new round of Soviet antiformalism and purges that took place during the late 1940s. Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony was singled out for harsh rebuke during the General

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[44] The official, though incorrect version of the symphony's withdrawal--that Shostakovich singly withdrew the work for purposes of revision--was first put forward by Sovetskoe iskusstvo December 1936) and repeated in subsequent articles, even ones attributed to the composer. See Dmitri Shostakovich, "Moi blizhaishie robaty" (My most recent work), Rabochii i teatr, no. 11 (1937): 24; Dmitri Shostakovich (attributed), "Moi tvorcheskii otvet" (My creative reply), Vechernyaya Moskva, 25 January 1938.

[45] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Dumy o proidennom puti." Sovetskaya muzyka 1956, no. 9: 14.

[46] I wish to thank Dr. Laurel E. Fay for passing along this information.

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Meeting of the Union of Soviet Composers (February 1948), a conference at which Shostakovich was repeatedly lambasted for his so-called anti-people formalism. Tikhon Khrennikov, in his statement to the conference, pointed to the 1946 publication of the Fourth as evidence that the Composers' Union had failed to act forcefully enough to so-called formalist tendencies in Soviet music.[47] Shostakovich was forced to keep the symphony hidden from public view for nearly a decade and a half longer.

The harsh cultural policies of *Zhdanovshchina* and the late Stalin period loosened only slightly after the leader's death in 1953. When the Central Committee reversed its earlier 1948 resolution condemning Shostakovich and other leading Soviet composers (May 1958), the repression of Soviet musicians eased a little bit for the next five years.[48] The so-called cultural thaw of the late 1950s and early 1960s was fostered by General Secretary Nikita Khrushchev's attempt to win support from the intelligentsia for his New Program of Communism. Shostakovich's earlier compositions, which had been neglected since the mid 1930s, were rehabilitated in the early 1960s and performed in public--

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[47] "Declaration of Tikhon Khrennikov," in Nicolas Slonimsky, ed., Music Since 1900, 5th rev. ed. (New York: Schirmer Books, 1994), 1368. It is unlikely that Khrennikov coveted Shostakovich's unheroic, ideologically stained Fourth Symphony and wished to steal it, as Solomon Volkov alleges. See Volkov, ed., Testimony, 212. For a rebuttal to Volkov's allegation, see Laurel E. Fay, "Shostakovich versus Volkov: Whose Testimony?," The Russian Review 39 (1980): 486. For a detailed discussion of the Soviet antiformalism debates of the late 1940s in English, see Andrew Werth, Musical Uproar in Moscow (London: Turnstile Press, 1949; reprint, New York: Greenwood Press, 1977).

[48] The Central Committee resolution of 28 May 1958 ("On rectifying errors in the evaluation of the operas 'The Great Friendship' 'Bogdan Khmelnitsky,' and 'With All One's Heart'") was first published in Pravda on 8 June 1958. For a translation, see "Party Reverses Past Criticism of Leading Composers," The Current Digest of the Soviet Press 10, no. 23 (1958), 3-7.

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including a revised version of his much-maligned opera Lady Macbeth, now titled Katerina Izmailova, op. 114 (1956-63).

In 1961, a year after Shostakovich was forced into party membership, the Leningrad Philharmonic approached Shostakovich with the idea of performing the Fourth Symphony.[49] Librarians from the Leningrad Philharmonic copied out new parts and prepared a new score in consultation with the composer.[50] The premiere of the Fourth took place on 30 December 1961 by the Moscow Philharmonic, conducted by Kirill Kondrashin, in the Large Hall of the Conservatory; the score was published in 1962 by Sovetskii Kompozitor.[51] Kondrashin recounts how he came to conduct the first performance:

> In 1961 the artistic director of the Moscow Philharmonic, M. Grinberg, a very intelligent man, advised me to have a look at Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony, which was written in 1936 and had still never been performed. . . . It was only later that one of Shostakovich's close friends, Levon Atovmyan, found the surviving orchestral parts of the Symphony in Leningrad. Using them as his basis, he was able to reconstruct the score. He also made a reduction of the Symphony for two pianos, and it was this version that I first saw. It was very

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[49] On Shostakovich's forced recruitment into the Communist Party, see Wilson, A Life Remembered, 332-39.

[50] Hulme, Catalogue, 113-15. The location of the autograph score is unknown; the manuscript was allegedly lost during the Second World War. The score was reconstructed from parts by Boris Shalman, librarian of the Leningrad Philharmonic. Fragments of the first and third movements are preserved at the Russian State Archives of Literature and Art. There is controversy over whether Shostakovich revised the Fourth Symphony in preparation for the late 1961 premiere. Because the issue still needs documentation and much contradictory information is being circulated, I do not address this question here.

[51] For performance, publishing, and recording information, see Hulme, Catalogue, 113-15.

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> carelessly done, with few dynamic markings and tempo instructions.[52] Nevertheless, it was immediately clear to me that this was an outstanding work. I told Grinberg that I would be delighted to perform the Symphony. Shostakovich didn't know about our plan at the time, as Grinberg had decided to tell him only when he was certain that I would agree to the performance. I went to see Shostakovich. He said, "Here on the piano is the version of the score that you have seen. As the full score was lost I've forgotten much of it. I need to look at it again to see whether the Symphony is worth performing, and whether it requires any changes." The next day he rang me. *"Kirill Petrovich, I'd be very happy for you to perform the Symphony. No changes need to be made. The piece is very dear to me as it is"* [emphasis added].[53]

Isaak Glikman, who sadly escorted his friend Shostakovich out of Leningrad's Philharmonic Hall following the Fourth's cancellation in 1936, took in the composer's reactions at the symphony's remarkable premiere twenty-five years later. His recollections confirm the notion that Shostakovich's public self-criticism over the Fourth masked the pride he felt toward the piece:

> After the colossal success of the concert, we went to his home. Under the fresh impression of what he had just heard, Dmitri Dmitriyevich told me, "It seems to me that in many respect my Fourth Symphony stands much higher than my most recent ones." A remarkable admission! Given that this statement contained an element of exaggeration, it was nevertheless provoked by his impulse to defend a composition which had suffered unjust oblivion in the last twenty-five years.[54]

Glikman's recollection of the composer's reaction to the premiere is corroborated by Flora Litvinova, a longtime friend of the Shostakovich family. Her testimony is vital,

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[52] According to Derek Hulme, three arrangements of the Fourth Symphony were prepared: for two pianos by the composer (1946), for two pianos by Pavel Lamm (n.d., not published), and for piano four-hands by Lev Atovmyan (n.d., not published).

[53] Quoted in Wilson A Life Remembered, 347-348.

[54] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 120.

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too, in confirming a link between the political subtext of the Fourth (a defiant gesture against party ideology) and its complex musical content. On 31 December 1961, a day after the symphony's long-delayed premiere, she makes an entry in her diary that reflects a deep understanding of the events of 1936:

> Yesterday we went to hear the Fourth Symphony, we had been invited by Dmitri Dmitriyevich. It was the first time we heard it, and it made a shattering impression on us. Why do Dmitri Dmitriyevich's later works lack those qualities of impetuosity, dynamic drive, contrasts of rhythm and color, tenderness and spikiness? One involuntarily thinks what a different path he would have taken, how different his life would have been if it were not for the 'historic' Decree which warped the living spirit in him. Now the Symphony enjoyed the enormous success. Dmitri Dmitriyevich said that he had not corrected one note in it. Its exceptional maturity and finished perfection shone through from the first to the last note. Lady Macbeth and the Fourth Symphony surely marked the apogee of Shostakovich's creative career.[55]

In a 1970 conversation with Litvinova, Shostakovich discussed the significance of the Fourth from both musical and political standpoints. She quotes him as saying:

> You ask if I would have been different without "Party guidance"? Yes, almost certainly. No doubt the line that I was pursuing when I wrote the Fourth Symphony would have been stronger and sharper in my work. I would have displayed more brilliance, used more sarcasm, I could have revealed my ideas openly instead of having to resort to camouflage. I would have written more pure music.[56]

Despite the successful premiere in December 1961 and the composer's positive reaction, few performances of the Fourth ensued, largely because a new cultural freeze

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[55] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 348.

[56] Quoted in Wilson, A Life Remembered, 426.

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began a year later, right after the premiere of his controversial Thirteenth Symphony ("Babii Yar")--a work that forcefully confronts Soviet society with its antisemitism.[57] Though the Fourth did not fully enter the orchestral repertory in the Soviet Union, several fine studies of the work were published during the 1960s.[58] The Fourth Symphony has been attracting more attention among both western and Russian scholars since 1979, when Solomon's Volkov's controversial Testimony started a posthumous reappraisal of Shostakovich's life and works--a reappraisal that portrays the composer as an internal dissident under the Soviet regime. Still, as mentioned earlier, much work is left to be done on the Fourth Symphony, including a documented account of the events surrounding the cancelled premiere in 1936. In addition, better documentation is need to establish the composition, performance, and publication histories of the symphony. A detailed study of the sources, too, is needed to determine what differences, if any, exist between the version the Leningrad Philharmonic played in rehearsal in 1936, and the

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[57] In a speech entitled "Shostakovich Remembered" (Hunter College, New York City, 28 September 1996), Yevgeni Yevtushenko recalled that the authorities ringed the Conservatory with tanks, trucks, and soldiers the night of the Thirteenth's premiere on 14 December 1962. Boris Schwarz gives a compelling account of the Thirteenth Symphony's premiere in "Shostakovich: Soviet Citizen and Anti-Stalinist," in Music and Civilization: Essays in Honor of Paul Henry Lang (New York: W. W. Norton, 1983), 369:

> I can still remember the stunned silence followed by a wild outburst of approval at the end of that premiere in the packed conservatory hall in Moscow. The following morning, the work was withdrawn "for revision." The cultural honeymoon had ended, the "thaw" was refreezing. The intelligentsia tried to fight back, but in vain; whether in music, literature, or art, the hard-liners took over, and "The Heirs of Stalin" regained power.

[58] Orlov, "V Seredine Puti," in Dmitri Shostakovich, ed. Lev Danilevich, 166-87; Orlov, Russkii sovetskii simfonizm, 106-38; and Sabinina, Simfonizm Shostakovicha, 91-106.

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version the Moscow Philharmonic played in the work's premiere twenty-five years later.[59]

[59] A model for such a study is Laurel E. Fay, "From Lady Macbeth to Katerina: Shostakovich's Versions and Revisions," in Shostakovich Studies, ed. David Fanning (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 160-88.

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Conclusion

This dissertation examined political content and musical substance in Dmitri Shostakovich's Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies. Though these works did not achieve the immediate and lasting success that his First and Fifth symphonies attained, they are no less important in his development. My study places the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies in a context that is marked by discussions of: 1) the complex relationship between the composer and the state, including ways in which he both dissented from and cooperated with the regime; 2) musical life in Russia during the first twenty years of bolshevik rule; 3) Soviet Russian political and artistic discourses; 4) external political factors that shaped the composition and reception of each work; and 5) the composer's motivations for writing these symphonies. In addition, I have drawn attention to previously published documents from the Soviet press that have been largely overlooked or undervalued by western scholars--for reasons of language, inaccessibility of sources, ideological mistrust, and problems of authorship. These materials shed light on Shostakovich's position in the culture debates during the early Stalin period, his attitudes toward symphonic music, and broader historical questions concerning the interaction of music and politics in Soviet Russia. In this conclusion I first provide a narrative of major historical and compositional issues related to the Second, Third, and Fourth symphonies (readers already familiar with the issues at hand may skip this section). This ten-page summary leads me at the end to a brief but important discussion of problems of musical meaning in Shostakovich's music, a crucial issue in the recent

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debates surrounding his life and work.

Despite significant reorganization of the cultural and educational ministries following the Russian Revolution, higher education in Russia was still under the influence of the old regime in the late 1910s and early 1920s. The prevailing academicism of the Petrograd (later Leningrad) Conservatory at this time, for example, provided students with conventional, nineteenth-century approaches to pedagogy, performance, composition, and history. Shostakovich's first stint as a conservatory student (1919-25) took place during the catastrophic Civil War and the painful recovery of early NEP. When his father died in 1922, the teenaged composer worked--despite frail health and malnutrition--as a cinema accompanist to help support his family. He detested such boring and exhausting work because it kept him from studying, composing, socializing, and enjoying cultural events (especially concerts and theater). Despite financial hardships and ongoing health problems, he received diplomas in piano performance (1923) and composition (1925) from the Conservatory. On the surface, Shostakovich's First Symphony (1924-25), written in fulfillment of his composition diploma, is a four-movement work that reflects conventional approaches to form and structure. Closer inspection reveals a youthful masterpiece filled with innovations in harmony, counterpoint, and orchestration--harbingers of things to come. Premiered by the State Academic Philharmonic in May 1926 and greeted warmly by the musical press, the symphony was soon played by leading symphony orchestras throughout Europe and the United States.

Constrained by neither the academic rigors of the academy nor the official

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hostility toward modern music that marked later years, Shostakovich's music became more experimental in 1926-27. Considering the family's financial difficulties, it is understandable that the composer was pleased in early 1927 to receive his first commission--to compose a symphonic cantata to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution. Despite the low quality of the text he was given to set, the symphonic dedication To October (later called the Second Symphony) is an engaging work that brings to mind the modernity of well-known composers in the West (Stravinsky, Milhaud, Honegger, Hindemith, Schoenberg) and in Soviet Russia (Roslavetz, Mosolov, Deshevov, Schillinger, and Popov). In addition to its modern complexities, To October correctly fulfilled the political narrative that characterizes other agit-prop works commissioned for the October Jubilee of 1927: the dark chaos of prerevolutionary times is overcome by an awakening of revolutionary spirit, followed by a heroic struggle and a victorious conclusion.

From letters and reported conversations to friends, however, it is clear that the message of To October does not accurately reflect the composer's attitudes toward the Revolution, communism, or the Soviet regime. Always loathe to write illustrative music, Shostakovich did not musically paint Bezymensky's text or provide simple musical accompaniment to the bombastic verses. Rather, he allowed the poem's key images of struggle and victory to guide the work's overall form, affect, and compositional process. By placing modernism in the service of bolshevism, whatever one may think of the idea, Shostakovich's symphonic dedication reflects the artistic-political program of Russian constructivism, an influential trend in the arts that attempted to synthesize the artistic and

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political revolutions.

Shostakovich entered To October in a contest sponsored by the State Academic Philharmonic (Leningrad Philharmonic) and it was selected to be premiered in November 1927, at Leningrad's official celebrations commemorating the Revolution. Journals sympathetic to modern music published laudatory essays on the composer and his new symphonic cantata; these articles portrayed him as a politically committed fellow-traveller whose musically revolutionary style expressed the broader social and political revolution taking place in Soviet society. Opponents of modern music, especially members of RAPM, criticized the level of modernism in the work and questioned the composer's sincerity in writing a piece on a revolutionary theme.

Having reentered the Conservatory in the 1927/28 academic year, this time as a postgraduate student in composition, Shostakovich began receiving a student stipend again. This income, combined with the money he made from To October (commission fee, competition prize money, performance royalties), permitted him to take permanent leave from playing the piano in Leningrad's top movie houses and concentrate on writing music. But the Soviet political and artistic landscape changed dramatically starting in 1928, immediately after Stalin purged left oppositionist leaders from the Communist Party, strengthening his control over the country as a whole. As the cultural component of the First Five-Year Plan, the proletarian episode in the arts (1928-32) is marked by state-sponsored harassment of artists, intellectuals, and other freethinkers. As Soviet Russia's leading proletarian music organization, RAPM stepped to the forefront of Stalin's cultural revolution, promising to liquidate music it deemed ideologically unfit for

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the proletariat, including untexted instrumental music, opera, syncopated dance music, jazz, and light music. Under RAPM's administration, new music had to possess an overtly ideological message to be published and performed.

Like nearly all Soviet composers during the proletarian episode in music, Shostakovich could only find work writing so-called *prikladnovo muzyka* (applied music, or music for theater, ballet, and film). As one of only two independently circulated pieces he wrote during the proletarian episode, The First of May symphony is a kind of companion piece to To October: a single-movement, episodic, symphonic cantata celebrating an important holiday in the Soviet calendar. Like the First Symphony, The First of May was written as a graduation piece for the Leningrad Conservatory. These two works, of course, differ considerably--partly because of Shostakovich's development as a composer, and partly because of the radical changes that had recently taken place at the Conservatory. In 1924-25 he was expected to write a purely instrumental, four-movement, nonprogrammatic symphony as his graduation test piece. But in 1929, with new regulations on creative expression, it was necessary for composers to submit music that displayed ideological content in the form of a text, title, or program.

Although Shostakovich properly satisfied the ideological requirements of new music with The First of May, it contains complex compositional features that conflicted with the simple patriotic tunes favored by the proletarian music establishment. Composed according to a principle of composition in which themes are continuously varied within a series of quickly-changing episodes, The First of May turns out to be a symphony in which virtually no theme is ever repeated (except for the fugato episode in

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rehs. 25-31). The strong sense of forward motion, created by the constant introduction of new melodies and episodes, mimics the constant swirl of activity associated with large public festivals.

The premiere of The First of May in late January 1930 at a concert sponsored by the Komsomol, I argue in Chapter Two, may have been arranged to temper the increasing criticism of his music in the press (especially his controversial opera)--i.e., that he did not work toward the goals of socialist construction. Official hostility toward modernism, a hallmark of Soviet cultural policy during the Stalin period (1928-53), has its roots in the culture debates of the 1920s, when a variety of artistic and intellectual movements flowered in Soviet Russia. In Chapter Three I showed how cultural hard liners during the 1920s formulated a system of discourse in which "leftism," constructivism," and "formalism" became leading terms of abuse used against modernists. During the Stalin period, these labels became fixtures in the Soviet lexicon, used to denounce non-party influences in the arts, humanities, and sciences. I examine the use of these terms to abuse Shostakovich's music in Chapters Three, Six, and Seven.

As a rising star among the musical elite, Shostakovich increasingly drew fire from music critics during the proletarian episode. He clashed openly with ideologues in public forums (articles to the press and meetings of creative workers), ridiculed supporters of the proletarian line, and argued in favor of high musical culture. Criticism of the composer intensified in 1929, after new party decrees banned all publications not geared toward mass education, marxist critique, or political indoctrination. Documents in Chapter Four attest to ways in which Shostakovich dissented from, and at times

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cooperated with, official policies toward creative expression from 1927 through 1933. This period covers the high modernism of the late NEP, the repression of the proletarian episode, and the relatively conciliatory policies of stalinist cultural *perestroika*. Shostakovich's iconoclasm in both music and print contributed to a need to seek political cover at times, examples of which include the composition of The First of May symphony, his work for the ideologically-correct Leningrad TRAM, and his participation in RAPM's campaign to liquidate the light music genre.

Fed up with the coercive atmosphere, suppression of high-quality music, and lack of creative individuality permitted by work in the Soviet theater, Shostakovich stepped to the forefront of a new reform movement by publishing a controversial article in November 1931. In his "Declaration of a Composer's Responsibilities" he harshly criticized the state of musical life under RAPM's control, called for composers to turn toward traditional genres like the symphony, and resolved not to write any more music for the theater, claiming that it robbed him of his creative individuality. The declaration touched off a firestorm; members of RAPM quickly organized a backlash against Shostakovich in the press. He refused to back down. At a speech to a union of musical theater workers (December 1931), he criticized RAPM for its failure to improve the quality of Soviet music and its overemphasis on ideological and theoretical issues at the expense of the creative development of Soviet composers. His outspokenness and public dissent, however, could only go so far. In an interview for The New York Times (also December 1931), he portrayed himself as a faithful citizen-composer of the regime and an active supporter of Soviet communism.

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Though the country's intellectual and cultural elite welcomed the change in direction brought on by the restructuring of the arts in 1932, especially for the ideological relaxation it promised, the move solidified the Party's direct control over artistic production, ultimately setting the stage for the horrifying repression of artists and intellectuals during the late 1930s. Having been a leader in the reform movement of 1931-32, Shostakovich wrote several articles after the April 1932 restructuring in which he obligingly thanked the Central Committee for their actions and called for reconciliation among the various factions of a divided musical community--a politically safe position to take. In 1933, however, he resumed his outspokenness on creative issues, publicly dismissing the newly-coined slogan "socialist realism" and once again objecting to the low standards of Soviet music criticism.

During the period of stalinist *perestroika* (1932-35) socialist realism became the official creative doctrine of the Communist Party. Though cast as a way to synthesize traditional creative practices with a revolutionary message, socialist realism was designed to regiment Soviet arts into stylistic and ideological conformity. The party-administered creative unions held meetings and congresses in 1933-35 to discuss socialist realism and debate its application to every possible artistic practice. The Party's early attempts to force artists' acceptance of socialist realism were met with mixed results. The First All-Union Congress of Soviet Writers, held in August 1934, proved to be a tremendous propaganda boon for comrade Stalin and his Party; its proceedings were closely followed in the country's newspapers and arts journals. Far less successful (and far less publicized) were efforts by the Union of Soviet Composers to ensure that

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composers were incorporating socialist realist principles in their work. After publishing transcripts from the Writers Congress and offering prescriptions on how to create socialist realist music, the USC held a series of creative discussions in 1935 on such topics as symphonism, opera, folk music, music for children, and mass song.

By that time, the overwhelming critical success of his second opera, Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk (premiered in January 1934), had catapulted Shostakovich to the top of the Soviet musical establishment: his works were performed on a regular basis, he wrote essays and gave speeches on a variety of creative issues, and he became the subject of numerous interviews and articles. In speeches and statements to the press during the *perestroika* period, he emphasized the importance of creative individuality and spoke out against the abuse of terms such as "formalism" and "epigonism."

Shostakovich continued his outspoken ways at the USC's *diskussia o simfonizme* (February 1935) by leading a group of dissenting composers and critics who opposed ideas endorsed by the Party and Union. In his speech, Shostakovich clashed with the Party's directives in several major ways: failing to embrace the principles of socialist realism; rejecting the idea that Soviet symphonism must contain Soviet themes and ideological content; displaying a deep distrust of politically-charged slogans; openly questioning alleged successes of Soviet symphonism; and raising the controversial idea that Soviet composers might elevate the quality of their work by studying music of their western counterparts.[1] In my view, his overall outspokenness in public, illustrated by his

[1] He was generously supported by a number of leading composers and critics at the conference (Sollertinsky, Braudo, Shebalin, Kabelevsky), but his non-party ideas raised the ire of former RAPMists (Khubov, Gladkovsky, Belyi) and of the conference's

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comments at the conference on symphonism, contributed to his public rebuke by party officials in 1936.

After Pravda published its inflammatory reviews of Lady Macbeth and Bright Stream, presumably on the direct orders of comrade Stalin or of other high party officials, a campaign of organized slander was waged against the disgraced composer, his supporters, and other leading members of the musical intelligentsia. As outlined in Chapter Six, the Lady Macbeth affair served as a warning to the entire musical community (and by extension the entire artistic and intellectual community) that its work must conform to the principles of socialist realism. Despite official resolutions passed "unanimously" by the USC to censure Shostakovich, a number of musicians and artists bravely defended the composer during this harrowing time. The support he received from some corners, however, diminishes only slightly the awful events of 1936, when many sympathetic colleagues abandoned his cause and numerous critics viciously attacked his reputation.

Shostakovich showed great heroism during the Lady Macbeth affair by remaining publicly silent, itself a symbol of resistance--no public apology or acknowledgement of wrongdoing (as the authorities expected), no finger-pointing or blaming others for his downfall (as others often did). He sought solace from the strain of recent events by finishing his Fourth Symphony, which he called "the credo of my musical work."

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featured speakers, all of whom gave party-approved accounts on symphonism. Though all delegates to the conference paid proper rhetorical tributes to the Party and the Union of Soviet Composers, not all of them endorsed the Party's ideas on Soviet symphonism. The results of the *diskussia o simfonizme*, therefore, were a far cry from the unanimous voice of support for socialist realism that the Communist Party had expected.

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Unrepentant in the face of official hostility to his music, he wrote a complex, hour-long, untexted symphonic work with no connection to a political theme or message--i.e., a deliberately anti-socialist realist piece, and a defiant gesture designed to clash with the kind of mind-numbing propaganda envisioned by the upper party echelon. In the final chapter I illustrate this point by analyzing Shostakovich's unheroic use of march images, the extensive use of melodic variation and transformational complexities in each movement, his use of nineteenth-century "bourgeoise" dances as creative inspiration, and the finale's unheroic coda.

Though the Fourth Symphony, as I argue in Chapter Seven, stands as Shostakovich's defiant answer to unjust criticism, his Fifth Symphony, written in 1937, was falsely billed in the press as his "creative response to just criticism." The Fifth both marked his return to a conventional, four-movement scheme and represented a moderation of the complex style displayed by Lady Macbeth and the Fourth Symphony. Most Soviet critics were willing to accept the Fifth Symphony because the slow movement's tragic intonations are seemingly resolved in the direction of triumph during the finale. But as we have learned from the composer's associates since his death, the heroism of the finale is false; the Fifth Symphony is by no means the optimistic piece of socialist realism the Party claimed it was. The gulf between the official interpretation of the Fifth (creative response to just criticism) and recent interpretations (symbol of grief and resistance), as well as that between the official version of the Fourth's withdrawal and recent revelations about its suppression, illustrates the dramatic reappraisal of Shostakovich's life and music that has taken place since the publication of Solomon

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Volkov's controversial Testimony twenty years ago.

Recent debates in the field of Shostakovich studies have focused on sensitive issues such as the authenticity of Volkov's book, the composer's attitudes toward the Soviet state and the Communist Party, his status as either a secret political dissident or an establishment Soviet composer, and the degree to which his music offers richly coded symbols of political defiance and moral humanism. As mentioned in the Introduction, though I do not accept Volkov's version of how the book was put together (parts of Testimony are clearly plagiarized, and other parts seem culled from conversations with Shostakovich's associates, not the composer himself), I am in agreement with the overwhelming majority of Shostakovich scholars who now believe that the general political tone of Testimony is correct--i.e., that far from being loyal to a regime that repressed him, Shostakovich was a dissident intellectual-artist who despised the Soviet state, resented the rule of the Communist Party, and suffered from the repressive environment of totalitarian rule. This view is confirmed in testimonies of the composer's associates and relatives that have appeared since the mid 1980s.

It has now become fashionable to portray Shostakovich as a repressed artist-intellectual, but voices of political dissent do not exist in every piece, nor do coded messages magically unlock "the meaning" of his music--as if there could ever be a single meaning or message in a piece of music. The composer himself chafed at attempts to control, fix, and manipulate the meaning of music during his lifetime. In 1933, for example, he wrote: "When a critic writes that in such-and-such symphony, the Soviet civil servants are depicted by oboes and clarinets, and soldiers of the Red Army are

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depicted by the brass section, then one wants to cry out: 'Untrue!'"[2] Now the danger comes not from Soviet critics and their vulgar marxist interpretations of music, but from contemporary critics (both western and Russian) who want to portray the composer as a lifelong dissident and invent programs to confirm this view. Knowing Shostakovich's position on music criticism and musical meaning, Richard Taruskin reminds us that the current practice of reassessing the composer's music has led writers to repeat the same sins as Soviet music critics--i.e., finding political content and secret programs where there are none. Though scholars who depict Shostakovich's music as creative symbols of resistance bring us closer (perhaps) to the way the composer may have conceived his art, at times they unwisely attempt to control the legacy of this great artist.

Meaning in music is a fluid process of understanding and re-understanding--always subject to change, always subject to revision. Nowhere is that more apparent, Taruskin argues, than in the music of Dmitri Shostakovich:

> No other music--indeed, I would not hesitate to say, no other body of texts--so radically forces engagement with the most fundamental issues of interpretation. No other body of texts so compellingly demonstrates that meaning is never wholly immanent but arises out of a process of interaction between subject and object, so that interpretation is never wholly subjective or wholly objective to the exclusion of the other. And no other body of texts so fully convinces us that *the* meaning of an artwork, indeed of any communication, is never wholly stable but

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[2] Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet music criticism is lagging) Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 121. "Kogda kritik pishet, chto v takoi-to simfonii sovsluzhashchie izobrazhayutsya goboem i klarnetom, a krasnoarmeitsy--gruppoi mednykh instrumentov, to khochetsya kriknut: 'nepravda!'." In his review of The New Shostakovich by Ian MacDonald, Richard Taruskin quotes this same passage to criticize MacDonald's attempts to find dissident voices in nearly every piece. See Richard Taruskin, review of The New Shostakovich, by Ian MacDonald, Slavic Review 52 (1993): 396-97.

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> is the product of its history, a history that only begins with its creation. . . . On the other hand are those who not only acknowledge the immanence of a latent musical content but seek, or presume, to define it, to fix it, to make it manifest, to have it name names and propound propositions, to subject it to paraphrase, which means subjecting it to limitation and ultimately to control.[3]

Musical expression, especially in purely-instrumental music, necessarily implies a lack of absolute, immanent, or as Soviet critics of the 1930s might say, "concrete" meaning. Current writers on Shostakovich, I believe, should be careful in recognizing differences between *interpreting* musical meaning and *imposing* it. The difference lies in allowing a field of interpretations to exist rather than believing that a single interpretation must be accepted by everyone in the scholarly community. Otherwise, current hermeneutic readings of his music--though sympathetic to the composer's plight--will have no more validity that the false, Soviet-era programs that were superimposed on the Fifth, Seventh, Eleventh, and Twelfth symphonies, among other pieces.

As listeners and scholars, we do not need to programmatically decode the Fourth Symphony, for instance, to feel its significance as a politically defiant gesture. Its very existence is a political statement. Imagine: a condemned Soviet composer who writes a piece of music that conflicts in nearly every way possible with the demands of high party officials, all the while witnessing a rise in political terror directed at himself, his friends, and his country. Is it absolutely necessary to fix a meaning on the symphony's conclusion--a murderously loud funeral march followed by a long *morendo* fade-out? Does the coda, after all, really intimate resignation, death, and departure, as suggested by

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[3] Richard Taruskin, "Shostakovich and the Inhuman," in Defining Russia Musically (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 476, 480.

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the Mahlerian orchestral codes outlined in Chapter Seven? Does the conclusion, as Testimony suggests, intimate the composer's own execution? Or is the composer simply trying to write an ambiguous and unheroic conclusion designed to be the antithesis of socialist realist art? Indeed, ambiguity is the key here--ambiguity that is built right into the music. Like the final sonority in the piece (high D superimposed on a widely-space C minor chord), the meaning(s) of the Fourth Symphony are deliberately left unresolved by the composer--we are left to fill in the blanks. If we wish to come to a credible judgement of what Shostakovich was trying to express with the symphony, we must ask further questions of the music, its composer, the circumstances surrounding its composition, and finally, ourselves. In the absence of the composer's credible testimony at the time (he was constrained, after all, from ever publicly addressing the non-party attributes of his work), answers to these questions can never be fully known, although interpretations can be offered--interpretations that are forever subject to reappraisal and revision.

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Appendix 1a
Aleksandr Bezymensky's "Oktyabryu"

My shli, my prosili roboty i kleba.
Serdtsa byli szhaty tiskami toski.
Zavodskie truby tyanulisya k nebu,
Kak ruki, bessilnye szhat kulaki.
Strashno bylo imya
Nashikh tenet:
Molchanie.
Stradanie.
Gnet.

No gromche orudii vorvalis v molchanie
Slova nashei skorbi, slova nashikh muk.
O, Lenin! Ty vykoval volyu stradania,
Ty vykoval volyu mozolistykh ryk.
My ponyali, Lenin, chto nasha sudba
Nosit
Imya:
Borba.

Borba! Ty vela nas k poslednemu boyu.
Borba! Ty dala nam pobedu Truda.
I etoi pobedy nad gnetom i tmoyu
Nikto ne otnimet u nas nikogda.
Pust kazhdyi v borbe budet molod i khrabr.
Ved imya podedy
Oktyabr.

Oktyabr! eto - solntsa zhelannovo vestnik.
Oktyabr! eto - volya vosstabshikh vekov.
Oktyabr! eto - trud, eto radost i pesnya.
Oktyabr! eto - schastie polei i stankov.
Vot znamia, vot imya zhivykh pokolednii:
Oktyabr,
Kommuna,
I Lenin.

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Appendix 1b
Aleksandr Bezymensky's "To October" (trans. Joseph Darby)

We marched, we begged for work and bread.
Our heart was nearly crushed from anguish.
Factory stacks stretch across the horizon,
Like arms, powerless to clinch fists.
We were terrified.
We were shadows of ourselves
Silent.
Suffering.
Oppressed.

But then, loud booms burst and fell silent
We mourned, we were tortured.
O Lenin! You forged the will of suffering,
You forged the will of calloused hands.
Lenin, we understood that our destiny
Carries
A name:
Struggle.

Struggle! You led us to the final liberation.
Struggle! You gave us the victory of Workers.
And nobody can ever take from us
This victory over oppression and darkness.
Let all in the struggle be young and courageous.
The name of the victory is
October.

October! It is the sun of a welcome herald.
October! It is the will of the rebellious ages.
October! It is the work, the joy, and the song.
October! It is the happiness of the fields and the machines.
It is a slogan, it is our living generations:
October,
The Commune
And Lenin.

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Appendix 2a
Semyon Kirsanov's "Pervomaiskaya"

V pervoe, Pervoe maya
broshen v byloe blesk.
Iskru v ogon pazdubvya,
plamya pokrylo lesa.

Ukhom ponikshikh elok
vslushivalis lesa
v yunykh eshche maevok
shorokhi, golosa.

Shorokhi, golosa --
pervaya polosa Maya,
ognyami byushchevo
budushchemu v glaza.

Nashe Pervoe maya,
v posviste pul gorya,
shtyk i nagan szhimaya,
bralo dvorets tsarya.

Pavshii dvorets tsarya--
eto eshche zarya Maya,
vpered idushchevo,
svetom znamen gorya.

Pervoe maya nashe--
v budushchee parusa--
vsvilo nad morem pashen
rulkoe korpusa.

Novye korpusa--
novaya polosa Maya,
ognyami byushchevo
budushchemu v glaza.

Fabriki i kolonii,
maiskii vametnem parad,
zemlyu sozhmem kolenkami--
nashs prishla pora.

Slushaite, proletarii,
nashikh zavodov rech,
vam, podzhigaya staroe,
novuyu yav zazhech.

Solntse znamen podnimaya,
marsh, zagremi v ushakh.
Kazahdoe Pervoe maya--
k sotsializmu shag.

Pervoe maya--shag
szhevshikh vintovku shakht.
V ploshchadi, revolyutsia
vbei millionnyi shag!

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Appendix 2b
Semyon Kirsanov's "The First of May" (trans. Joseph Darby)

On the very first First of May
a torch was tossed into the past.
The spark grew into a fire,
the flames engulfed the forest.

With ears of drooping firs
the forest listened
to the still young May Day meeting
of noises and voices.

The noises and voices -
the first ranks of May,
gunfire is striking
the future in the eyes.

Our First of May,
with whistling bullets of grief,
bayonet and revolver squeezed,
overthrew the tsar's palace.

The fallen palace of the tsar -
even this is the dawn of May,
marching forward,
in the light of grief's banners.

Our May Day -
in the future, sails
are flying above a sea of fields
echoing the corps.

New corps -
the new voice of May,
gunfire is striking
the future in the eyes.

Factories and colonies,
put on a May Day parade,
we reap the land on our knees -
our time has come.

Listen, proletarians,
to the speech of our factories,
burning down the old,
you light a new reality.

Raising banners to the sun,
a march thunders in the ears.
Every First of May is
a step towards socialism.

The First of May - a step
for miners who grasp rifles.
In the squares, the revolution,
grows into a million steps!

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Appendix 3

"Anketa 'Proletarskovo muzykanta' o 'legkom zhanre'" (Survey of 'Proletarian musician' about the light-music genre), Proletarskii muzykant, no. 3 (1930): 25.

Дмитрий Шостакович. Композитор.

Во-первых, самым энергичным образом приветствую борьбу, начатую „Пролетарским музыкантом" с так называемым „легким жанром" музыкального искусства.

Считаю лишним повторять мое резко-отрицательное отношение к вредительской деятельности господ Хайтов, Мессиавов, Липатовых и иже с ними.

Предлагаю следующие меры борьбы с „легким жанром":

1. Обратиться в органы, контролирующие издание и исполнение музыкальной продукции, Главлиту и Главреперткому, с требованием издания соответствующего постановления, категорически запрещающего издание и исполнение „легкого жанра".

2. Исключения из устава авторских обществ пункта, гласящего, что членами авторского общества может быть всякий, доказавший, что его произведения исполняются публично. В связи с этим поголовное исключение из числа членов авторских обществ композиторов, работающих в области „легкого жанра".

3. В виду того, что „легкий жанр" имеет чрезвычайно большое распространение в рабочих клубах, радио-передачах и т. д. и посему делает громадной вредности дело, отравляющее здоровое музыкальное сознание широких масс, радиолюбителей и членов рабочих клубов, повести в клубах и радиопередачах широкую работу, раз'ясняющую художественное убожество, вредность при слушании продукции „легкого жанра" и, самое основное, классовую сущность легкого жанра.

4. Конечно, голым администрированием не уничтожишь легкого жанра, как стиля. Поставщики музыкальной продукции вряд-ли охотно сдадут свои позиции и тепленькие местечки в ряду получающих авторский гонорар. Они будут пробиваться наружу не только в виде цыганских романсов и откровенных фокстротов. Нет, они к цыганскому романсу *припишут „стопроцентно идеологически-выдержанный"* текст. Они будут лезть из всех щелей с „Кирпичиками", „Джон-Греем"—вместо Джон-Грея-денди, Джон-Грей-шахтер (есть такой) и тому подобной макулатурой.

Благодаря этому, часто притупляется бдительность советской общественности, которая, не задумываясь, проглатывает музыкальную отраву с „идеологическим" текстом.

Для борьбы с легким жанром, передовой музыкальной общественности нужно позвать себе на помощь *партию, комсомол, профсоюзы*, радио, клубный актив и музыкальное затейничество.

Лишь только вместе со всей советской общественностью проводя широкую раз'яснительную работу о классовой сущности легкого жанра, удастся ликвидировать этот жанр.

P. S. Считаю своей политической ошибкой разрешение, данное мною дирижеру Малько, на переложение моей инструментовки „Тайти-Трота", ибо „Тайти-Трот" (номер из балета „Золотой век"), исполняемый без соответствующего окружения, показывающего *отношение автора к материалу*, может создать ошибочное впечатление о том, что я являюсь сторонником „легкого жанра". Соответствующее запрещение мною послано дирижеру Малько за границу 3 месяца тому назад.

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Appendix 4

Dmitri Shostakovich, "Deklaratsia obyazannostei kompozitor" (Declaration of a composer's responsibilities), Rabochii i teatr, no. 31 (1931): 6.

Будучи в двухмесячном отпуску, я много думал о своей композиторской работе.

С начала 1929 г. по конец 1931 г., всего три года, я работаю только в качестве «прикладного» композитора. Писал музыку к драматургическим спектаклям и для кино. Сделал в этой области очень много: «Новый Вавилон» (ФЭКСы), «Клоп» (театр Мейерхольда), «Выстрел», «Целина», «Правь, Британия» (Ленинградский ТРАМ), «Одна» (ФЭКСы), «Златые горы» (Юткевич), «Условно убитый» (Мюзик-Холл). Имею договоры на «Гамлета» (Театр им. Вахтангова, реж. Акимов), «Твердеет бетон» (моск. кино-фабрика, реж. Могарет) и «Негр» (оперетка, текст Гусмана и Мариенгофа).

За это время мною, помимо вышеперечисленных работ, написаны два балета («Золотой век» и «Болт») и «Первомайская симфония».

Единственно, что может, по моему мнению, претендовать на «занятие места» в развитии советской музыкальной культуры, — это только *«Первомайская симфония»*, несмотря на ряд недостатков этого сочинения. Я не хочу сказать, что все остальное, мною написанное, никуда не годится. *Но все остальное связано с театром и не имеет самостоятельного хождения.*

Ни для кого не секрет, что к 14-й годовщине Октябрьской революции *на музыкальном фронте положение катастрофическое.* За положение на музыкальном фронте отвечаем мы, композиторы. И я глубоко убежден, что именно поголовное бегство композиторов в театр и создало такое тяжелое положение.

Как типичное явление можно привести следующий пример: во всех театрах (драматических) имеется куцый оркестр, в который композитор вынужден впихивать свои, часто удачные, мысли. Мы не сумели добиться улучшения в этом деле. В то время как дирекция «не щадит затрат» на оформление, на увеличение актерского состава, *оркестр остается в положении пасынка.* Поэтому музыка звучит убого, плохо.

В области звукового кино дело обстоит не лучше. Не могу пожаловаться на оркестр в своих работах над «Одной» и «Златыми горами». Я имел исключительно высокого качества оркестр под руководством талантливейшего дирижера Н. Рабиновича. А результат? При записи убеждаешься, что вся работа пошла прахом: экран хрипит, икает и чудит различные звуки, *сводящие на нет работу первоклассного оркестра и композитора.* Это, так сказать, физическая часть работы в театре и кино.

Теперь идеологическая. Вся работа во всех драматических театрах и звуковых кино издавна заштампована (исключаю лишь из этого списка работу в ТРАМе). Музыка там играет роль акцента «отчаяния» и «восторга». Имеются определенные «стандартные» номера в музыке: удар в барабан при входе нового героя, «бодрый» и «зарядный» танец положительных героев, фокстрот для «разложения» и «бодрая» музыка для благополучного финала. Вот «материал» для творчества композитора. Нельзя, преступно перед советской музыкой, за которую мы несем ответственность перед партией и правительством рабочего класса, сводить роль музыки к голому приспособлению под вкус и творческий метод театра, часто плохой и полурвый («Условно убитый» в Мюзик-Холле). Получается настоящая композиторская обезличка. «Легкость» и штампованность работы в театре разлагает, теряется высокое качество. Композитор всеми силами стремится к «гастролерству» в драматическом театре и кино, а не к постоянной работе. Между тем, композитор обязан в первую очередь приложить все свои силы к созданию симфонии, оперы, балета, сонаты, квартета, песни, кантаты, фуги и т. д.

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Полная стопроцентная импотентность наших музыкальных театров создать советский музыкальный спектакль доказала мне с совершенной очевидностью, что таковой должен создаваться вне стен и вне связи с театром, ибо театр состоит из руководства и работников, у которых выработались за последнее время две «четких установки»: 1) музыка в опере или балете должна способствовать приятному пищеварению и 2) тенору создавать благоприятные условия для эффектной ноты, а балерине — для какого-нибудь фуэте. Прикрывшись фиговым листком, — ложно понятым лозунгом об освоении классического наследия, — театр делает свое вреднейшее дело, возобновляя всякие «Юдифи», «Корсары» и тому подобный хлам.

Что касается советского музыкального спектакля, то здесь мы видим совершенно безобразные методы их создания («Красный мак», «Лед и сталь», «Черный яр», «Болт», «Золотой век»). Надо заметить, что все эти спектакли создавались в полной связи с театром. А результат — позорный. Единственное сочинение, которое опять-таки может претендовать на «занятые места» в советской музыке, — это, при всех его ошибках, опера «Нос». Это сочинение писалось *вне всякой связи с театром*, и получилась работа, имеющая полное право претендовать на звание «высокого искусства». Два моих балета создавались в стенах театра. И «Золотой век» и «Болт» — жестокие провалы. Спешу оговорить всю работу балетмейстера Лопухова в «Болте». Работа прекрасная, но Лопухов оказался во власти театра, принявшего недоброкачественное либретто, и поэтому вышел пасквиль.

Опыт подсказывает, что музыкальный спектакль надо создавать вне стен музыкального театра. Театр должен лишь принимать (или не принимать) и ставить оперы и балеты, в готовом виде приносимые театру на рассмотрение. Так было с «Носом», и театр, обладая превосходным исполнительским аппаратом, создал замечательный спектакль. Вера Афиногенов и Киршон создавали лучшие образцы пролетарской драматургии без «помощи» театра!

Должен быть провозглашен лозунг ведущей роли музыки в музыкальном театре. Советский музыкальный спектакль, могущий послужить толчком к перестройке музыкальных театров, будет создан вне связи с театром, ибо руководство и работники музыкального театра делу создания музыкального, советского спектакля помощи оказать не в состоянии.

Суммирую.

За ведущую роль музыки в музыкальном театре! Долой композиторскую обезличку! Дальше от драматического театра и звукового кино! Дальше от музыкального театра в деле создания советского музыкального спектакля!

Заканчиваю эту статью фактом из моей биографии: с тяжелым сердцем заверяю театр им. Вахтангова, что музыку к «Гамлету» я напишу. Что касается «Негра» и «Твердеет бетон», то я договоры на днях расторгаю и возвращаю аванс. Я не в силах больше «обезличиваться» и штамповаться. Таким образом я расчищаю себе дорогу к большой симфонии, посвященной 15-летию Октябрьской революции. И заявляю всем моим будущим «заказчикам» из драматического театра и звукового кино, что с этим фронтом музыки на ближайшие пять лет я порываю.

Д. Шостакович

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Appendix 5a

"Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 162-64.

[Note: the text published in Appendix 5 is a stenographer's transcript of Shostakovich's speech--not the speech *per se*. Therefore, the wording is often awkward and unclear. I have attempted to produce a translation that is faithful to the original yet readable and coherent--not an easy task.]

Шостакович: Товарищи, я не слыхал доклада Россовского, так что не знаю, смогу ли я ему кинуть аналогичный упрек кинематографии от имени музыкальных работников, затронул ли он музыкальные вопросы или нет. Но тем не менее нужно о музыке поговорить и здесь на пленуме, несмотря на некоторое позорно малое количество композиторов, здесь присутствующих. Вопросы следующие: нужно со всей категоричностью заявить, что советское кино есть, что советская драматургия есть, что советская литература есть, а советской музыки почти что и нет. Положение на сегодняшний день таково. Сейчас Никитин[9] меня упрекнул, что я ухожу в кабинет, и будет так, что я просижу целую пятилетку и ничего не сделаю. Тут он привел аналогию со свеклой. Я позволю себе также сказать, что все дело в том, что у нас на композиторском фронте, если идти по такому механическому сравнению, то у нас недобор свеклы колоссальный. Музыкальных сочинений нет. Почему на меня такие страшные нападки, что я допустил довольно большую ошибку в моем выступлении в печати, потому что я утверждаю, что ввиду того, что композиторы в громадном количестве ушли на работу прикладную, на работу, скажем, в драматический театр, звуковое кино, они не делают советской культуры.

Всем известно, что драматический оркестр — средство нашего композиторского выражения, то, чем мы можем строить, организовывать зрителя, — мы его там не имеем, потому что нельзя считать, что двадцать три человека или тридцать один в наиболее шикарном оркестре, что мы можем этим создавать большое искусство большевизма. У нас нет технической базы для этого. Дальше, в звуковом кино дело значительно лучше, потому что я там работаю и там в своей работе над произведением "Златые горы" я имел настоящий, очень хороший оркестр и дирижера, в противовес тому барахлу, которое имеется в драматических театрах. И что же, мы не можем этим звуком агитировать, потому что звук не доходит... Работа пропадает. Хрип, шипенье — все это объективные причины, конечно, в будущем будет лучше. Но я считаю, что композитор не должен отдаваться целиком и полностью на работу [в] драматических театрах и звуковых кино. Он должен ходить на гастроли туда. В журнале "Рабочий [и] театр" была перепутана моя фраза, слово "должен" было выброшено и написано, что "композитор стремится..."[10]. В этой же самой статье выпало "из собственного опыта", выходит, что с моей стороны нет призыва поголовного ко всем композиторам, что нужно идти на борьбу и в драматический театр, и в звуковое кино. Но целиком отдаваться этой работе нельзя. Это невозможно. Где

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творчество московских композиторов? Мне можно назвать одного, двух, а здесь нужны десятки и сотни, которые появились за последние годы. Шебалин, симфонию которого мы слушали в Большом зале, замечательная симфония, которая показывает шаг вперед Шебалина, а когда я спросил, когда она сочинена, оказалось, что в 1928 году[12]. А что же он делал эти два года, что он теперь делает, когда он обязан был работать. Меня обвиняют в дезертирстве, а я обвиняю Шебалина и многих других в дезертирстве. Они ушли в звуковое кино, в театры, они не делают современную музыку. Никитин говорит, что я выбрасываю, я буду меньше всего о себе говорить, что я, уйдя из музыкального театра, замыкаюсь в кабинет... Это глупо. — так рассуждать. Потому что уход из музыкального театра, что означает, он означает борьбу за собственную перестройку, потому что, когда мы будем сравнивать, где я получу эту перестройку, под руководством театра Мариинского, актеров? Мне они ничего не дадут.

Самая беда моя и всех других композиторов в том, что мы мало боролись за овладение пролетарским мировоззрением. Это основная задача, которая стоит передо мной и каждым композитором. Почему мы должны создавать, сочинять свои произведения, музыкальные оперы для театров и т.д. вне связи с театром? Потому что театр не может дать толчка. В конце концов назовите мне одно произведение музыкального театра, которое имело бы право на название доброкачественного по сравнению с киносереднячком. Ни один товарищ не скажет.

Может быть, "Красный мак" или "Загмук", наивно ляпнет кто-нибудь. Нет, это никак не может претендовать на название советского музыкального произведения. Вся беда моя в том, что единственное мое сочинение, которое не может претендовать на название советского музыкального произведения театра, — это единственное доброкачественное сочинение, которое мною написано[16]. Я не хочу его ставить с такими высокими произведениями, как "Загмук", — я достаточно скромен. Вот в чем моя беда и недостаток. Мы мало думали о перестройке, мы были под большим влиянием у буржуазной школы, когда все это писалось. Когда мы начинаем перестраиваться, то мы, собственно, не перестраиваемся, а пристраиваемся.

Некоторые просто уходят в звуковое кино, в театр и думают, что это во! Они пишут музыку. Режиссер им говорит: извольте написать шумовую "экспликацию". Тут даже непонятно, что это значит и чего они хотят.

В одном из номеров журнала "Рабочий театр" был описан любопытный случай, который сильно меня убедил в том, что надлежит все-таки побаиваться руководства государственных

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академических театров в Ленинграде, и в Москве то же самое. Это случай с "Желтой кофтой", который там описан[17]. У нас в Ленинграде идет такая оперетка, которая приобрела печальную известность. Я считаю, что это издевательская оперетка над Китаем, потому что нельзя показывать каких-то сусальных мандаринов, когда в Китае идут события мирового масштаба.

К сожалению, нужно признать, что у нас среди рабочего класса еще есть мещанский вкус и на это нам не нужно закрывать глаза. Организуется на одном из заводов культпоход на "Майскую ночь" Римского-Корсакова. Затем приходит представитель завкома или культкомиссии в дирекцию театра и говорит, что у нас выразили желание посмотреть "Желтую кофту". Ах, "Желтую кофту" — пожалуйста. "Майскую ночь" снимают и, будьте любезны, смотрите "Желтую кофту".

Нам говорили руководители театра, что вот, мол, смотрите, как в "Желтой кофте", это приятно; почему вы, советские композиторы, не даете нам такую же музыку. Вот почему я написал тогда о ставке музыкальных театров на хорошее пищеварение. Они рассуждают, что приходят в театр после сытного обеда и наслаждаются там музыкой.

С места: Надо было бить театры, а не себя.

Шостакович: Я театр и бью.

Полемизировать с тов. Янковским, который написал ответ в журнал "Рабочий [и] театр", я не собираюсь. Это не имеет никакого смысла, потому что там не было принципиальной установки.

В заключение нужно призвать композиторов не забывать такой важнейший фронт, как симфония. Нужно создать симфонию, нужно инструментальную музыку и т.д. На этом фронте у нас колоссальнейший прорыв. Этот прорыв композиторы обязаны ликвидировать и не прятаться в угол за театр и отписываться, что, мол, мы сочинили музыку к тому-то, а больше ничего не получается. С этим пора покончить (Аплодисменты).

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Appendix 5b

"Plenum Soveta Vseroskomdrama. Fragment stenogrammy, posvyashchennyi muzykalnym voprosom (18-19 Dekabrya, 1931), Muzykalnaya akademia, no. 2 (1993): 171-72.

Шостакович: Товарищи, выступая во второй раз, я думаю, что уложусь в пять минут. Я вынужден был взять слово во второй раз, потому что здесь развернулись довольно оживленные прения по музыкальным вопросам. Поэтому я считаю нужным затронуть несколько вопросов не в порядке прений, а в порядке предложений или постановки вопросов для будущей работы Всероскомдрама в области музыки.

Я хотел сказать, что РАПМ в настоящее время становится уже организацией массовой. АПМ должна быть на музыкальном фронте ведущей организацией.. К АПМ у нас, композиторов, внимание очень большое. Мы внимательно следим за творческими достижениями, за теоретическими статьями и т.д. и т.д.

Вчера тов. Рафалович в своем выступлении подверг критике теоретические ошибки РАПМа. Я считаю, что нужно также затронуть и творческие вопросы, потому что в последнее время в журналах "Пролетарский музыкант" и "За пролетарскую музыку" пишется об отставании РАПМа от темпов нашей жизни. Мне хочется отметить, что тут не отставание, а стояние на месте.

Я беру вопрос техники... Уже подверглась достаточно серьезной критике "Песня о красном знамени" Коваля в журнале "За пролетарскую музыку". Действительно, произведение совершенно беспомощное. Затем произведение Давиденко "Под откос" [в историю советской музыки опера вошла под названием "1919"] тоже... технически совершенно беспомощное. Нужно жестоко критиковать РАПМ за то, что эти беспомощные, безграмотные вещи пошли в печать и получили широкое распространение. РАПМ должна отвечать за продукцию своих членов и не выпускать на свет макулатуру вроде оперы "Под откос"... Я не вижу у пролетарских композиторов сдвигов в их творчестве. Как сочинял Коваль три года тому назад, так и сочиняет и сейчас. Как Давиденко сочинял три года тому назад, так и сейчас сочиняет, может быть, местами даже и хуже... Поэтому я считаю, что в дальнейшем задача Всероскомдрама — развернуть широчайшую творческую дискуссию, которая нам необходима как воздух, потому что то, что мы сейчас говорим, то, что я сейчас говорю, может быть, это неправильно, может быть, разоблачает эту мою ошибку и, может быть, я не прав, называя оперу Давиденко "Под откос" безграмотно-детским сочинением... Значит — за творческую дискуссию. Это, по-моему, самая основная и первая задача Всероскомдрама в дальнейшем. Нужно всяческим образом приветствовать и поддерживать все симфонические концерты, которые начались. Я не знаю, какие там будут вставлены враждебные сочинения, о которых говорил тов. Фере в своем выступлении, потому [что] его выступление было неудачно в том смысле, что он не назвал ни одного примера.

Итак, за творческую дискуссию в ближайшем времени.

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Appendix 6

Dmitri Shostakovich, "Sovetskaya muzykalnaya kritika otstayot" (Soviet music criticism is lagging), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 3 (1933): 120-21.

Прошел год со дня исторического постановления ЦК, коренным образом перестроившего работу наших творческих организаций. Изжиты на музыкальном фронте - групповщина и ряд других ненормальных явлений, вызванных групповщиной, а также неумением РАПМ по большевистски руководить музыкальной жизнью Союза ССР.

Год, прошедший с 23 апреля 1932 г., прошел под знаком консолидации советских творческих сил и неуклонного творческого подъема. Близясь к концу такие два выдающихся произведения, как симфония Попова и симфония Шапорина. Активно работает Щербачев. Много работает Дешевов. Закончена первая часть грандиозной симфонии Шебалина «Ленин». Следовало бы продолжить этот список творческих достижений, но это заняло бы много места, и не это входит в задачи моей заметки. Мне бы хотелось выразить некоторые пожелания на будущее время.

Конечно, Союз советских композиторов должен возглавить и руководить всей творческой деятельностью. Это ответственейшая и серьезнейшая задача. ССК имеет много достижений в области консолидации творческих сил, но конкретности и основательности в работе ССК еще мало. Возьмем, например, такой серьезный вопрос, как овладение методом социалистического реализма в музыке. ССК откликнулся на этот вопрос только статьей В. Городинского, помещенной в № 1 журнала «Советская музыка». Статья эта произвела на меня плохое впечатление. Это какой-то набор фраз, безусловно показывающий эрудицию автора статьи в ряде вопросов, но ни в какой степени не разъясняющий и не направляющий композиторов в деле овладения методом социалистического реализма.[1]

Говорить о плохом состоянии этого важнейшего участка музыкальной жизни значит повторяться.

Однажды мне пришлось выслушать следующий «афоризм» (кем он был произнесен, или я его где-либо вычитал - не помню): «Критики, это такие люди, которым либо по недостатку дарования, либо по другим причинам не удалось попасть в число критикуемых».

[1] Статья т. Городинского «К вопросу о социалистическом реализме в музыке», напечатанная в № 1 нашего журнала, будучи первой попыткой подойти к постановке очень сложной проблемы социалистического реализма в музыке, не ставила и не могла еще ставить задачей уже на данной стадии разработки этой проблемы быть разъяснением и руководством творческой практики композиторов.

Значение ее заключается именно в том, что она является опытом обоснования полной применимости лозунга соц. реализма и в сфере такого сложного я, казалось бы, «абстрактного» искусства, - как музыка.

Отнюдь не являясь, по мнению редакции, «набором фраз» (хотя бы и «безусловно показывающим эрудицию автора»?), она делает первый шаг (в ряде вопросов - дискуссионный) по пути к достижению полной теоретической ясности в затрагиваемую ею проблему. *Ред.*.

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Когда почитаешь музыкальные отделы таких органов печати, как «Рабочий и театр», «Вечерняя красная газета», то невольно вспоминается вышеприведенный грустный «афоризм». Когда критик пишет, что в такой-то симфонии совслужащие изображаются гобоем и кларнетом, а красноармейцы группой медных инструментов,[2] то хочется крикнуть: «неправда!».

Много можно найти примеров такого же рода.

Редко промелькнут в печати такие высококвалифицированные люди, как Соллертинский, Нохельсон, Городинский и уж почти никогда Игорь Глебов. «Советская музыка» должна дать образцы высококвалифицированной критики. ССК должен влиять на перестройку музыкальных отделов периодической печати.

В заключение несколько слов о самом себе. Я переживаю в настоящее время большой творческий подъем. Закончил оперу «Леди Макбет Мценского уезда», написал 24 прелюдии для фортепиано. Пишу сейчас концерт для фортепиано с оркестром и «Сказку о попе и работнике Балде» по Пушкину (мультфильм).

В ЛССК я нахожу к себе внимательное отношение. Показ в ЛССК «Леди Макбет» дал мне очень много. Все высказывания стояли на большой принципиальной высоте. ЛССК должен стать той творческой средой, которая будет на основе товарищеской, дружеской, жесткой самокритики поднимать и двигать вперед наше творчество. Создание такой творческой среды будет лучшим ответом на постановление ЦК от 23 апреля 1932 г.

[2] См. в «Вечерней красной газете» от 27/III 1934 г. статью Мухаревского о «Публицистической симфонии» Богданова-Березовского.

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Appendix 7a
"Vystuplenie tov. Shostakovicha" (Comrade Shostakovich's speech), in "Diskussia o sovetskom simfonizme" (Discussion about Soviet symphonism),
Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33.

[Note: the text published in Appendix 7 is a stenographer's transcript of Shostakovich's speech--not the speech *per se*. Therefore, the wording is often awkward and unclear. I have attempted to produce a translation that is faithful to the original yet readable and coherent.]

Выступление тов. ШОСТАКОВИЧА

Вчера мы выслушали доклад т. Острецова и развернутое выступление т. Кузнецова; сегодня — по существу — большой доклад т. Рыжкина. Чрезвычайно много вопросов и мыслей затронуто было в эти дни и, конечно, все это в десятиминутном слове охватить трудно.

Я позволю себе поделиться некоторыми своими мыслями по поводу советского симфонизма. Тут я должен прежде всего сказать, что не могу согласиться с выступлением нашего делегата—ленинградца т. Гладковского, который (если я его правильно понял) выдвигал здесь теорию о композиторе, как о «поющей птице». Как композитор-практик, я знаю, что музыкальное творчество — дело сложное и, конечно, трудное, требующее большой, подчас кропотливой работы, требующее больших дум, и, может быть, отчасти дум и о том, как бы — «не показаться эклектиком, как бы не показаться эпигоном». Но я не думаю, чтобы это было основной мыслью композитора в процессе его творчества. И не думаю, чтобы это было основной мыслью Гладковского, но все-таки такая мысль в его выступлении промелькнула — пускай, мол, композитор творит, как птица поет.

И т. Острецов и т. Рыжкин много говорили в своих докладах о проблеме сюжетности и содержания. Но надо сказать, что это, видимо, дело слишком сложное; очень много прекрасных слов я слышал и сегодня и вчера на эту тему, но, к сожалению, сказать, что я что-либо вынес или что мне стали ясны эти вопросы, — я не могу.

Таким образом, мне трудно высказывать на этот счет определенные мысли, так как этот вопрос для меня сложен и неясен. Было время, когда он сильно упрощался. Запишешь стих, как будто, вот тебе и содержание, не запишешь — вот тебе и формализм. Теперь стали говорить серьезно, что дело не в одних стихах, но и в музыке,

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но, повторяю, вопрос этот слишком сложен, и рецептов, как писать содержательную музыку, дать нельзя. Соглашаясь в данном случае с т. Гладковским, я призываю товарищей композиторов больше работать, больше и серьезнее думать о языке и о выразительности языка. В частности, у нас почти не затрагивался вопрос о простоте и чистоте музыкального языка, вопрос, который так широко разрабатывается в литературе. Это проблема очень большого масштаба. Думаю, что если композиторы будут серьезно и много думать над всеми этими вопросами, то они, таким образом, добьются больших успехов и таким образом будет создано произведение, о котором мы сможем сказать, что это — произведение советского симфонизма, что оно могло родиться только у нас, в СССР.

Теперь несколько слов о конкретных достижениях нашего советского симфонизма. Было интересно выслушать анализ ряда симфонических произведений советских композиторов, сделанный т. Рыжкиным и т. Острецовым. Но должен сказать, что я не вполне согласен с некоторыми положениями докладчиков. Я не вполне согласен с некоторым преувеличением достоинств нашего советского симфонизма, несмотря на большое, может быть, количество талантливости и изобретательности. В частности, это касается третьей и пятой симфоний Л. К. Книппера. По-моему, путь, который избрал Книппер в этих симфониях, не может служить отправной точкой развития советской музыки. Может быть, т. Рыжкин, справедливо упрекнув меня за использование «блатной музыки» в балете «Болт», должен был это сказать и о симфонии Книппера, потому что здесь вопрос о чистоте и простоте языка стоит остро. Я этой чистоты и простоты языка в симфониях Книппера не нахожу. Наоборот, в этих произведениях чувствуется какая-то разжеванность языка и, я бы сказал, «торгсиновская» звучность: и серебро, и медь, и олово, и золото, и несмотря на это, все-таки музыка убога и примитивна. И я считаю своим долгом прямо об этом сказать Книппер у, интересному композитору. Считает ли сам он правильным этот путь? Если самый принцип построения симфонии Книппера, может быть, и интересен, то выполнение его явно неудачно. И я никак не могу согласиться с т. Острецовым, что эта симфония на данном этапе является ведущим произведением. Категорически спорю.

Вообще нам следует пересмотреть т. наз. «ведущие произведения» «ведущих» композиторов. У нас в Ленинграде и в Москве, в частности, очень злоупотребляют этим термином, говоря — такой-то композитор ведущий, а другой не ведущий, «ведомый», что ли. Ведомый, но кем ведомый? И как ведомый — это неизвестно. У нас этим термином начинают явно злоупотреблять.

Я знаю, что у нас много талантливых композиторов, и в Москве и в других городах нашего Союза, но вряд ли мы можем указать на такого, о котором мы могли бы сказать безусловно: да, это ведущий, на его творчество мы можем ориентироваться, как, скажем, советская литература ориентируется на творчество и критическую деятельность такого гигантского мастера, как Максим Горький. Наша советская музыка такого композитора не имеет. Так что надо легче с такого рода терминами обращаться и особенно — в отношении симфоний Книппера.

Теперь еще о проблеме формы, содержания и об особых отличиях советского симфонизма от симфонизма западного, с которым нас — в очень малой дозе — познакомил т. Кузнецов. Его выступление было

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очень интересно, но музыкальных иллюстраций было мало. Безусловно, качественное отличие есть, и мы его чувствуем и ощущаем. Но четкого, конкретного анализа в этом отношении мы не имеем.

Моя речь о советском симфонизме может быть закончена. Я выскажу еще лишь несколько организационных пожеланий. Мы, к сожалению, очень плохо знаем западный симфонизм. Наши концертные организации почти совсем не исполняют новейших произведений композиторов Запада, а мы знаем, что там кое-что и появляется. Может быть, не имеет смысла очень часто исполнять их произведения и перегружать ими наши концертные программы, но я считаю, что для изучения таких выдающихся композиторов, как напр. Альбан Берг, Вейль и др., Союз советских композиторов должен организовать семинар. Нам нужно глубже и серьезнее познакомиться с музыкальной культурой Запада, ибо там много интересного и поучительного.

Мы — советские люди— живем насыщенной эмоциональной жизнью. Поэтому советским композиторам следует обратить особенное внимание, как правильно сказал Рыжкин, на создание не только бытовых симфоний (как произведений более громоздких), но и на симфонические произведения лирического характера. Хорошо было бы написать такую симфонию! Правда, эта задача трудна, но ведь это не значит, что она невыполнима.

Я знаю, что наши исполнители, и не только одни исполнители, но и широкая масса слушателей отмечают, что советские композиторы мало уделяют внимания созданию массового репертуара. Советский слушатель это отмечает, и он требует от музыкального искусства, чтобы это искусство доставило ему, может быть, просто удовольствие. Я, может быть, грубо выражаюсь. Но это так. И я боюсь, что мы порой об этом забываем. Мы говорим что наша симфония должна волновать, что наша симфония должна рассказывать о героических поступках, что она должна заклеймить, опорочить колеблющуюся личность, о которой говорил Острецов.

Но я еще почти ни разу не слышал, чтобы кто-нибудь сказал, что наша советская симфония просто должна доставить удовольствие. А между тем — это серьезная проблема и обходить ее нельзя.

Вначале я согласился, что грешил легкомыслием, когда брал блатные мотивы, вернее — уличные. Может быть, я не совсем хорошо поступил в этом отношении, но мысль у меня была хорошая, я хотел написать хорошую развлекательную музыку, которая доставила бы удовольствие или хотя бы рассмешила, может быть, и квалифицированного слушателя. И когда публика во время исполнения моих произведений смеется или просто улыбается, — мне это доставляет удовольствие.

Когда я написал «Леди Макбет», или, как ее называют в Москве, «Катерину Измайлову», то все стали говорить, что вот, наконец, у Шостаковича появилась человечность. А мне интересно, в чем же раньше у меня была бесчеловечность? В том, что я писал легкую музыку? Но я писал и буду писать эту легкую музыку, конечно, не увлекаясь и не злоупотребляя уличными мотивами. Я считаю, что надо всем нашим композиторам пожелать, чтобы они не забывали и о той музыке, которая может доставить советскому слушателю просто удовольствие и здоровое развлечение.

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Appendix 7b
"Vystuplenie tov. Shostakovicha" (Comrade Shostakovich's speech), in "Diskussia o sovetskom simfonizme" (Discussion about Soviet symphonism), Sovetskaya muzyka, no. 5 (1935): 31-33. (trans. Joseph Darby)

Yesterday we listened to a paper given by comrade Ostretsov and a detailed speech given by comrade Kuznetsov. Today, in essence, we had a long paper given by comrade Ryzhkin. An extraordinary number of questions and ideas were covered during these days, and it is certainly difficult to cover all of these in a 10-minute speech. Permit me to share my thoughts regarding Soviet symphonism. First I must say that I cannot agree with the speech of Gladkovsky, our delegate from Leningrad, who (if I correctly understood him) promoted the theory that a composer should be like "a singing bird." As a practicing composer, I know musical creativity. It is certainly a complicated and difficult matter, requiring great and at times detailed work and considerable thought. And perhaps only slightly [do composers give] thought about how "not to appear as an eclectic, or not to appear as an epigone" [quoted from Gladkovsky's speech]. I do not think that this idea has ever been fundamental to a composer in the process of his work. I do not think that this was Gladkovsky's main idea, but still such an idea appeared in his speech. So, let it be [said] that a composer creates as a bird sings.

Both Ostretsov and Ryzhkin spent much of the time on problems of topicality and content. But it is necessary to say that this issue is apparently very complicated. I have heard many fine words on this theme yesterday and today, but unfortunately I am not able to say that I learned anything or had the question made clearer to me. Thus it is difficult for me to speak out in this respect using definite thought, since this issue is complicated

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and unclear to me. For a time it was oversimplified: it seemed that if you write a verse, that's content, [but if you] don't write a verse--that's formalism. Now they are beginning to state seriously that this issue rests not only in verses but also in music. But I repeat--this issue is too complicated, and it is impossible to give recipes for writing music with content. I agree with comrade Gladkovsky's point by appealing to fellow composers to work hard, to think more seriously about language and the expressiveness of language. For us [composers] in particular, the question of the simplicity and purity of musical language was hardly touched, although the same question is now being examined in literature. It is a problem on an extremely large scale. If composers were to think seriously and thoroughly on all of these problems, I think that they would achieve great success. And in this way, the work of Soviet symphonism will be created, about which we could say that it could have been created only here in the USSR.

Now a few words about concrete achievements of our Soviet symphonism. It was interesting to hear an analysis, given by comrades Ryzhkin and Ostretsov, on the range of symphonic works by Soviet composers. But I must say that I do not fully agree with some of the speakers' positions. Despite the great amount of talent and inventiveness available, maybe I do not fully agree with the exaggerated merits attributed to our Soviet symphonism. This relates in particular to the Third and Fifth symphonies of L.K. Knipper. In my opinion, the path chosen by Knipper in these symphonies cannot serve as a starting point in the development of Soviet music. Perhaps comrade Ryzhkin justly reproached me for using "the music of criminals" in the ballet Bolt, but he must also say the same about the symphonies of Knipper, because in this case, the question of a pure

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and simple language is crucial. I have yet to find purity and simplicity in the language of Knipper's symphonies. On the contrary, one has a sense of some *razzhevannost* ("chewed up-ness") of the language in these compositions, which has, it must be said, "the sound of Torgsin"--of silver, and copper, and tin, and gold.[1] Despite this [colorful sound], it is still wretched and primitive music. I consider it my duty to speak quite directly to Knipper, who is an interesting composer. Does he consider himself to be on the correct path? If Knipper's symphonic writing contains the correct principle of construction, then perhaps and interestingly, his execution is obviously unsuccessful. In no way do I agree with comrade Ostretsov, who feels that these symphonies serve as leading compositions of our time. I reject the idea.

On the whole, we should reconsider the so-called "leading works" of "leading composers." Particularly in Leningrad and Moscow, we misuse these terms too much--talking about a certain composer as being "leading," while another is not "leading," or is being led. Being led, maybe, but by whom is he being led? And how is he being led? This is unknown. We are obviously beginning to misuse this term. I know that there are many talented composers among us, in Moscow and other cities of the Union, but we can hardly point to someone about whom we could absolutely say--yes, he is leading, and around his work we can orient ourselves the way that Soviet literature orients itself

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[1] Torgsin is an stump compound denoting "trade with foreigners" (*torgovla s inostrantsami*). During NEP, Torgsin was the state agency responsible for trade with foreign countries. Torgsin shops were filled with the best goods, but many such products were unavailable to most workers because of high prices. Once Torgsin shops were closed in Soviet Russia, many of the same goods were only available on the black market.

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around the work and critical activity of such a giant master as Maksim Gorky. There is no such composer in our Soviet music. Therefore, it is necessary to treat such terms [leading composers, leading works] more carefully, and especially with respect to the symphonies of Knipper.

Now about the problem of form, content, and the special differences of Soviet symphonism compared to the symphonism of the West, with which comrade Kuznetsov acquainted us in a very small dose. His speech was very interesting, but there were few musical examples. Unconditionally, there is a qualitative distinction [between Soviet and western symphonism]--we feel and perceive it. But we do not have a precise, concrete analysis in this respect. I could end my speech on Soviet symphonism here, but I would like to express a few organizational wishes. Unfortunately, our knowledge of western symphonism is very poor. Our concert organizations rarely perform the newest works of western composers, but we do know that some have appeared. Perhaps it does not make sense to perform their works too frequently, overloading our concert programs with them, but I think that the Union of Soviet Composers should organize a seminar for studying outstanding composers, such as Berg, Weill, and others. We must become more fully and seriously acquainted with the musical culture of the West, because many things are interesting and instructive there. We--Soviet people--live a rich and emotional life. Therefore Soviet composers, as Ryzhkin correctly stated, should turn special attention towards composing not only everyday-life symphonies (of which there are many unwieldy works), but also to symphonic works of the lyrical type. How good it would be to write such a symphony! In truth, it is a difficult problem, but it is not impractical.

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I think that our performers, and not just performers, but also the broad mass audiences, point out that Soviet composers do not devote enough attention to works for the mass repertoire. A Soviet listener himself points this out, demanding that this art simply provide pleasure to him. Perhaps I put it crudely, but it is so. And I am afraid that at times we forget [that music provides pleasure]. We say that our symphony should agitate, recount heroic deeds, and stigmatize and denounce the hesitating individual, just as Ostretsov stated. But still, I have almost never heard anyone say that our Soviet symphony should simply provide pleasure. Meanwhile, it is a serious problem and [one that] is impossible to avoid. At first I agreed that I sinned by being flippant when I used criminal materials, and those of the street. Perhaps I did not quite act well with respect to this, but my idea was good. I wanted to write good and entertaining music, which would provide pleasure, if only just to make them laugh. And when the public, during a performance of my works, is laughing and smiling--this gives me pleasure.

When I wrote Lady Macbeth, or as it is called in Moscow, Katerina Izmailova, everyone began saying that humanity had finally appeared in the works of Shostakovich. But I am curious, where before did they find inhumanity? Because I wrote light music? But I wrote and will continue to write light music, although I am not fond of it and will no longer abuse it with *ulichnymi motivami* (street motives). I consider it necessary to wish that all of our composers not forget about music that simply provides amusement and healthy entertainment for the Soviet listener.

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Appendix 8

Diskussia o simfonizme (Moscow, 4-6 February 1935), roster of speakers:
Stenographic transcripts are published in Sovetskaya muzyka unless otherwise noted

4 February

A.A. Ostretsov - Soviet symphonic creativity

(entire paper published in SM 1935, no. 4,: 3-21)

K.A. Kuznetsov - On contemporary symphonism in the West

(SM 1935, no. 5: 23-27)

A.S. Abramsky - themes and language of Soviet symphonism

(speech not published in SM)

5 February

L. Danilevich - concrete symphonism, development, and form

(speech not published in SM)

A.P. Gladkovsky - against individualism and intuitivism

(SM 1935, no. 5: 27-31)

A.S. Ogolevets - themes and resources of Soviet music

(SM 1935, no. 6: 37-39)

I.Ya. Ryzhkin - Tasks of Soviet symphonism

(entire paper published in SM 1935, no. 6: 3-27)

D.D. Shostakovich - musical creativity is complicated; don't abuse ideas with clichés; convene a seminar about western contemporary music

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(SM 1935, no. 5: 31-33)

I.I. Sollertinsky - improve knowledge of both western and Soviet music

(SM 1935, no. 6: 28-31)

6 February

"comrade" Zimin - against extremism in orchestral music

(SM 1935, no. 5: 45)

E.M. Braudo - comments on the proceedings; folkloristic symphonism

(SM 1935, no. 5: 43-45)

V.A. Belyi - problems and formation of Soviet symphonism

(SM 1935, no. 5: 34-38)

G.N. Khubov - polemics with other speakers' positions

(SM 1935, no. 6: 33-37)

D.B. Kabalevsky - free development for Soviet symphonism

(SM 1935, no. 5: 38-40)

V.Ya. Shebalin - shortcomings in criticism and composition

(SM 1935, no. 5: 40-43)

G.I. Litinsky - Soviet symphonic style

(SM 1935, no. 6: 39-43)

I.I. Sollertinsky - no preconditions should be set on Soviet symphonism

(SM 1935, no. 6: 32-33)

K.A. Kuznetsov - (second speech not published in SM)

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A.P. Gladkovsky - (second speech not published in SM)

N.I. Chelyapov - results of the discussion on symphonism

(SM 1935, no. 3: 103-106)

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no. 5 (1936): 24-27.

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