THE OPERATIC INNOVATION AND MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF RODION SHCHEDRIN'S CHORAL OPERA *BOYARINA MOROZOVA*

By

Valeria Ore

Bachelor of Arts in Music Bachelor of Arts in Music Education Tchaikovsky Musical College 1989

Master of Arts in Music Urals Mussorgsky State Conservatoire 1994

Master of Music University of Nevada, Las Vegas 2006

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School of Music College of Fine Arts The Graduate College

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Valeria Ore	
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Alfonse Anderson, D.M.A. Examination Committee Chair	Alyssa Crittenden, Ph.D. Vice Provost for Graduate Education Dean of the Graduate College

&

David Weiller, M.M. Examination Committee Member

Tod Fitzpatrick, D.M.A. Examination Committee Member

Mykola Suk, D.M.A. Examination Committee Member

Joe Bynum, M.F.A. Graduate College Faculty Representative

ABSTRACT

THE OPERATIC INNOVATION AND MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF RODION SHCHEDRIN'S

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by

Valeria Ore

Dr. Alfonse Anderson, Examination Committee Chair Professor of Music, Voice University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Rodion Shchedrin is an outstanding composer who uses the deep tradition of Russian musical culture in his compositions. Shchedrin's style is very individual and consists of the universality of world perception and originality of musical language, which encompasses a sensitive assimilation of a new, careful, and respectful approach to Russian traditions. By reasonably and fragmentarily using the elements of dodecaphony, sonorics, and aleatoric music, he developed his own musical language. Thus, the purpose of this work is to explore Shchedrin's compositional style and to discover his innovation and individual style in the opera *Boyarina Morozova*. Shchedrin's compositions are unusual: he invented the term *Poetoriya* (a combination of "poet" and "oratorio"); in his modern opera *Not Love Alone*, he uses a satirical folk song - *chastushka* throughout the whole opera; and he became a modern reformer of a new opera in the beginning of the 21st century, "The Russian Choral Opera," *Boyarina Morozova*. This was the fifth opera of Rodion Shchedrin and was composed in 2006 from his own libretto on the story of Boyarina Morozova, using texts of the 17th century that were titled "The Life of Protopop

Avvakum," "The Life of Boyarina Morozova, a Noble Woman, and Her Sister, Princess Urusova," and "The Letters of Avvakum to Morozova and to Her Sister."

The opera's story is based on one of the most terrible and tragic episodes of Russian history: the persecution of "Old Believers" (people who rejected any changes of liturgical texts and rituals introduced by the reforms of Patriarch Nikon) and the schism within the orthodoxy. The church schism was a national tragedy of the Russian people, which divided society into two warring parts; those who did not convert to the new faith were persecuted, tortured, and executed.

Boyarina Morozova is not a traditional opera and is in the genre of liturgical drama and mystery that was actively revived in the 21st century. In this opera, Shchedrin conveyed the holy feat, fortitude, and self-sacrifice of a heroine in the name of her faith. The tragic moments of Russian history, the literary works of Archpriest Avvakum, the images of the noble woman Morozova and Princess Urusova, their terrible fate, deprivation, hunger, death in conjunction with Christian humility, and love - all of this was embodied in the opera of Rodion Shchedrin Boyarina Morozova.

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CHAPTER ONE: THE FORMATION OF THE COMPOSER'S STYLE

1.1 Introduction of the Composer Rodion Shchedrin

Rodion Shchedrin is an outstanding composer who uses the deep tradition of Russian musical culture in his compositions. His works represent a bright and innovative phenomenon that is found within the Russian music of the 20th - 21st centuries. Over many years of creative activity, he has composed a significant number of works within various genres. Shchedrin's music spans diverse areas of imagery – from intellectual thinking and dramatic conflict to the joyful rapture of life and brilliant satire. He is one of the most famous composers of the 21st century because he creates works that are accessible to a wide range of listeners, and consequently he has had all of his opuses published and performed.

His style is very individual and consists of the originality of musical language, which encompasses a sensitive assimilation of new, careful, and respectful relations for Russian traditions. The theme of Russian history is deeply experienced and felt within his music. Rodion Shchedrin was raised with Russian music for the first half of the 20th century, and during the 1960s and 1970s used many different *avant-garde* techniques; however, he was not an avant-garde composer. By using Russian folk tunes, the element of *dodecaphony* (the 12-tone technique), *sonorics* (technique of a sonorous composition that interprets a group of many sounds as a single coloristic and expressive complex), and *aleatoric music* (a technique in music that allows a variable relationship between the elements of musical texture and musical form), he developed his own musical language which has allowed him to address his work to many different times and eras while making it understandable to the modern listener.

The author of almost one hundred and fifty opuses, Shchedrin is one of the few modern composers who has covered almost all musical genres in his work - from opera and symphony to piano miniatures and film music. The composer's creative heritage includes five ballets, seven operas, one musical, three symphonies, folklore works, numerous concerts, symphonic etudes, choral and vocal music, piano works, film music and many other chamber and instrumental compositions.

Shchedrin's works have a very strong innovative line. He was the first composer who used chastushka in his compositions. Chastushka is a humorous folk song full of irony and satire that was used in academic musical genres, such as Concerto for Orchestra No. 1 "Naughty Limericks" and the opera Not Love Alone. In Not Love Alone he composed chastushka throughout the whole opera. By creating his own melodies, Shchedrin subtly delved into a genre of folk song using a combination of folk art and the avant-garde techniques consisting of peculiar harmonies, tone clusters, precise rhythms, and orchestration. The instruments in the orchestra are made to sound like the instruments in a folk orchestra, such as accordions and balalaikas. The balalaika is a Russian and Belarusian folk instrument that has a triangular body of three to six strings which are plucked when played.

In his opera *Dead Souls* based on a novel by Nikolai Gogol, the composer introduces a small chorus that is off stage in the orchestra pit which replaces the first and second violins of the orchestra. He has composed the musical *Nina and Twelve Months* with a Russian plot but in Japanese language. Lastly, Shchedrin created ballets on Anton Chekhov's novels, such as *Seagull, The Lady with the Dog*, and Lev Tolstoy's novel *Anna Karenina*. Shchedrin composed *Carmen Suite* which is a ballet using music from the opera *Carmen* by Bizet, and he arranged it for strings and percussion.

Rodion Shchedrin dedicated these ballets to his wife, the very famous *Prima ballerina assoluta*, Maya Plisetskaya.

Shchedrin continued the traditions of not only classical composers, but also composers of the 20th century, such as Igor Stravinsky and Sergei Prokofiev (using folklore in his compositions), Dmitri Shostakovich (theatrical ideas), and Yuri Shaporin (tonal harmony). Shaporin was a teacher of Shchedrin when he studied at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory. Rodion Shchedrin was very interested in the techniques of Polish composers, such as Witold Lutoslawski and Krzysztof Penderecki (passion for aleatoric music, sonorics, and harmony with halftone dissonances).

Rodion Shchedrin did not limit himself to traditional musical genres, he went further by inventing new genres. His compositions are unusual: he invented the term *Poetoriya* (a combination of a "poet" and "oratorio," as in his *Concerto* for the poet accompanied by a woman's voice, mixed chorus and symphony orchestra), and he became a modern reformer of the new opera in the beginning of the 21st century - The Russian Choral Opera as in *Boyarina Morozova*.

Thus, the purpose of this work is to explore Shchedrin's compositions, discover his innovation and his individual style in the example of the opera *Boyarina Morozova*.

1.2 Rodion Shchedrin's Origin and Education

Rodion Shchedrin is a distinguished Soviet Russian composer, virtuoso pianist and organist who was born in 1932 in Moscow into a musical family. The composer's father, Konstantin Shchedrin, was born in the village of Vorotsy, Tula province (it is about 300 kilometers south of Moscow) and was a gifted musician with rare musical abilities, including perfect pitch. He

played the violin and performed in an instrumental trio that included Rodion's two older brothers.

Rodion Shchedrin was surrounded by music throughout his childhood. He was influenced by his family. His paternal grandfather, Mikhail, was a priest in the small town of Aleksin, and Shchedrin's father, Konstantin, and his seven uncles graduated from the Tula Theological Seminary. The composer's eldest uncle, Ivan, later taught there and served as a regent. His grandmother, Elizabeth, was also from the clerical family.

Schedrin referred in his *Autobiographical Memories* about his grandfather: "Grandfather Mikhail, the Aleksin priest, had eight children, all boys - not a sister among the lot. All eight, including my father, were educated at the Tula Seminary and received a good religious grounding. Grandfather departed this mortal coil before the Revolution but there still exists a pleasing memorial to him in Aleksin: the winding path leading up to the little church bears to this day the name of the *Shchedrinka*." ¹

All the sons of the priest from Aleksin were gifted with bright musical abilities, but only one - Konstantin, the father of Rodion Shchedrin - became a professional musician graduating from the Moscow Conservatory in that fateful year for Russia, in 1917. The composer's mother, Concordia, was a deeply religious person and raised her son in the spirit of Orthodoxy, although this was not easy in the Soviet totalitarian state. At the birth of Rodion in 1932, he was secretly baptized in the suburb of Moscow in Sokolniki because holding religious ceremonies was not safe at that time.

¹ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 9.

Shchedrin's maternal grandfather, Ivan Ivanov, was a railway worker and took part in revolutionary events. His maternal grandmother Praskovya was from an aristocratic family, graduated from the Smolny Institute for Noble Maidens, and spoke three languages.

At the beginning of 1945 in the USSR, a new educational institution was opened in Moscow, the Moscow Choral College for Boys. The institution's creator and first choir director, Alexander Sveshnikov, invited Rodion's father to teach history of music and music theory, and urged Rodion Shchedrin to study there. In the choir class, Rodion sang many compositions of the great masters of the 16th century, such as Josquin des Prez, Giovanni Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso and also Russian sacred music of Pavel Chesnokov, Alexander Grechaninov, Alexander Kastalsky, and Sergei Rachmaninoff.

During his studies at the Moscow Choral College and later at the Moscow Conservatoire under the composer Yuri Shaporin and pianist Yakov Flier, Shchedrin intensively developed his incredible interest in folklore. In his class "Folk Art," Shchedrin was required to participate in folklore expeditions. He went on a trip to the Vologda region where he learned a lot about a folk tune of *chastushka*. Shchedrin carried his love for *chastushka* throughout his life and career; and he used folk musical elements in an amazingly original way in his compositions.

A year before graduation, Shchedrin wrote his *Piano Concerto No 1* (1954) which was unique. The twenty-two years old composer included two folk tunes of *chastushka* into this *Piano Concerto*: The Siberian tune "Balalaika is buzzing" and "Semyonovna." He effectively developed these tunes in a series of variations. Soon after Shchedrin performed a solo in his *Piano Concerto No. 1*, he was accepted into the organization The Union of Composers of Russian Federation without submitting an application. Shchedrin graduated from the Moscow Conservatory in 1955 with honors and received his master's degree in composition and piano.

In 1959, Shchedrin completed post - graduate school at the same conservatory and received his Doctorate degree in composition under the direction of Yuri Shaporin.

1.3 The Formation of the Composer and His Innovations

The Russian theme branches out into many through composed lines in Shchedrin's compositions, such as the ballet *The Little Humpbacked Horse* (1956); *Chamber Suite* (1961) for twenty violins, harp, accordion and two double basses; opera *Not Love Alone* (1961); *Piano Concerto No. 1* (1954); *Concerto for Orchestra No. 1* "Naughty Limericks" (1963); *Symphony No. 1* (1958); and some works that were created recently: Russian Choral Opera *Boyarina Morozova* (2006), *Belcanto in the Russian Style* (2007), a chamber composition for cello and piano; *Vivat! St. Petersburg* (2008), an Overture for Symphony Orchestra.

During the period after graduation from the conservatory, Shchedrin had an image as the embodiment of vital energy, humor, and jokes in his music. His song "The Cheerful March of the Installers," composed for the film *Height* in 1957, had an energetic tone and became well known in the Soviet Union.

His energy and humor were unexpectedly destroyed when Rodion Shchedrin wrote his Symphony No. 1 with its depiction of a harsh war tragedy. This work has an unusual structure: the symphony has three movements, not four. The first movement is Rondo but not the Sonata Allegro and the last movement in the symphony is a Theme with Variations which composers usually chose for the second movement. In the second movement, Rodion Shchedrin introduced Scherzo-Toccata which was also not typical for a symphony. This unusual structure of the symphony characterizes the composer as an innovator. Another experiment of Shchedrin's compositions, Piano *Concerto No. 2* was written in 1966. By knowing how to use the modern dodecaphonic technique (the 12th tone composition), he decided to combine it with jazz improvisation. The *Piano Concerto No. 2* became a classic example for the study of the history of music in musical institutions, and the very technique of *polystylism* (incorporating styles and techniques) became an influence for many other composers. He also revived the ancient genre and gave it a new life by creating the *Twenty-Four Preludes and Fugues* (1964 - 70) for the piano in all keys, and while simultaneously using such a creative process Shchedrin was teaching composition at the Moscow Conservatory and performing as a pianist. For his oratorio dedicated to the 100th Anniversary of Vladimir Lenin (a head of government in Soviet Russia) *Lenin is Amongst Us* (1969) for mixed chorus, soloists and symphony orchestra and the opera *Not Love Alone* (1961), Shchedrin received *the USSR State Prize* in 1972. *Not Love Alone* was also a great success in Paris, London, and Berlin.

In 1973, Rodion Shchedrin was elected by Dmitri Shostakovich to an important leadership post - the Chairman of the Union of Composers of the USSR. In this capacity he worked until 1990 supporting and helping composers, musicologists, and conductors.

At this time, the composer wrote dozens of literary works revealing his talent as a writer. He published several articles: about his teachers Yakov Flier and Yuri Shaporin, about composers, such as Olivier Messiaen, Leonard Bernstein, Alexander Sveshnikov, Aleksander Borodin, Anton Webern, Igor Stravinsky, and also about a Soviet conductor Karl Eliasberg. Shchedrin created his own librettos for his operas *Dead Souls* (1977), *Lolita* (1992), and *The Enchanted Wanderer* (2002), the ballets *The Seagull* (1980) and *The Lady with the Dog* (1985).

For the 300th anniversary of Johann Sebastian Bach's birth, Shchedrin wrote an extra-long composition (more than 2 hours) - the *Musical Offering* (1983) for organ, three flutes, three

bassoons and three trombones; and later, made a compact version of this work - an hour and a half long with a recording in the Dome Cathedral in Riga, Latvia. He composed another composition for the 300th anniversary of J. S. Bach, which was the *Echo Sonata* (1984) for solo violin. The *Echo Sonata* became a main repertoire for violinists from different countries: Ulf Hoelscher (Germany), Maxim Vengerov (Russia), Dmitri Sitkovetsky (Russia), and Sergei Stadler (Russia).

Mikhail Gorbachev's *Perestroika* (changes in the economic and political structure of the USSR) radically changed the life of the entire Soviet people and opened up great opportunities for contacts with foreign countries. Thus in 1988, a new type of event took place in Moscow - the Soviet - American Festival. It was called *Making Music Together* and there were African - American singers who participated in the production of Shchedrin's opera *Dead Souls*. This festival had enormous worldwide resonance that was both artistic and political.

For the celebration of the Millennium of the Christianization of Russia, another significant event in the USSR, Rodion Shchedrin composed the *Stikhira* (1988) for symphony orchestra (it was based upon the work *Stikhiry* (*Hymns*) For the Feast of the Vladimir's Icon by the Russian tsar, Ivan the Terrible) and The Sealed Angel (1988), a Russian Liturgy or a choral work on a poem of Nikolai Leskov for mixed chorus a cappella and a shepherd's pipe. This was a very important event for the composer, a grandson of a priest, and it had a deep meaning for him. The composer sent the work *Stikhira* (*Hymn*) for the first performance in the USA to his dear friend and very famous cellist and orchestra conductor, Mstislav Rostropovich to whom he dedicated the piece. The Sealed Angel, based on the Church Slavonic texts (Slavonic is a form of Slavic based language used exclusively in the orthodox church), was first performed in Moscow by two choirs: the Moscow Academic choir and the Moscow State Academic Chamber Choir under the

direction of the legendary conductor Vladimir Minin. In 1992, Rodion Shchedrin was awarded the State Prize of the Russian Federation for his choral work The Sealed Angel.

In the late 1980s, Shchedrin began to receive many commissions from abroad and responded to them by creating new compositions on his favorite Russian theme. His chamber piano pieces were performed in Finland and Paris, France; his musical *Nina and Twelve Months* (1988) was staged and performed in Japan; and his *Concerto for Orchestra No. 3* "Old Circus Music" (1989) was commissioned by Chicago Symphony Orchestra for its 100th anniversary and was performed under the direction of the very famous conductor, Lorin Maazel.

He wrote several *Concertos* and dedicated them to very talented musicians, such as *Concerto* "Sotto Voce" (1994) for cello and orchestra which was dedicated to Mstislav Rostropovich (there was an eternal theme of this *Concerto* - life and death), *Concerto* "Cantabile" (1997) for violin and string orchestra dedicated to Maxim Vengerov, and *Concerto* "Dolce" (1997) for viola, string orchestra and harp dedicated to Yuri Bashmet.

The beginning of the 1990s brought significant changes in Shchedrin's life: the composer was forced to leave Russia; he chose München Germany, and his wife, a prima ballerina Maya Plisetskaya followed him, yet they retained their Russian citizenship.

During this time when he was in Germany, he did not write any ballets, but he wrote the opera *Lolita* (1992) on a novel of Vladimir Nabokov on his own libretto, and it was premiered in Stockholm by the Royal Opera of Stockholm under the direction of Mstislav Rostropovich.

In 1999, Rodion Shchedrin received an unexpected commission from the Nuremberg Symphony Orchestra, to write an orchestral *Prelude* to Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*. The *Bavarian Radio Orchestra* commissioned a composition which resulted in the *Symphony*

Concertante No. 3 "Faces of Russian Fairy Tales" (2000). Rodion Shchedrin became recognized as a composer of classical Russian and world music.

One of the authors, musicologist Olga Sinelnikova, described the following "characteristics of Shchedrin's creativity:

- 50s the years of study at the Moscow Conservatory and the formation of the composer's style;
- 60s the early period of creativity, a period of discoveries and active development of the *avant-garde* techniques: dodecaphony, sonorics, and polystylistics;
- 70s is the beginning of creative maturity: the experiments in ballet and opera;
- 80s is a period of meditative orientation and philosophical lyrics: the program-instrumental and choral works, more immersing to the Russian theme;
- 90s is the period of supremacy of the concert genre: seven *Concertos* for the various instruments, festivals of his music in Finland, France, Germany and Russia;
- 2000 years is the period of creation of large-scale and conceptual works: opera, choral, symphonic and concert music. Mastering the new genres and instrumental compositions."²

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² Olga Sinelnikova, "The Russian History Through Rodion Shchedroin's Life and Creative Work," *Bulletin of the Kemerovo State University of Culture and Arts* (June 2014): 135-136.

CHAPTER TWO: THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE OPERA

2.1 Russian Music at the End of 1990 and the Emergence of New Genres

For more than thirty years, the revival of spiritual genres and the emergence of new aspirations for composer creativity in Russian music continued. This happened due to the legalization of various spheres of church activity - worship, education, missionary movement, and organization of festivals of Russian sacred music. This spiritual awakening occurred in 1988 - the year of the celebration of the *Millennium of the Christianization of Russia* and continues to the present day. Many composers turned to sacred choral and instrumental music, such as Sergei Slonimsky, Georgy Sviridov, Alfred Schnittke, Eduard Artemyev, Valery Kalistratov, Rodion Shchedrin, Sofia Gubaidulina and others, and in turn they created new and innovative genres, such as: *Concert Vocalize, Symphony Concert, Concert Liturgy*, etc.

"The composers tried to immerse themselves into the sacred meaning of texts associated with themes and images of the Holy Scripture, comprehension of the deep layers of Russian Orthodox national culture, and mastering the musical genres of the Catholic tradition, which was not allowed during the seventy-year history of the Soviet system. Composers turned to spiritual genres which were determined by the desire to capture a sad event, express one's personal attitude towards it and pour out emotional pain. These compositions represent the pinnacle of creativity, composed already in adulthood, and often in the last years of life, such as *Songs and Prayers* by Georgy Sviridov, *The History of the Life and Death of Our Lord Jesus Christ* by Edison Denisov, *The Passion of Ioann* by Sofia Gubaidulina, *Russian Passions* by Alexey Larin, and *Requiem* by Alfred Schnittke and *Requiem* by Sergei Slonimsky."

Thus, in secular genres - symphonies, concertos, vocal and choral works - composers started to use religious symbolism, texts and intonations of the church music, some systems of

³ Olga Sinelnikova, "The Russian History Through Rodion Shchedroin's Life and Creative Work," *Bulletin of the Kemerovo State University of Culture and Arts* (June 2014): 138.

Znamenny chant (the Orthodox singing) and Gregorian chant, such as Choral Concerto on poems by G. Narekatsi by Alfred Schnittke, Stikhira for the Millenium of the Christianization of Russia for symphony orchestra by Rodion Shchedrin, Piano Concerto No. 3 "Ave Maria" by Alemdar Karamanov, and Seven Words for cello, bayan (a button accordion), and strings by Sofia Gubaidulina.

Some composers, at the turn of the 1980-90s, were interested in the plots and texts of the Holy Scriptures, and these trends penetrated opera and ballet, which had not previously been realized in this area of creativity. Thus, some mixed genres began to appear, such as opera-oratorio and opera-mystery. Further examples include the opera-oratorio *The Mystery of the Apostle Paul* by Nikolai Karetnikov, ballets *Vladimir the Baptist* and *Agony in the Garden* by Valeri Kikta, opera-mystery *Suffering Iov* based on a text from the Old Testament by Vladimir Lorionov, opera-mystery *Liturgy of the Catechumens* by Alexei Rybnikov, and many others.

Composers began to pay special attention to another musical genre - the Lives of Saints.

"The Lives of the Saints in music, which arises by analogy with its genetic predecessor - the literature, is also based on the narrative of the life of the saint, but unfolded here musically and dramaturgically - in choral music, cantatas, operas-oratorios..." The Lives of Saints is a special genre, dear to the Orthodox heart, that is inspiring, consoling, instructive, and encourages the spirit of believers while helping to better understand and put Christian values into practice. The Lives of Saints contain stories of great feats and grave sufferings, stories of the torments and joys of faith, the endless power of the human spirit and its victories over imperfect human nature.

⁴ Olga Sinelnikova, "Metamorphoses of Rodion Shchedrin's Creative Work at the Beginning of the 21st Century," *Bulletin of the Kemerovo State University of Culture and Arts* (April 2011): 33.

Examples of choral music of this genre are the choral mystery *Avvakum* for narrator, soprano, tenor, baritone and mixed choir by Kirill Volkov, and the spiritual cantata *Reverend Savva*, *The Abbot* by Georgy Dmitriev. The interest of composers in this genre was also realized in the opera genre, for example: opera-oratorio: *Saint Hermogenes* by Georgy Dmitriev, and *Sergius of Radonezh* based on the text of the *Life of Sergius of Radonezh* by Tatiana Smirnova.

This search for new mixed genres ultimately led to the appearance of the Russian Choral Opera *Boyarina Morozova*. The Choral Opera was Shchedrin's definition which was dedicated to the topic of schism (a division in a religious organization) in the Russian Orthodox Church and the conflict between "Old Believers" and "New Believers." The choral opera *Boyarina Morozova* was written within the genre of the Lives of Saints. In 1988, Rodion Shchedrin had already composed a Liturgical choral work on this topic - *The Sealed Angel* with soloists, flute and chorus upon a story that concerns a group of "Old Believers" whose revered icon of an angel was confiscated by officials and sealed with wax. The church *schism* of the 17th century was truly a great tragedy for Russia, its church and people.

2.2 Schism and the "Old Believers" in the Russian Orthodoxy

Schism was a religious and social movement that arose in Russia in the middle of the 17th century. To strengthen the church, Patriarch Nikon (1605 - 1681) began to implement church ritual reforms, the essence of which was to unify the theological system throughout Russia. Some of the clergy, led by Archpriest's Avvakum (1620 - 1682) and Daniel, proposed to rely on ancient Russian theological books; however, Patriarch Nikon decided to use Greek models, which, in his opinion, would facilitate the unification of all Orthodox churches of Europe and Asia, and strengthen his influence on the tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov. The change in

ordinary rituals, the appearance of new theological books and their forced introduction gave rise to discontent.

The "Old Believers" were people who rejected the reforms by Patriarch Nikon in 1653. The main essence of these reforms was not only to change various rituals, correct theological books, but to also change the form of the sign of the cross. "Three fingers" were introduced for the sign of the cross which was completely rejected by the "Old Believers," who recognized only "two fingers." The tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov supported those reforms and was against the "Old Believers."

The schismatics wanted to get away from evil, as they considered the "New Faith", and tried to preserve the "Old faith" therefore saving their souls. The church schism was a national tragedy of the Russian people, which divided society into two warring parts: those who did not convert to the new faith were persecuted, tortured, and were even burned alive. Many "Old Believers" fled to the forests and remote villages of the Volga region and the European north - Siberia and founded the communities there. Some "Old Believers" fled abroad to Brazil (South America) and Uganda (East Africa). In these areas they remained isolated from Russian society until tsar Nicholas the II proclaimed the *Decree of Tolerance* in 1905, freeing the "Old Believers" from exile and persecution.

Archpriest Avvakum was the first supporter of the "Old Believers" and because of his harsh statements to the tsar Alexei Romanov, he was imprisoned for several years in Pustozersk (a city in the Polar region of the Nenets Autonomous Okrug, a place of exile and imprisonment) where he wrote his autobiography. Despite the fact that Archpriest Avvakum was under guard, he constantly sent letters to his supporters - the "Old Believers." Avvakum was burned at the stake and after his death the "Old Believers" began to consider him as a saint.

Boyarina Feodosia Morozova (1632 - 1675) became the next "martyr" who refused Patriarch Nikon's reforms and together with her sister Evdokia Urusova was imprisoned in the Borovsk Monastery.

2.3 The Education System of the "Old Believers"

The "Old Believers" maintained their own education system, which included memorizing many prayers, learning to read and use basic arithmetic, and singing the *Znamenny chant*.

Znamenny chant or Znamenny singing is like Gregorian chant in the Roman Catholic church, a type of church singing, which is based on unison or monophonic, melismatic performance of the composition. Znamenny singing is also called Orthodox canonical singing due to its antiquity and prevalence in Orthodoxy during the Byzantine Empire. The very gifted children were also taught Slavic writing and icon painting. After the schism of the Orthodox Church, the "Old Believers" did not accept either the new polyphonic style of singing or the new system of musical notation. Kryuk singing, preserved by the "Old Believers," received its name from the method of writing a melody with special signs - "banners" or "hooks".

Singing for the "Old Believers" is very important and they don't recognize classical manner of singing (using vibrato); a person praying must sing in his natural voice, in a folklore manner. When singing, they should achieve the sound of one natural voice. There are no pauses or stops in *Znamenny singing*, all chants are performed continuously. The composition of the church choir was exclusively male, but due to the small number of singers, at the present time, in almost all "Old Believer" prayer houses and churches, the majority of the choirs are women.

Rodion Shchedrin answered some questions during his interview with Boris Barabanov about the "Old Believers:

"The church service for the "Old Believers" is very long, for many hours, and singing is only monophonic. And the change in the order of these ceremonies affected their length. It was not feasible for rich people and for peasants to spend hours praying at the church. Who will work then? Therefore, the Greeks shortened all these ceremonies, that is, they made the religion more suitable for that stage of economic development of the country. But the point is not only that the "Old Believers" wanted to live the old-fashioned way, they did not want to break the old habits and their pace. These were all sedate people, not in a hurry. There are still, many of them now: the "Old Believers" live In Canada and Lithuania. Do you know how many "Old Believers" are in Russia now? Three million."

2.4 Plot and Libretto of Rodion Shchedrin's Boyarina Morozova

The opera's story of *Boyarina Morozova* is based on one of the most terrible and tragic episodes of Russian history: the persecution of "Old Believers" and the schism within orthodoxy. In these regards, the obvious predecessor of *Boyarina Morozova* is the opera *Khovanshchina* by Modest Mussorgsky and it is compared to Shchedrin's opera, because the center of the historic drama by Mussorgsky is the tension between Peter the Great and three different groups who stood between him and absolute power: Prince Ivan Khovansky, leader of the old nobility; the "Old Believers," who opposed Peter's attempts to extend his dominion over the church; and the leader, Golitsyn who supported Peter's sister, Sophia.

Apart from Mussorgsky, none of the composers actually addressed this important history and art theme, although the historical problem itself was of concern to the Russian musicians quite often. Shchedrin was attracted to it back in 1988 when he created the Russian Liturgy of Nikolay Leskov's story "The Sealed Angel." The story is about the icon painter Sebastian and a group of the "Old Believers" whose revered ancient miraculous icon of an angel was confiscated by officials and sealed with wax.

⁵ Rodion Shchedrin, "A Conversation with Rodion Shchedrin," interview by Boris Barabanov (Kommersant, 30 October 2006), *Boyarina Morozova* (fall 2006): 4-5.

The faith and spiritual search of a person, self-determination of the individual and his path to God - this was very important for the composer. A close connection with the culture of the Russian Orthodox Church predetermined the composer's creative guidelines for his compositions, especially for *Boyarina Morozova*. His interest in Russian Church Art turned out to be a powerful source of Shchedrin's creativity which manifested itself with unusual stability over many years. In answers to questions from journalists, Rodion Shchedrin noted that the history of the "Old Believers" in Russia is extremely contradictory, and he had long wanted to approach this plot and create a new composition.

At the outset of creating the choral opera *Boyarina Morozova*, Shchedrin intended to represent Protopope (Archpriest) Avvakum as a main character of the opera. The composer wrote: "The inspiration for my dream was the Archpriest Avvakum and his magnificent, immortal *Life*. My thoughts continually turned to an opera on the subject. Center stage had to be the tempestuous Archpriest himself: a dramatic tenor since, according to those who remembered the man himself, his voice was harsh and high-pitched. Opposed to him is the "dog from hell," the apostate Patriarch Nikon." Shchedrin also commented about the followers of Avvakum during that terrible time:

"Avvakum's devout follower the Blessed Cyprian, silenced by having his tongue cut out. Avvakum's sons betrayed the faith of their father. The *strelets* captain Ivan Yelagin, who sealed Avvakum in his dungeon. And the Boyarina, Feodosia Prokopyevna Morozova, and her sister, who followed her uncomplainingly to the rack, imprisonment and death."⁷

Thus, *Boyarina Morozova* was the natural result of a long creative search that turned out to be quite painful and difficult for the composer himself. Shchedrin noted that he had been

⁶ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 246.

⁷ Ibid.

thinking about an opera based on this plot for a long time, however, initial attempts to write an opera did not end in anything. "This was a tragic story, but somehow despite many attempts I could not weld it into a convincing whole. I put it aside for a more favourable time, awaiting the advent of some happy chance."

Only in the summer of 2006 this "happy chance" appeared and Rodion Shchedrin returned to the idea of his opera. The occasion was a request from a close friend, the outstanding choral conductor Boris Tevlin, to write a new choral work for Tevlin's 75th birthday- anniversary. Rodion Shchedrin then completely changed the concept of the opera, the main character became a noble woman, Feodosia Morozova. In this terrible story, Shchedrin was attracted to a strong female character, and according to the composer, female characters are generally more interesting than male ones. The sudden change in Morozova's fate also attracted Shchedrin - a rich, high-ranking woman who had everything but ended up in the prison of Borovsk.

During the interview with the journalist Boris Barabanov, Rodion Shchedrin commented:

"What could be more attractive in opera than a strong female character: Carmen, Marfa, Lyubasha, Maiden Fevronia, and others? Of course, male characters are also important. But still, the female character, it seems to me, is more interesting - visually, plastically, and even in voice. Morozova was the richest and most influential woman in Russia at that time. There

in voice. Morozova was the richest and most influential woman in Russia at that time. There were peacocks in her yard! She was the tsar's beauty and according to etiquette she had to sit next to the tsar. And after that, find yourself on the rack, with broken bones, naked in the snow, be exiled to the Borovsky pit and die of hunger. Her last wish was for a soldier to wash her dress because she didn't want to die dirty."

In other areas of art, spiritual and religious themes, and in particular, the theme of schism and specifically the personality of the noblewoman Morozova were illuminated much earlier than in

⁸ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 246.

⁹ Rodion Shchedrin, "A Conversation with Rodion Shchedrin," interview by Boris Barabanov (Moscow, 30 October 2006), *Kommersant* (fall 2006): 6.

the musical embodiment. Turning to a specific historical figure, the authors use it as a means to reveal the creative task they have established, therefore the image of the noblewoman Feodosia Morozova has always been interpreted in art in different ways. Many artists turned to the image of Morozova in painting, such as Vasiliy Surikov (the painting *Boyarina Morozova* which depicts a noblewoman in chains moving on a sledge by the Chudov Monastery), Vladislav Perov (the drawing *Torture of the Boyarina Morozova*), Alexander Litovchenko (the painting *Boyarina Morozova* where Morozova refused to attend services at the church with the "New Believers," and she was carried out of the house on a chair), and a drawing by an unknown master in the iconographic style "Archpriest Avvakum Together with Epiphanius, Lazarus and Fedor."

In the literature of the 20th century, a vivid reflection of the image of Boyarina Morozova can be found in the poetry of Anna Akhmatova and Marina Tsvetaeva. Akhmatova had drawn some parallels between her own life and the similar tragic fate of the noblewoman Morozova.

The historian, writer, poet and philosopher Kirill Kozhurin from St. Petersburg created the book *Boyarina Morozova* from the series "The Life of Remarkable People" which presented the "Old Believers," the biography of Boyarina Morozova, and the entire Russian history of the 17th century. A new novel by the famous modern writer-historian Vladislav Bakhrevsky "Boyarina Morozova. The Great Destiny of Russia" which reflected the life and fate of the famous figure of the "Old Believers," the spiritual daughter of Archpriest Avvakum - Feodosia Prokopyevna Morozova.

In cinematography, the original reflections of the church schism and the fate of Boyarina Morozova were two film premieres in 2011 which caused a huge resonance among the audience, such as the documentary film "Boyarina Morozova and Schism" and the television series

"Schism" which presents the image of an outstanding Russian woman from the age of sixteen until her death.

In music, in the opera genre, this theme was first presented in Rodion Shchedrin's opera *Boyarina Morozova* in 2006. The image of the noblewoman Morozova is well known from the famous work by the artist Vasiliy Surikov that was painted in 1887 and attracted Rodion Shchedrin primarily by her extraordinary strength of character, devout faith, and uncompromising will. The composer noted that it was the personality of Boyarina Morozova that became the decisive factor that allowed the composition to take place. This is the brightest figure in the history of the Russian schism. The martyr and her sister, Princess Urusova, were imprisoned in a dungeon, where they died of hunger and thirst.

The libretto was written by Shchedrin himself based on sources of the 17th century that were titled "The Life of Protopope (Archpriest) Avvakum;" "The Life of Boyarina Morozova, a Noble Woman, and her Sister Princess Urusova;" and "The Letters of Avvakum to Morozova and to Her Sister." In addition to other sources, Shchedrin used a book of *History of the Old Believers in Russia* by S. A. Zenkovsky that was published in München (in 1971) in Russian that played a huge role for him. The idea of this work was considered by Shchedrin for many years, but the key to realizing the plan, by his own admission, was found only when the choral inclination of the opera was determined (which entailed the abandonment of the orchestra).

Rodion Shchedrin was very interested in hagiography - a theological discipline that studies the Lives of Saints; this is why he wrote the opera *Boyarina Morozova* in this genre using the old Slavonic text. In presenting historical facts, Shchedrin adheres to consistency and documentation which is confirmed by many of his statements and references to literary sources, however, the composer is very laconic in his libretto compared to the hagiographers who compose the Lives of

the Saints. An important point is that the composer-librettist, Rodion Shchedrin showed interest in specific hagiographic subjects of a certain historical period and focuses on the traditions of the "Old Believers" which is reflected in the works of the schismatic writers: Archpriest Avvakum, monk Epiphanius, abbott Theoktist, monk Abraham, and Ignatius Solovetsky. These writers did not alter the traditional story but enriched the genre of the Lives of the Saints with psychological emotionalism, and depiction of human feelings and relationships. This was exactly what Shchedrin needed for the opera plot. He does not depict the whole life of Morozova in this opera but represents only the last and most dramatic episode of the life of Morozova and her sister. The entire opera appears as a legend about the last days of a saint who died for her faith. This is a court scene, the death of Morozova's son, the torture of the sisters, their imprisonment in a dungeon and the death.

"To further aggravate the conflict in the opera *Boyarina Morozova*, Shchedrin used the principle of ancient tragedy. Only four heroes participate in his opera - Boyaryna Morozova, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, the sister Princess Urusova, Archpriest Avvakum and the chorus. The composer created a new genre - the "Russian choral opera" where the chorus replaced the orchestra and, as in ancient tragedies, either conflict with the heroes, then comments on the events or mourn the dead people with them. Shchedrin did not clutter the opera with cruel and naturalistic details. What he created was more of a parable about faith, reminiscent of a modern version of Bach's Passions." ¹⁰

2.5. Feodosia Prokopyevna Morozova

Feodosia Prokopyevna Morozova was born in Moscow on May 21, 1632, in the family of Prokofy Sokovnin. Her father was related to Maria Miloslavskaya, the first wife of the tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. In 1650, Sokovkin was granted a court rank - *okolnichy* which was one of the highest ranks closest to the tsar in the courts of Moscow rulers. Feodosia Morozova was

¹⁰ Olga Ronantsova, "Boyarina Without Music," Novye Izvestiya, 20 November 2006, 53.

among the courtiers accompanying the empress. Feodosia's sister, Evdokia Prokofievna, was the wife of Prince Pyotr Urusov. The high position of Morozova allowed her to become the wife of 54-year-old Boyarin Gleb Morozov when she was just at the age of 17, and after the marriage she became Boyarina Feodosia Morozova. *Boyarin* or *Boyarina* was the highest rank of the aristocracy.

Boyarin Gleb Morozov died when she was only 30 years old leaving all of his inheritance to her and their son, Ivan. Thus, Boyarina Feodosia Morozova and her son became the wealthiest people of Russia at that time: they had several estates near Moscow, and she owned eight thousand serfs and three hundred servants (serfs were unfree peasants in Russia from the 15th century till the reforms of 1861).

Morozova refused to recognize the church innovations of Patriarch Nikon. She became the spiritual daughter of Archpriest Avvakum, who returned from Siberian exile. Around 1670, she secretly became a nun under the name of Theodora.

For her belonging to the "Old Faith" and opposition to the tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov and Patriarch Nikon, Morozova was arrested, and her entire estate was confiscated. Her son, Ivan Morozov was poisoned, and in the winter of 1673, Morozova, her sister Princess Urusova and one other lady, Maria Danilova were terribly tortured in the prison of Borovsk where they died of starvation. The "iron lady" of the 17th century, Boyarina Feodosia Morozova, was one of the richest and most notable women of Russia that refused all that was dear to her for her faith: the life of her son, her power and wealth, and sacrificed her life.

CHAPTER THREE: MUSICAL LANGUAGE OF THE OPERA BOYARINA MOROZOVA

3.1 Choral Music for Rodion Shchedrin and His Choral Compositions

Choral music in Russia has a very long history and even in ancient Russia, varied songs in musical and poetic images were performed by choirs. Choral culture in Russia had an inseparable connection with the church, however, the early forms of church music were largely developed under the influence of folk songs. The theme of Russian history was deeply experienced and felt by Shchedrin. The very facts of the composer's biography and the history of his clergy family clearly illustrate the tragic events that took place in the country at that time.

Rodion Shchedrin, being a student at the Moscow Choral College for Boys, throughout his career turned to various choral genres, continuing the traditions of the Russian school of composition. He mentioned this about the choir: "I experienced the first moments of inspiration in my life while singing in the choir, and of course, my first compositions were also for the choir..."

In the interview with John Stuhr-Rommeriem he talked about the role of choral music in his career: "I think, choral training is fantastic. It is the best way to learn, because when you study the violin or cello, for instance, you usually do not see results immediately. In choral music, you get immediate feedback. It is also excellent ear training; I really think it is the best form of musical education for someone who wishes to become *musical*, a real musician."

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¹¹ Irina Komarova, *Musicians and Composers* (Moscow: Ripol Classic, 2002), 453.

¹² Rodion Shchedrin, "An Interview with Rodion Shchedrin," interview by John Stuhr-Rommereim (Oklahoma City, April 1992), The Choral Journal, no. 9 (spring 1992): 7-13.

Shchedrin's favorite writer was Nikolai Leskov whose ancestors were also priests. In his stories, Leskov used texts that are replete with quotations from the *Holy Scriptures*, and the heroes of his works are devout believers. Shchedrin composed several works based on Leskov's novels, such as the Russian Liturgy *The Sealed Angel* for mixed choir with shepherd's pipe, and two operas *The Left Hander* and *The Enchanted Wanderer*. They were really among Shchedrin's most inspired creations, and they realize an amazing fusion of the Orthodox worldview of the writer and composer that were formed in his childhood.

Rodion Shchedrin is an impeccable composer of the art of choral writing. The genre palette of his choral works is wide, including *a cappella* works, vocal and symphonic works, and opera choruses. Choral compositions are distinguished by their perfect writing technique, and they reveal the honed artistic taste of the author. There are several *a cappella* choruses written in different years, major works for choirs, such as "Lines Stanzas from Eugene Onegin" for mixed choir, "The Execution of Pugachev" a poem for mixed choir, soloists and three boys, "Concertino" in four movements for chorus, "Many Years to You" for choir, piano solo and drums, and also several choral works to lyrics by Alexander Tvardovsky and Andrei Voznesensky. The opera choruses played a huge role in Shchedrin's creation, in such operas as *Not Love Alone, Dead Souls, Lolita, The Left Hander, The Enchanted Wanderer, A Christmas Tale*, and the choral opera *Boyarina Morozova*.

Shchedrin enriches choral technique with new elements and discovers new means of realizing artistic ideas. For Rodion Shchedrin, choral music became at the same time an expression of his thoughts and feelings, and a creative laboratory in which his composer's innovations were convincingly embodied. For example, as mentioned earlier, in the opera *Dead*

Souls, written to a libretto by the composer himself, Rodion Shchedrin introduced the innovation of replacing the orchestra's violins with a chamber chorus in the orchestra pit.

The composer reinterprets sacred music in a new way. For example, the Liturgy *The Sealed Angel* was written by Shchedrin after Nikolai Leskov on the Church Slavonic texts for a mixed choir with a shepherd's pipe or flute in nine movements. He did not try to reproduce the entire sequence of the Liturgy but selected only several Russian Orthodox liturgical chants with rearrangements and abbreviations. Stylistically he used in this composition the principles of Russian *Znamenny chant* with its smoothness of singing and singing without pauses.

In addition to *Znamenny chants* in this work, there are also *podgolosok* - a Russian definition of a counterpoint, sonorous homophonic texture, the rich color of low bass voices, and a solo of a boy treble, like an imitation of a ringing bell.

Shchedrin's style, which was initially based on traditional Russian folklorism, became characterized by a combination of elements of folk art and *avant-garde* techniques, elements of *dodecaphony* and *sonorics*. The same principles of the *Znamenny chant*, using Russian folk tunes, the elements of dodecaphony, sonorics and aleatoric music, Rodion Shchedrin used in his choral opera *Boyarina Morozova*. The theme of spiritual achievement, related with the need of spiritual cleansing of a Christian on his path to salvation, and sometimes the sacrifice, has become the quintessence of deep meaning of Shchedrin's choral music.

3.2 Chorus in the opera *Boyarina Morozova*

Revealing new possibilities of the chorus, Rodion Shchedrin comes to the creation of a new genre - the Russian Choral Opera *Boyarina Morozova* for four soloists, a mixed chorus, trumpet, timpani and percussion. Continuing the opera traditions of Mikhail Glinka, Alexander Borodin,

Nikolai Rimsky - Korsakov, and Modest Mussorgsky, Shchedrin gives the primary role in the opera to the chorus. According to Russian traditions within the Orthodox churches, only *a cappella* voices were able to be used, and musical instruments were forbidden. Rodion Shchedrin titled this as the "Choral Opera" and used the old Slavonic text. Shchedrin decided to convey the tragedy of Boyarina Morozova through the multifunctional chorus which replaced the orchestra. The chorus is the main character and direct participant in the opera which either conflicts with the heroes, and sometimes makes comments on the events, or mourns the perished people. The chorus is a kind of creative laboratory of the composer in which he makes his discoveries. The chorus is like a vocal orchestra. Its sound significantly enriches the unusual instrumental composition of the orchestra used by the author and conveys the psychological state of the characters at different moments of the action.

At the beginning of the opera in movement No. 1 - *Anathema*, the chorus depicts the enviable crowd of Alexei Romanov's servants and executioners who are full of anger, envy, ruthlessness, and aggression. In movement No. 5 – *The Killing of Morozova's Son*, the chorus represents a street crowd gloating about Morozova's wealth. They are jealous and furious. In other movements: No. 8 - *Avvakum's Lamentation* and No. 10 - *Death of Princess Urusova*, the chorus personifies the image of a people praying for the salvation of Russia. In movement No. 12 - *Words with the Guard and Death of Morozova*, the chorus personifies the angels who sing the memorial service of Morozova, with a chorale-like "Lord, receive her in peace."

Boyarina Morozova is a chamber opera; there is no orchestra here - it is replaced by a mixed chorus, only a trumpeter and two drummers (one - on timpani, the other's part includes a whole set of percussion, including bells). The composer's masterful work portrays together the elements of Russian bells, prayerful and sublime sound of choral chants, creatively arranged

intonations of *Znamenny chants* and folk genres (lamentation), declamatory remarks of the chorus, and virtuoso instrumental solos. This is a real picture of that bloody era of Russian history of the 17th century.

Boyarina Morozova essentially combines the features of the opera and oratorio and has similar principles of an ancient Greek tragedy and the Passions during the Middle Ages and Passions by J. S. Bach. Like medieval dramas where spoken dialogues alternated with music of different genres, in Shchedrin's Choral Opera, dialogues are replaced by laments and enlightened prayers. The dramatic interpretation of the chorus, especially the character of Avvakum, is reminiscent of the Evangelist narrator whose role was entrusted to a tenor voice and evokes parallels with the Baroque Passions.

Rodion Shchedrin himself designated his work as "The Life and Suffering of Boyarina Morozova and Her Sister Princess Urusova." Thus, Shchedrin emphasized the connection of Morozova with the martyr's type of the Lives of Saints, and he described her suffering and death as a saint in the name of faith. The opera is dedicated to the theme of church schism and the trials that befell the legendary woman. Feodosia Morozova, who was one of the richest and most famous women of Russia, who gave up everything that was dear to her for her faith.

The choral principle, as the embodiment of the crowd, is one of the most characteristic features of Russian historical opera. Shchedrin's chorus is like the crowd of people in Vasiliy Surikov's painting *Boyarina Morozova*, sometimes cruel and unforgiving, sometimes deeply compassionate to the heroine. The three martyrs: Boyarina Feodosia Morozova, her sister Princess Urusova and Archpriest Avvakum are opposed by the tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov, who was portrayed in the opera as the main villain, although he received the nickname in history of "The Quietest."

The main characters in the opera have an organic connection with sacred choral music, and these characters are perceived more like soloists from the chorus. The chorus supports the tsar Alexei Romanov in his demand to Morozova to renounce the "Old Faith," then mourns the fate of the perishing sisters with Archpriest Avvakum, or comments on the terrible events. Combined with trumpet, timpani and percussion - from rattles to real small church bell ringing, the chorus sounds like a full-fledged orchestra.

3.3 Opera Structure and the Principal Characters

Boyarina Morozova was written in two parts for four soloists, a mixed chorus, trumpet, timpani and percussion. There are four acting hero-soloists in this opera: Boyarina Feodosia Morozova - mezzo-soprano; her sister, Princess Evdokia Urusova - soprano; Tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov - bass; and the Protopope (Archpriest) Avvakum - tenor.

The first part includes six movements: 1. "Anathema", 2. "Two Sisters" (Boyarina Morozova and Princess Urusova), 3. "Threats", 4. "Avvakum" (Lamento I), 5. "Murder of Morozova's son," 6. "Morozova's cry for her son." The second part has seven movements: 7. "Torture", 8. "Crying of Avvakum" (Lamento II), 9. "Imprisonment", 10. "Death of Princess Urusova", 11. "Command of the Tsar", 12. "Conversation with the guard and the death of Morozova", 13. "Epilogue (Avvakum: Lamento III)."

The composer strives for laconic presentation, focusing only on the main points of the narrative surrounding the main heroine. Despite the number of movements, the dramaturgy of the opera *Boyarina Morozova* is through-composed. Thirteen numbers of the opera grouped into two parts, in the mode of extreme concentration represent a series of tragic events (anathema, trial by threats and torture, murder of a son, weeping, imprisonment, and the death). It is the last

episode of Boyarina Morozova's life. The musical language corresponds to the line of dramaturgy. Rodion Shchedrin uses expressive chromatic passages in the solo parts and in the chorus, frenetic timpani's solos, shrill *recitative* like sound of the trumpet, and short or long pauses between movements (*fermata* or *lunga*).

Odd numbers/movements of the opera are devoted to the effective development of the conflict, the manifestation of the aggressive sphere of the Tsar, and images of evil. These movements alternate with even numbers where we hear the prayers, prayerful compassion for schismatics, and comprehension of their path to God through torment.

Shchedrin was attracted to the history of the church schism not by the schism itself but by the bright, highly emotional, tragic, courageous and strong images of heroes (personalities) who reject compromise solutions for the sake of their faith and beliefs. Therefore, the choice of the main characters fell on the images of Feodosia Morozova, her sister Princess Urusova, Archpriest Avvakum, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov and the people. Shchedrin represented two conflicting groups in this opera: the first was represented by Tsar Alexei Mikhalovich Romanov and Patriarch Nikon, who were changing and supporting new church canons and reforms, and the second one was represented by Archpriest Avvakum, the noblewoman, Boyarina Feodosia Morozova, and her sister, Princess Evdokia Urusova, who were adherents of the "Old Believers."

One of the most important characters in the opera is the Tsar Alexei Romanov, his nickname was "The Quietest." In contrast to his nickname, he appears to be a tyrant and despot who deals with undesirable people. In the exposition of conflict between the Tsar, Feodosia Morozova and her sister Princess Urusova (the first movement - *Anathema* which is a curse by a priest, excommunicating people), Tsar Alexei Romanov demands that Morozova and her sister

renounce the "Old Faith," threatening them, but both sisters remain adamant, so the Tsar gives the order to imprison the sisters in chains. In the first movement: powerful *ostinato* sound of the trumpet, the blows of timpani (tremolo), timbre of the bells reinforcing the importance of the action of the Tsar, and very strong dynamics *ff (fortissimo)* in the men's chorus chanting "Anathema to upon each and every one of the misbelievers." Three times, Boyarina Morozova and Princess Urusova testify to their unwavering adherence to former customs, not wanting to reconcile and give in. The Tsar's decision is unshakable: "Seize them! Chain them!" In movement No. 9 "Incarceration in the Dungeon," is the last demand of the Tsar Alexei Romanov to Boyarina Morozova and her sister Urusova to renounce the "Old Faith." In this dramatic movement, we hear short *recitative* in the soprano and alto parts, they are repeating the Tsar's threats which represents great emotional power.

The other main character in the opera is noblewoman Boyarina Morozova who is characterized as a woman of unbending will, and firmly follows the orders of her faith. At the same time, the opera includes episodes where the heroine is shown as an ordinary woman mourning her son (No. 6, "Morozova's Lamentation over Her Son"), and just before her death appealing to the compassion of the guard and begging to give her food and wash her gown for her (No. 12, "Words with the Guard and Death of Morozova"). From the primary sources of the libretto, we can see that Feodosia Morozova was not a religious fanatic woman. Archpriest Avvakum wrote about her as "a cheerful and amiable woman." She was not at all alien to human passion and weakness. The characteristics of the main character of Morozova are given in the opera both indirectly (through choral remarks and from the lips of Avvakum in his laments) and directly, in her solo parts in all numbers except No. 7, "Torture." Rodion Shchedrin, having

written an opera dedicated to a woman, has created the image of one of the best representatives of Russian history, strong in spirit, incapable of betraying God, faith, and beliefs.

No. 1 "Anathema" is the beginning of a conflict between two opposing sides - the Tsar and the sisters. The noblewoman's first refusal to the Tsar's demands "I believe according to the rites the saints of old have taught us. Two fingers joined." The choral sound is based on the word "Anathema," its repeated chanting in the opera emphasizes the dramatic intensity of the exposition.

No. 3 "Threats" - "I'm not afraid of ordinary fire, I tremble as much as the eternal flame!" In this scene, disobedient women are threatened with burning. The accompanying chorus reaches a powerful sound (fff). The crowd, sympathizing with the schismatics, urge them to renounce the "Old Faith" to which Morozova does not react, continuing to stubbornly defend her position.

No. 5 "The Killing of Morozova's Son" is the climax of the first part of the opera. This number is the most detailed characteristic of the noblewoman. Several sections can be distinguished in it, such as: a description of a rich, wealthy noblewoman ("Royal lady - in - waiting, she was the owner of eight thousand serfs. Peacocks in her yard, promenading"); characteristics of a loving mother who evokes compassion ("I love my son, and he is my only child..."); characterization of a strong willed, heroic woman ready to accept the death of her son and her own for the sake of her faith ("O child, this is our hour of testing..."). Rodion Shchedrin specifically introduced the image of the noblewoman's son Ivan into the opera and in this movement, thereby emphasizing Morozova's diverse personality. She is not just a principled and determined woman, but also a deeply unhappy mother mourning the death of her son.

No. 6 "Morozova's Lamentation over Her Son" sounds after the boy was poisoned. A solo number where the noblewoman is shown as a mother tormented by grief. She knows that her

principles and beliefs are to blame for the child's death, and she blames herself for this ("I am the fault of your death, child..."). The Boyarina's part is based on the traditional intonations of lamentation and a lullaby; the rhythmic pattern (eighth notes) and descending second intervals depict the dripping tears. The choral part is based on sustained sounds and the same rhythmic pattern as Morozova's part. Thus, the chorus plays a secondary role but supports the main character morally and spiritually.

No. 12 "Words with the guard and the death of Morozova" is the denouement of the tragedy of the main character. This is a morally and physically broken woman who killed her son for the sake of her principles and beliefs. This number is the quiet climax of the entire opera. The sound of bells in the upper register by *crotale sospesi* and the choral prayer *a cappella* "Lord, receive her in peace" imitating the ascension of the soul to heaven.

Archpriest Avvakum is portrayed in the opera by three *Lamentos* (from Italian - lament). These are laments about the tragic fate of Russia, allegorically correlated with the fates of two courageous and desperate women. Avvakum's solo part is written largely in the free and improvisational manner of performance indicated by the composer himself.

No. 4 "Avvakum (Lamento I)" - "O, unhappy Boyarina, tormented and tortured with your sister. O, cherished one, tortured..." represents the support and consolation of the two heroines of the opera, Morozova and Urusova.

No. 8 "Avvakum (Lamento II)" depicts the tragic fate of Russia and the church schism. The accompanying choral prayer sounds *a cappella* and reflects the image of the crowd who ask for the salvation of Russia.

No. 13 "Avvakum (Lamento III - Epilogue)" is a lament on the death of the noblewoman Morozova. Archpriest Avvakum is, on the one hand, a commentator on current historical events, and on the other hand, is a prophet.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF THE OPERA BOYARINA MOROZOVA

4.1 The Odd Movements of the Opera Boyarina Morozova

Movement No. 1 - "Anathema!"

The opera begins with an imitation of the bells alarm (percussion instruments of the orchestra) and syncopated alarm signals of the trumpet, the chorus imitating the strikes of the bells (musical example no. 1, p. 55). The alarm calls the people who proclaim: "Anathema to upon each and every one of the misbelievers." The word "Anathema" is repeated many times, like a rolling echo, moving from part to part, loudly rolling across the entire range of choral parts from basses to sopranos (musical example no. 1, p. 56, m.m. 8-21).

For the last time, the word "Anathema" is heard by the entire chorus in the dynamics *fff* (*fortississimo*), the soprano part is duplicated by the trumpet solo and *tremolo* of the drums which creates extreme tension. Here Shchedrin uses an unusual effect: "whistle in chorus (1-2 singers) *ad libitum*" (musical example no.1, p. 57, m.m. 23-27).

Rich and varied harmonic texture in this movement: accents in the melodic line of the bass part in the chorus that begin with the C3 then moving up through halftones, dissonant intervals, and octatonic scale creating the image of an approaching evil force. This feeling is further intensified when tenors and then female voices join the bass line, building up in a powerful choral unison. The chorus expresses unanimous opinion of the crowd, indignant and hating the infidels. Rodion Shchedrin uses mixed chords, secundal chords, added note chords, and then

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¹³ Rodion Shchedrin, *Boyarina Morozova*, libretto by Rodion Shchedrin, English version by Natasha Ward (Mainz: Schott, 2006), 3.

counterpoint - a Fugue which is a standard technique of Shchedrin's choral music (musical example no. 1, p.p. 57-58, m.m. 31-44 - a fugue).

The chorus sounds like the most important part of the entire score, accompanying the soloist - Tsar Alexei Romanov: rhythmic *ostinato* of eighth notes in the bass part performing *staccato* on "M" with the closed mouth. Their part begins with the same sounds as the timpani part, entering two bars earlier, and this similarity between the orchestral and choral lines emphasizes the unity of their instrumental interpretation.

The same episode will appear later in this movement. The word "Anathema" will be repeated in an abbreviated version like variations of the theme "Anathema to upon each and every one of the misbelievers." The trumpet solo and then the bass part of the chorus is presented in a higher tessitura, reflecting the tension of the atmosphere of what is happening. Shchedrin is using *divisi* in the chorus which has up to seven voice parts (musical example no. 2, p. 59).

In the first movement "Anathema" we can observe a different character of the chorus' sound. It relates to the religious symbolic character of the opera. This is happening with the appearance of the noblewoman Morozova and princess Urusova. The entire moving crowd instantly freezes and rolls into the background as soon as the action moves to the main characters. The octave unison of the female group of the chorus is sustained for four bars during Boyarina Morozova's solo part and represents the prayerful atmosphere and lamentation.

The main heroine Morozova is described quite briefly. The composer created a stern *leitmotif* "I believe according to the rites the saints of old have taught us. Two fingers joined." This is the trichord chant reminiscent of the intonations of *Znamenny chant*, and an expressive upward leap in melody to the tritone - diminished 5th (musical example no. 3, p. 60, m.m. 74-79).

While wanting to emphasize the significance of this leitmotif and the words of the heroine, Shchedrin repeats it only to dramatic movements: No. 1 "Anathema", No. 5 "The Killing of Morozova's Son," No. 10 "Death of Princess Urusova," and No. 12 "Words with the Guard and Death of Morozova."

The next section is the chromatic pattern in sopranos and altos singing *parlando*, "Into chains with the schismatics," basses and then tenors continue this line singing *staccato* with the closed mouth. Timpani and drums imitate the chorus. Shchedrin uses a figurative technique of a tonguetwister in representing a hated and fierce crowd of people (musical example no. 4, p.p. 61-62).

Thus, two contrasting images of the opera represented in the first movement will determine the development of the chorus throughout the opera. The first image depicts an angry and violent crowd eager to punish the infidels. There are several movements in this opera that embody this image, the odd movements: No. 1 "Anathema," No. 3 "Threats," No. 5 "The Killing of Morozova's Son," No. 7 "Torture," No. 9 "Incarceration in the Dungeon," and No. 11 "The Tsar's Command."

The other contrasting choral technique is an atmosphere of lamentation and prayers for the noble women, Boyarina Morozova and her sister Princess Urusova, and also for the fate of Russia. Choruses of this type include all even numbers of the opera and No. 13, such as: No. 2 "Two Sisters (Boyarina Morozova and Princess Urusova)," No. 4 "Avvakum (Lamento I)," No. 6 "Morozova's Lamentation over Her Son," No. 8 "Avvakum (Lamento II)," No. 10 "Death of princess Urusova," No. 12 "Words with the Guard and Death of Morozova," and the last movement No. 13 "Epilogue (Avvakum: Lamento III)," chorus portrays lamentation and prayers.

The techniques of choral writing used by Rodion Shchedrin in the first movement are later found throughout the opera. There are two episodes in Movement No. 3.

The first episode - the stern, ascetic sounding chorus starting with an ominous crawling chromatic bass line like in No. 1, "Anathema" is repeated with some changes and different text in this movement - "Seest thou the fire and instruments of torture prepared for thee?" Shchedrin is using the elements of the Russian folk song in this episode, such as: the fourth and fifth intervals and intonations of the *long song*. The *long song* is named because it means that not only are the songs long, but because each syllable of text is extended for a long duration (musical example no. 5, p. 63).

The second episode in this movement depicts a cruel and hissing crowd threatening the sisters with terrible reprisal. Shehedrin is using *staccato*, pauses, *pp* (pianissimo) and also *divisi* in the chorus which starts with five voice parts and then at the end of this movement increases to seven voices. The same means of expression Rodion Shehedrin uses in *batteria* and *timpani* (music example no. 6, p. 64-65).

Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov threatens Morozova with terrible torture and fire. "Seest thou this fire?"- he rages, and Morozova replies, "I'm not afraid of ordinary fire, I tremble as much as the eternal flame!" Shchedrin is using the rigorous *leitmotif* of Morozova that was heard in the first movement of the opera to emphasize her inflexibility and stubbornness again (musical example no. 6 - *leitmotif* of Morozova - p.p. 64-65, m.m. 14-16).

This movement is the climax of the first part of the opera and has the most detailed characterization of the noblewoman Morozova. There are several sections in this movement. The first one is where the chorus represents a street crowd who is sarcastic and jealous about the wealthy noblewoman - "Royal lady-in-waiting, she was the owner of eight thousand serfs."

Rodion Shchedrin wrote this episode in contrapuntal style using a repetitive rhythmic pattern in fast tempo *Allegro*: nine eighth notes and six sixteenth notes. He emphasizes in the score "sotto voce sempre ritmico, ben articolato" in the chorus part, and uses ostinato patterns in the drum (Tamburo) using "small brushes." 15

Its multiple repetitions create the feeling of a perpetual motion machine (passages of stream notes in rapid tempo), like an inexorable force capable of crushing undesirable "Old Believers."

Boris Tevlin described this episode as a "demonic scherzo."

The choral *staccato* technique used earlier in the first and third movements sounds somewhat different in this number. The obvious reliance on the march genre supported by the accompaniment of a drum creates a military mood in which there is a hidden threat and a premonition of a terrible result (musical example no. 7, p. 66).

Acting as a narrator in the first section, the crowd not only represents an indirect characterization of the main heroine but also appears as envious servants. The repetitive rhythm, transmitted from one part to another, from tenors and basses to sopranos and altos, followed by

¹⁴ Rodion Shchedrin, *Boyarina Morozova*, libretto by Rodion Shchedrin, English version by Natasha Ward (Mainz: Schott, 2006), 49.

¹⁵ Ibid.

an introduction in canonical imitation, can be interpreted as gossip about the arrogant Boyarina Morozova, who opposed the Tsar.

This line is continued by the chorus in the second section where the composer uses chordal texture, secundal chords in declamatory manner - *parlando*. It represents the imitation of the whispers of the jealous conspirators (musical example no. 8, p. 67).

In another section in this movement, Shchedrin depicts a loving mother who evokes compassion - "I love my son and he is my only child..." Morozova's solo sounds only with the accompaniment of the trumpet and timpani, without the chorus. We hear her strong *leitmotif* again in dynamic f(forte) (musical example no. 9, p.p. 68-89).

Shehedrin also represents the strong heroic woman ready to accept the death of her son and her own for her faith's sake - "O child, this is our hour of testing..." He uses intonations of *Znamenny chant* in Morozova's solo, a rigorous *leitmotif* we heard at the first movement of this opera. This is a conversation with her son, Ivan (musical example no. 10, p.p. 69-70).

The most dramatic section in this movement is choral recitative, "And the Tsar sent his doctors to Ivan, with poisons..." But now the crowd condemn the Tsar who dooms the mother to terrible torment due to the death of her only son. In this section, Shchedrin uses added note chords and secundal chords in the chorus and the tritone's intonations in the solo of Ivan (musical example no. 11, p. 71).

Movement No. 7 - "Torture"

Even more severe ordeals are depicted in this movement. The chorus acts as the gloating people, describing in detail and seemingly enjoying the tortures that Boyarina Morozova and her sister Princess Urusova must endure. To convey this atmosphere of cruelty, Rodion Shchedrin

masterly distinguishes the solo of trumpet and timpani, and emphasizes every word in the chorus that is pronounced by the male voices in octave unison and then by sopranos and altos repeating the same sarcastic words: "O spawn of vipers, enemies of the spirit, evil malefactors. Your joints will snap, your arms, backs, spines will shatter, your flesh will be rent, and your body covered in lacerations. Recant!" The torture scene makes a terrible impression especially with the recitative of the Tsar: "Drag them naked through the snow. Torture and beat them without mercy!"

(Musical example no. 12a, p. 72, trumpet's solo - no. 12b, p.73, timpani solo - no. 12c, p.73, the Tsar's recitative - no. 12d, p. 74).

Movement No. 9 - "Incarceration in the Dungeon"

In the ninth movement, a trumpet solo, a group of percussion instruments, such as *sonagli* (troika bells), tamburo drum, hi-hats, guiro, gong, timpani, tom drum, chains, and their rhythmic patterns play an important role. In dynamics, music development occurs gradually - from *pp* (*pianissimo*) to *fff* (*fortississimo*). In the first section, the chorus supports the Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov, who proclaims his final verdict on the sisters, sending them to their deaths. Therefore, Shchedrin again uses the choral techniques previously used in No. 1, "Anathema": short tongue twisters in soprano and alto parts and intonations of the Russian *long song* in the male group of the chorus that support for the Tsar's solo part, and it represents his great power: "Consign them to a dungeon in the ground, to eternal darkness in the town of Borovsk!" The section reaches a climax and ends with the accusatory conclusion of the chorus which is carried out in each part from female to male voices, as if confirming the verdict: "O daughters of enmity, what are you doing?"

In the new section, the chorus is given an independent role. To create the image of an angry crowd, the composer again applies a *staccato*, separating the rhythmic unison of the choral part with pauses. The crowd intends to beat the main characters. At first, this sounds as if from afar in the dynamics of the *pp* (*pianissimo*), but gradually the entire crowd picks up these words, and the episode reaches its climax when a group of percussion instruments enters, literally recreating the picture of the beating of exhausted women by an angry crowd: "Go to, and beat them then, so, and so," (Musical example - no. 13, p. 75).

The choral unison echoes the words of the Tsar: "Starve them in a hole in Borovsk, in a stinking dungeon, in blackest darkness, in stifling earth, in the cold, in vermin, cramped and suffering!" Musically, this episode is a repetition of the opening theme from No. 1 "Anathema," however, Shchedrin is using different note values (the tied notes and dotted half notes) compared to the first movement, thereby achieving the power sound and creating the image of an evil destructive force (musical example no. 14, p. 76).

Movement No. 11 - "The Tsar's Command"

The main character of this movement is the tyrant Tsar Alexei Romanov. The crowds again support him, and they are direct executors of the monarch's will. Rodon Shchedrin uses a *fugato* in this movement, the presentation of the theme and then imitative voice parts introductions and gradual thickening of the polyphonic texture in the chorus.

The pinnacle of this scene is the fierce cries of the Tsar, predicting the terrible fate of the rebellious schismatic Boyarina Morozova: "And give neither food nor drink to Morozova!"

Depicting the evil crowd supporting the Tsar, Shchedrin again applies separating rhythmic recitatives with short eighth notes pauses in the chorus, shrill solo of trumpet and timpani, and

persistent rhythmic patterns in the *gran cassa*, sonagli (Troika bells) and tamburo (musical example - no. 15, p. 77).

4.2 The Even Movements of the Opera Boyarina Morozova

Movement No. 2 - "Two Sisters: Boyarina Morozova and Princess Urusova"

A striking contrast to the chorus of the first type are the even movements of the opera - the prayers and meditations (No. 2, No. 4, No. 6, No. 8, No. 10, No. 12 and the odd movement, No. 13 - Epilogue) which relate to the symbolic religious plan of the opera.

The second movement is a prayer to the Mother of God ("The Most Holy Virgin, Mother of God..."). A duet of two sisters turns every now and then into cries and sounds against the backdrop of the sound of the sopranos, altos and tenors. To create a prayerful atmosphere, the composer uses the sound of the muted trumpet, and timbre of the vibraphone and crotales which duplicates the main tone of sopranos. The performing technique of the chorus with a closed mouth on "M," the layering of sounds one on top of another, as it were, envelops the voices of the soloists - Boyarina Morozova and her sister Princess Urusova, creating a soft warm background.

In the melody of the chorus, Shchedrin uses Phrygian mode for sopranos and Ionian mode for altos, whereas tenors sing on one or two notes. A prayer of Morozova and Urusova is a combination of the atonal melody with wide intervals, with chromatic intonations, intonations of the *long song*, and variable time signatures: 5/4, 4/2, and 2/2, which is very typical of Russian folk songs (musical example - no. 16, p.p. 78-79).

In this movement, Archpriest Avvakum laments for his spiritual children: "O, unhappy Boyarina, tormented and tortured with your sister." In his solo, Shchedrin uses intonations of *Znamenny chant* and chromatic intonations of the Russian folk songs in a free improvisational manner of performance indicated by the composer himself. The chorus sounds like an accompaniment singing with closed mouth on "M." Clear consonances sustained over long note durations (dotted whole notes) evoke an association with the temple sound that accompanies the divine service. Depicting prayer, Shchedrin also uses crotales in this movement (musical example - no. 17, p.p. 80-81).

Movement No. 6 - "Morozova's Lamentation"

This is a monologue of the noblewoman Feodosia Morozova where for the first time, the main heroine is shown not as a supporter of the "Old Believers" filled with fortitude, but as a deeply tormented and suffering mother. It happens just after her son Ivan is poisoned.

Analogies arise with the image of the Mother of God, whose son endured torment in the name of the faith. She knows that her principles and beliefs are to blame for the child's death: "Woe to me, for that my son should die in such a place. Mine is the guilt for your death, my child!" The Boyarina's part is based on the traditional intonations of lamentation and a lullaby; the rhythmic pattern (eighth notes), and descending minor second intervals that depict dripping tears.

The chorus part is based on sustained sounds and the same rhythmic pattern as Morozova's part, and in this episode plays a secondary role, but supports the main character morally and spiritually (musical example no. 18, p. 82).

On the other hand, this is a collective image of all mothers who have lost their children. In the other episode there is a solo of Morozova, a trumpet solo with an accompaniment of vibraphone, after her phrase "Weep for your sons with me, all mothers. Weep, weep..." Shehedrin represents a desperate scream of the crowd using a high *tessitura* in the chorus, secundal chords and the dynamics of *fff* (fortississimo). The crowd is suffering with the main character and gradually the voices descend into a low register thereby achieving the effect of a subsiding storm (musical example no. 19, p.p. 83-84).

Movement No. 8 - "Avvakum's Lamentation (Lamento II)"

A huge contrast is created in comparison with the previous movement, No. 7, "Torture," whereby the crowd acts both as an executioner and witness, while observing with particular cruelty the horrors of the torture of the Boyarina Morozova and her sister Princess Urusova. This movement explains about the tragic fate of Russia. The accompanying choral prayer, "Satan, Satan hath prevailed upon the Lord to give him radiant Russia...," sounds *a cappella* and is a reflection of the crowd who imploringly asks for the salvation of the state. The homophonic prayer creates a complex harmonic structure with *divisi* in the chorus (starting four voices and then increasing to ten voices) designed in the style of Orthodox church chant. In this choral episode, the defining means of musical expressiveness are multiple, almost in every measure, agogic changes in tempo (*poco allarg*. and *a tempo*) and the use of moving and contrasting dynamics (from *pppp* crescendo to *sfff*). Avvakum's solo is written in an improvisational manner (*Tempo precedente, ma sempre quasi poco improvvisato*) as in the recitative "My light, do you breathe still, or have they burned or crushed you?" (Musical example no. 20, p. 85).

"Satan, Satan hath prevailed upon the Lord to give him radiant Russia..." This thought conveys that the tragedy of Boyarina Morozova is not the personal drama of one person or one family. This is the historical turning point that attracted the attention of Rodion Shchedrin. The fate of Boyarina Morozova is also the fate of the whole country which experienced one of the more profound turning points in its history: the transition from the "Old faith" to the new one and introduced by crude violent methods which destroyed so many innocent lives.

Confirming this idea, the composer once again repeats the same theme at the beginning of this movement "Death of Princess Urusova," but in an abbreviated form.

There is an interesting episode that occurs in the chorus part written in the spirit of a traditional church rosary. The chorus pronounces ten times the phrase, "Son of God, have mercy on us." This reminds us of that moment in the Orthodox Liturgy when the phrase "Lord, have mercy" was repeated 40 times. It is the part of an ancient prayer addressed to God for the sending of mercy and forgiveness of sins and anticipates the dying confession of Princess Urusova (musical example no. 21a, p.p. 86-87). Thus, the stage life of one of the martyrs ends in this movement.

To create a prayerful atmosphere and a valediction of the Princess Urusova, the composer repeats a prayer for the Virgin Mary that we heard in the second movement. Shchedrin uses the same meter, rhythm, Phrygian mode in the chorus part with the accompaniment of the vibraphone. The duet of Morozova and Urusova is a combination of the atonal melody with chromatic intonations and variable time signatures: 3/4, 4/4, and 2/4 (musical example no. 21b, p. 88). The movement ends with the *leitmotif* of Morozova and the chorus that sounds like the

blows of a funeral bell thanks to the dynamics *sf pp* on the syllable "Bam" (musical examples no. 21c, p. 88).

Movement No. 12 - "Words with the Guard and Death of Morozova"

This is a final part of the tragedy and the last link in the characterization of the main character: Morozova is a morally and physically broken woman who blames herself for her son's death. Sopranos sing *non legato* on one tone with their mouths closed in unison with the wind chimes and suspended crotale accompanying Morozova's conversation with the guard which creates the feeling of dripping tears (musical example no. 22a, p.89).

Feeling the approach of her death, Boyarina Morozova begs the guard to wash her clothes in order to die in a clean shirt, to which the guard constantly repeats to her: "No, I'm afraid...I do not dare..." At the end, turning to God for the last time "Lord, accept me" Morozova dies. The rhythmic *ostinato* (the same sound is constantly repeated eighth notes) in the chorus, timpani and suspended crotale embodies the fate of Morozova, the gradual fading of her life. This movement is the quiet climax of the entire opera (musical example no. 22b, p. 90).

Movement No. 13 - "Epilogue (Avvakum: Lamento III)"

The result of the tragic story is the Epilogue in which the chorus acts as harmonic support for the Archpriest Avvakum's solo "O morning star, how early you're shining." At the beginning of the movement, the choral sound resembles a lullaby, but as it develops, it represents a funeral procession (Chorale "Rest in peace, blessed Theodora...), as if gradually moving away and dying down. *Campani tubolari*, bell-plate and trumpet solo accompany the funeral service which creates an atmosphere of peace, silence, and catharsis. As a philosopher, Rodion Shchedrin

leaves the ending of the opera open, thereby inviting the listener to dialogue and inviting him to independently comprehend the historical events (musical example no. 23, p. 91).

CHAPTER FIVE: THE WORLD PREMIERE OF THE OPERA BOYARINA MOROZOVA FESTIVALS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 The World Premiere of the Opera Boyarina Morozova

On October 30, 2006, the production agency "Classica Viva" presented the world premiere of Rodion Shchedrin's opera *Boyarina Morozova* at the opening of the XXVIIIth International Festival of Contemporary Music "Moscow Autumn" at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. The choral opera, in the literal sense, is the opera for the chorus which bears the main burden so that only a highly professional group is able to master the score that requires real virtuosity from choral singers. It is no coincidence that the first performer of this opera was the Chamber Choir of the Moscow Conservatory under the direction of conductor Boris Tevlin and was dedicated to his 75th birthday-anniversary. The appearance of such scores became a big event in the modern musical world.

The soloists were from the Bolshoi Theatre, Helikon Opera, and Novosibirsk Opera and Ballet Theater. The role of the noblewoman Boyarina Morozova was performed by Larisa Kostyuk (mezzo-soprano), her sister Princess Urusova by Veronika Dzhioeva (soprano), the Archpriest Avvakum was performed by the Australian tenor Andrew Goodwin who studied at that time at the Saint Petersburg Conservatory, and Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich Romanov by Mikhail Davydov (bass).

Larisa Kosttyuk from Helikon Opera in Moscow was engaged for the role of Boyarina Morozova and Shchedrin described about her character and her voice as "a sonorous, chest-voiced mezzo, a stately woman with the austere features of an icon painting. Surikov's famous painting portrays Morozova as an unappealing fanatic in the grip of ecstasy. My own conception

of Morozova, based on all I have read about her, is of a different woman. At the time of her arrest, she was 39 years old. Not only was she the richest, but she was also the most beautiful woman in Russia - a veritable "Miss Russia." Kostyuk was the ideal visible and aural embodiment of the legendary "Old Believer" of my imagination." ¹⁶

Another singer from Helikon Opera was Mikhail Davydov, bass-baritone. Schedrin said that Davydov was "excellent for the role of the Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich. He was the embodiment of power, strength, might, and a dark will. The Tsar, alone in the expanse of the stage, opposed the rebellious schismatics, punished them and put them to death. I portrayed him in a single tone: black. Davydov's diction was exemplary...his every syllable combined to form an indissoluble whole with the intonation. I love singers who have good diction!"¹⁷

For the role of Morozova's sister Princess Urusova, Rodion Shchedrin chose the lyric soprano Veronika Dzhioeva from Novosibirsk. "Much of the Princess' music repeats that of her sister, like a distant echo, or a coloratura second line in imitation. Almost all of it is written p or pp. The two women often sing together and as Dzhioeva has an extraordinarily beautiful and touching piano sound, she and Kostyuk blend in a magical harmony." 18

For the role of the Archpriest Avvakum, Rodion Shchedrin wanted to choose Evgeniy Akimov from the Mariinsky Theatre who had already performed in the composer's premiere of the opera *The Sealed Angel* in New York, but Akimov was not available at that time. The production agency "Classica Viva" found Andrew Goodwin, the lyric tenor from Australia who had just performed the role of Lensky at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

¹⁶ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 249.

¹⁷ Ibid. 250.

¹⁸ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 250.

Shchedrin wrote that "Goodwin's voice has an exceptional lyric quality and beauty - perhaps too much so for this character. No doubt for this reason I was upbraided by some critics for injecting too pronounced a note of lyricism into the Archpriest's music, a yearning ecstasy and pathos. But the text of the part I wrote for him consists wholly of excerpts from Avvakum's letters to the sisters in their confinement, and they are permeated with piercingly lyrical appeals to the two captives so dear to his heart."¹⁹

Rodion Shchedrin was really pleased about the soloists for his premiere of the opera Boyarina Morozova: "All four sharply contrasted with one another, the four characters vividly and distinctly delineated, yet together they formed a homogeneous ensemble because of the way the singers complemented one another."²⁰

For the demanding trumpet part, Shchedrin found a very young and talented musician, Kirill Soldatov who had already performed the composer's work *Concerto Parlando* for violin, trumpet and string orchestra. The composer chose Soldatov because his "tonal palette contains a huge range of colors and shades. His phrasing is irreproachable: every note and nuance I wrote into the score he played without a single deviation, simplifying nothing whatsoever and cutting no corners." Two percussionists, Viktor Grishin and Mikhail Dunaev were from the Bolshoi Theatre. Thus, the three instrumentalists were able to produce the sound of a full symphony orchestra in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory.

Finally, about the chorus and its chorus master, Boris Tevlin, Rodion Shchedrin said: "The young singers attacked the complexities of the score with such fervor that by the time of the

¹⁹ Rodion Shchedrin, *Autobiographical Memories*, trans. Anthony Phillips (Mainz: Schott, 2012), 251.

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ Ibid.

premiere they all knew their parts by heart. Not a nuance, marking, fermata, slur, accent was missed. Intonation was beyond reproach. Perhaps once in a while their diction left something to be desired, but that, alas, will be found in every choral ensemble on the planet. Boris Tevlin has created many first performances of my choral music, and each time his work has been distinguished by meticulous care, his grasp of the work as a whole, his ability to shape its dramatic line, in addition to his faultless sense of tempo and clarity in voice leading."²²

5.2 Theatrical and Stage Embodiment of the Opera *Boyarina Morozova*

Seventeen years have passed since the opera *Boyarina Morozova* was premiered in Moscow and during this time, the concert version of this opera was performed with great success at the International Arts Festival "Mittelfest" in Cividale del Friuli, Italy; at the Mariinsky Theatre in Saint Petersburg, Russia; at the Novosibirsk Opera Theatre in Novosibirsk; and at the Saratov Philharmonic in Saratov.

The theatrical and stage embodiment of the opera that the composer dreamed of happened only in 2015 during the IXth Winter Surikov Arts Festival at The Academic Concert Hall of the Academy of Music and Theater in Krasnoyarsk. The decision to stage the opera *Boyarina Morozova* was made after the premiere of this opera a year ago during the VIIIth Surikov Festival. Krasnoyarsk residents heard this work for the first time and the choral opera made a huge impression on them. The artistic director of the festival was a Doctor of Art History, Lyudmila Gavrilova, and the artistic and music director of the premiere was Honored Artist of Russia, Konstantin Yakobson.

²² Ibid, 252.

This time the singers appeared on stage in costumes stylized as historical ones. The traditional stage equipment (machines, stands, and the conductor's platform) took on a completely new meaning within the framework of the production and symbolically recreated the atmosphere of the last days of the martyrs. One of the central elements of the stage version was the large bells, and the orchestra was hidden behind the stage.

In the summer of 2017, the other staged performance of the opera *Boyarina Morozova* took place at the Russian Institute of Theater Arts in Moscow (GITIS) and was performed by graduate students of the musical theater department directed by a young student Victoria Agarkova under the direction of Georgy Isaakyan, a stage director of this institution.

5.3 The Musical Festivals Dedicated to Rodion Shchedrin

In 2011, the non-profit organization "The Fund for the Development of the Creative Initiatives" was created and officially registered in Moscow as a platform for the realization of different projects in a variety of fields of culture and education. The organization supports the spiritual, moral and patriotic education of people, and provides assistance to creative groups, artists and musical performers. Every year, they organize concerts of Rodion Shchedrin's compositions and every five years in December, there is the festival "The Sealed Angel" dedicated to Rodion Shchedrin's birthday.

Thus, the opera *Boyarina Morozova* became the climax of the festival "The Sealed Angel" dedicated to his 85th birthday-anniversary, which took place from December 2 - 18, 2017 in many Russian cities, such as Nizhny Novgorod, Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Krasnoyarsk, Saratov, Orenburg, Ulan-Ude, and Vladivostok.

Celebrations on his birthday have been taking place in different countries of the world: in Switzerland (Zürich), Germany (Berlin), the Netherlands (Amsterdam), Finland (Helsinki), and France (Paris).

Every summer in St. Petersburg, Russia there is the International Festival "Stars of the White Nights" where we can hear the music of Rodion Shchedrin. This festival was created by Valery Gergiev, a famous conductor, the general director and artistic director of the Mariinsky Theater in Saint Petersburg and of the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow.

5.4 Conclusion

Rodion Shchedrin is one of the most significant representatives of Russian music of the 20th and the 21st centuries and his name enjoys well-deserved popularity. He has a rare gift for combining highly modern language in his works as well as composition techniques and traditional elements of the Russian musical culture which has allowed him to easily fit into the world musical space and at the same time remain an individual composer. Shchedrin is one of the few modern composers who has covered almost all musical genres in his work, and it is very important that his compositions have a very strong innovative line.

Shchedrin's music, regardless of genre, is impeccable in style, program and always exquisitely intellectual. The composer's works are replete with dynamic and timbre contrasts, thereby emphasizing the current pulse of time, and therefore invariably delight the listening audience. A talented pianist, Shchedrin is also known as a performer of his own works for piano, and he writes the librettos of his theatrical works himself, while possessing extraordinary literary abilities. His works have been performed on the stages of the world's largest Philharmonic societies. Shchedrin constantly receives commissions from different countries and many famous

performers around the world dream of playing his works. All his compositions are published by two of the world's largest publishers, Schott and Sikorski.

Shehedrin is an innovator in many ways: using the humorous folk songs in academic musical genres, the singing of orchestra members in symphonic works, the original effects in instrumental music, and the creation of ballets based on the poems by Anton Chekhov in which he also composed the musical based on a Russian plot but in Japanese. He loves to experiment with the composition of the orchestra and ensemble searching for new timbre combinations, and he goes further by inventing new musical genres.

His new creation of the Russian Choral Opera *Boyarina Morozova* became a new opera genre in the beginning of the 21st century. In fact, there is no orchestra in the opera, just a trumpet and a percussion section, but the chorus is both a participant and a commentator of the events. Percussion instruments cease to be just a rhythmic background for the composer; he uses a wide palette of this group, introducing a lot of non-traditional instruments: guiro, cup-bells, and even chains.

After the premiere of the opera *Boyarina Morozova*, Rodion Shchedrin received the German music award "ECHO Klassik 2008" for the choral opera in the category "Best Opera Recording of the Year." The very fact of creating an opera based on real historical facts was recognized even by the "Old Believers" whose delegation was present at the premiere of the opera in the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory. By creating an opera dedicated to a woman, Shchedrin has drawn the listeners' attention to the best representatives of the past, who did not compromise, and for whom the main thing was not the power of money but did not betray their faith and their motherland.

Rodion Shchedrin succeeded in embodying historical figures not only through various innovative means of musical expression, relating to both the most complex solo parts and the multifunctional choral support, but also using Old Church Slavonic texts. The innovative genre "Russian Choral Opera" is a discovery of the 21st century, and the outstanding composer Rodion Shchedrin is a modern reformer of the opera genre.

APPENDIX (MUSICAL EXAMPLES)





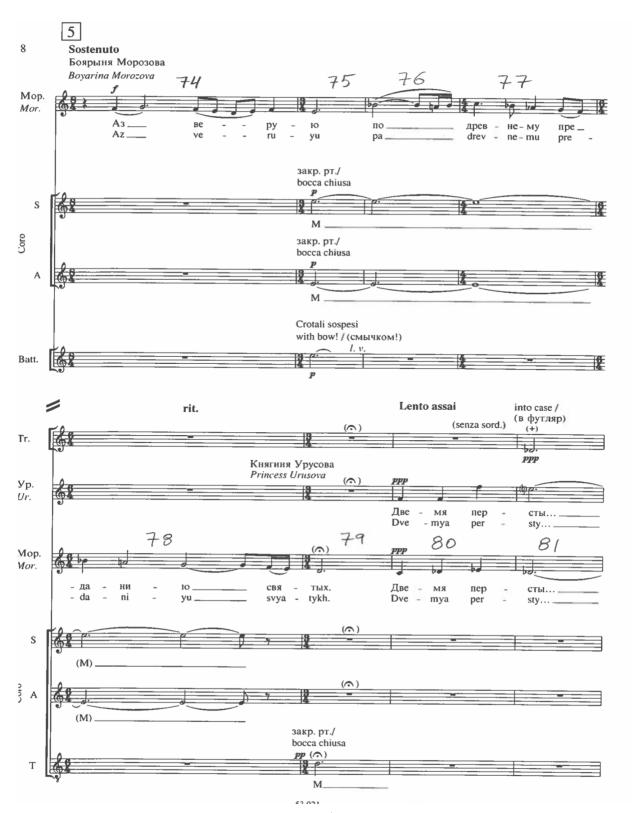


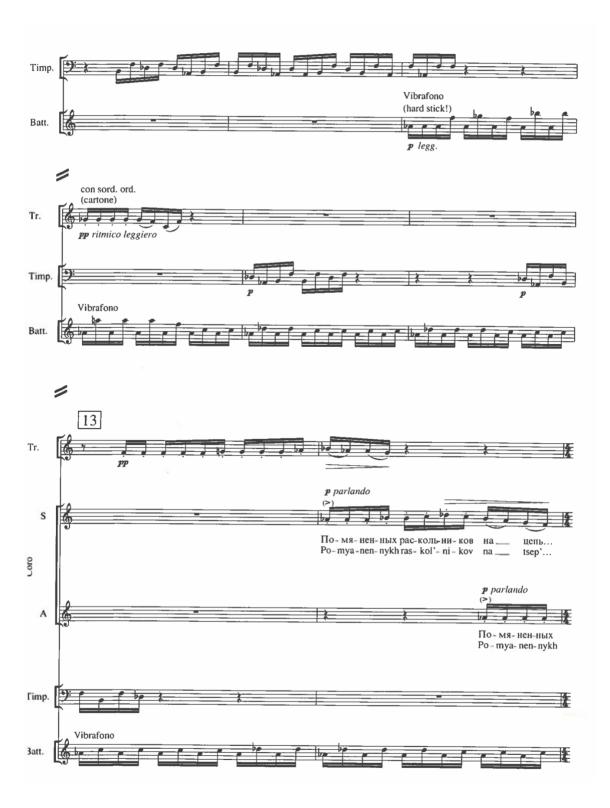


No. 2

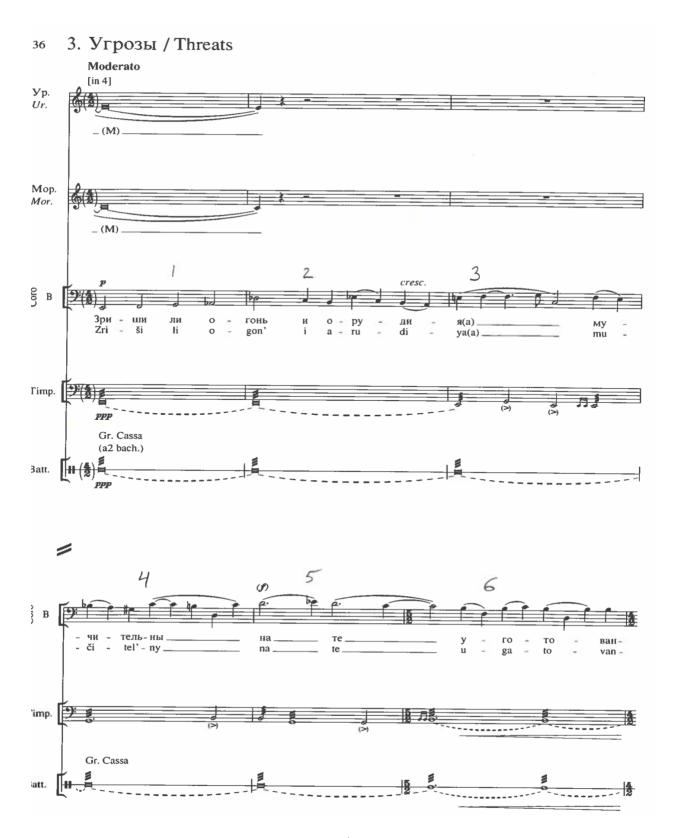


No. 3 - Morozova's leitmotif:



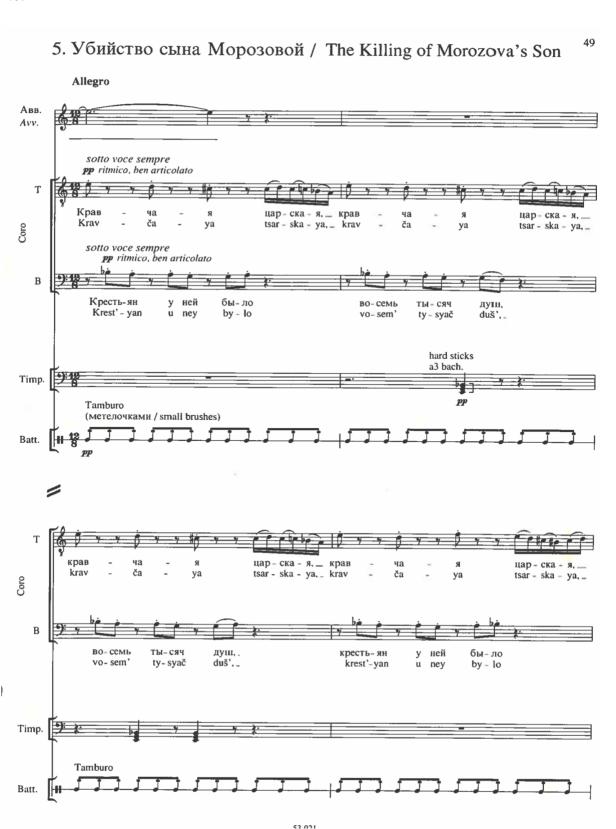




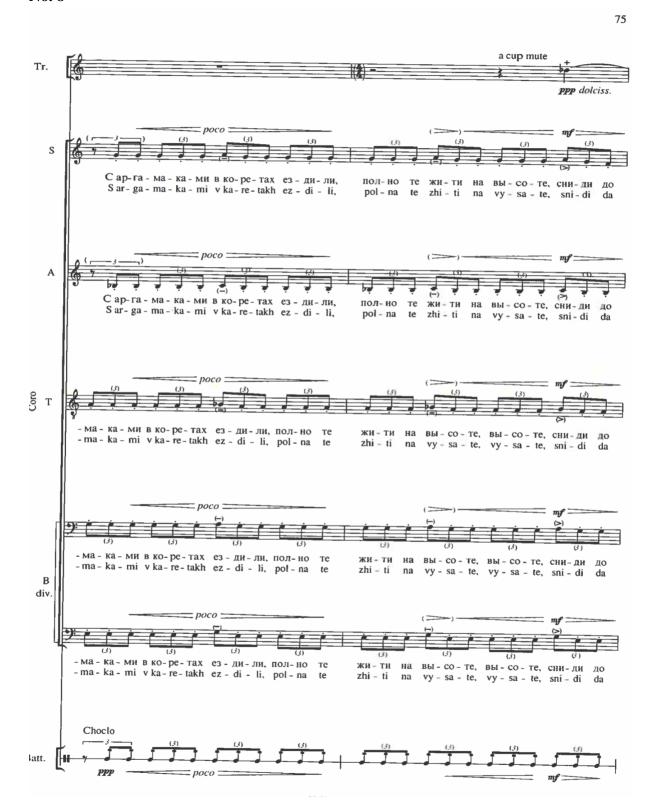








No. 8

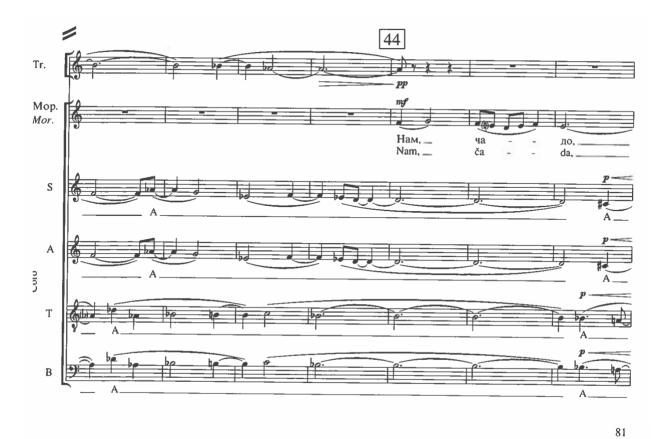


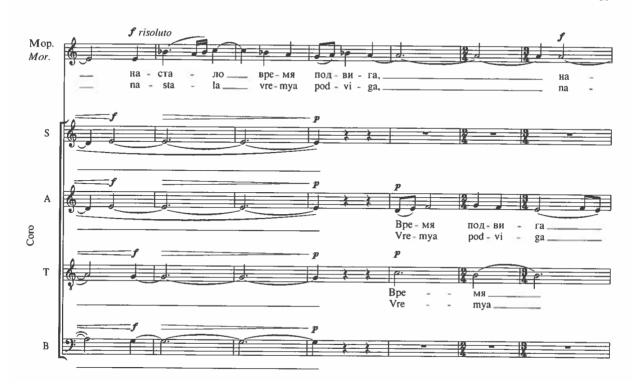




No. 10

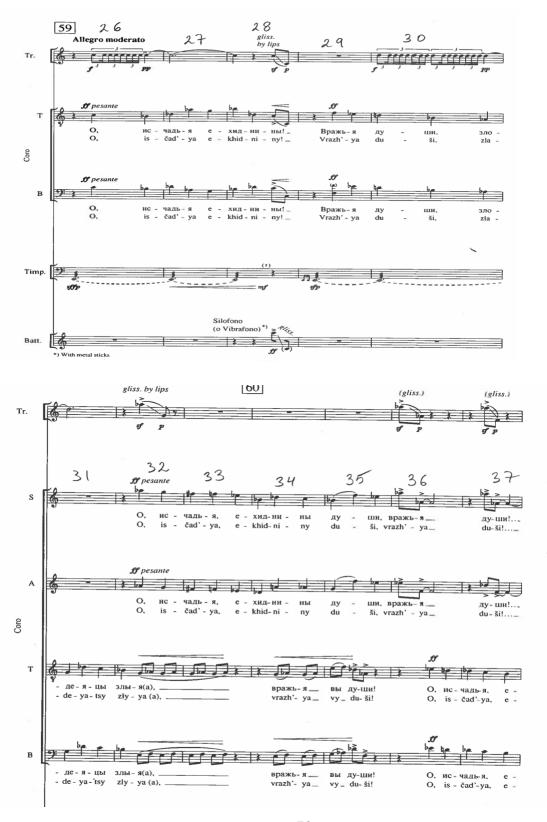








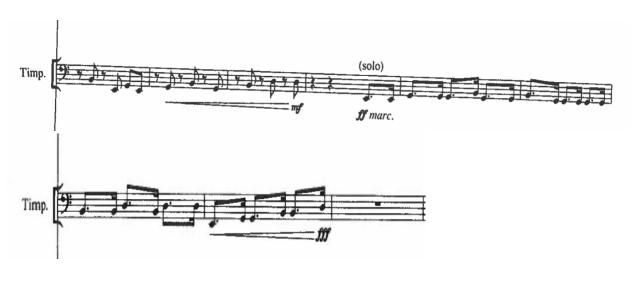
No. 12 (a)



No. 12 (b) - Trumpet solo



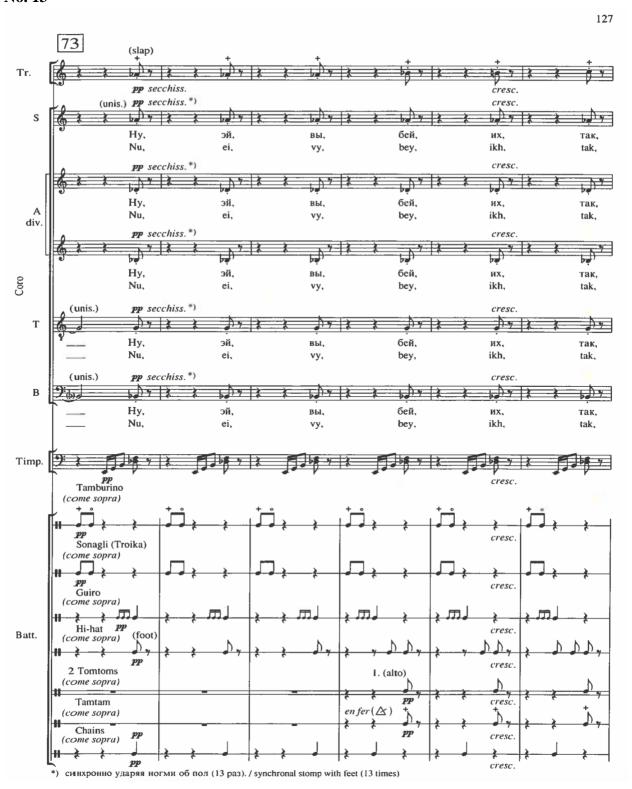
No. 12 (c) - Timpani solo



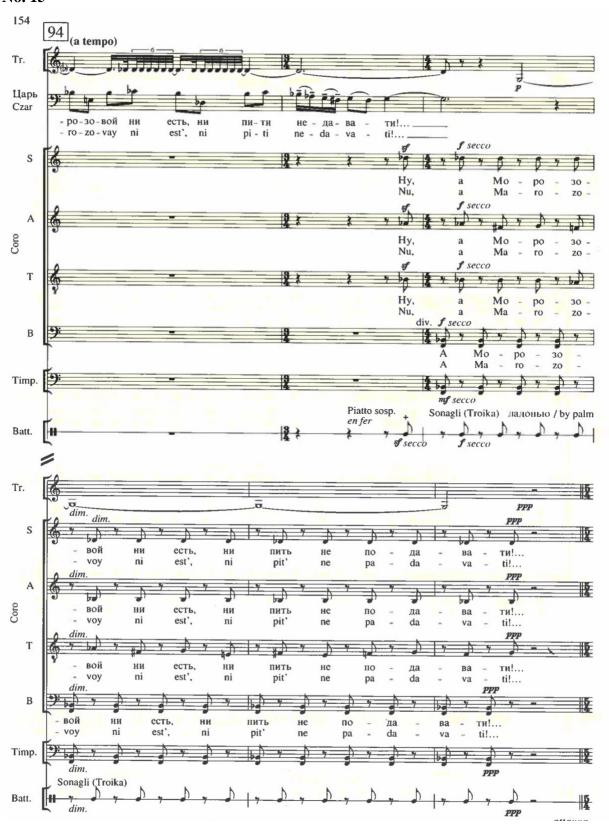
No. 12 (d) - Tsar's recitative



No. 13

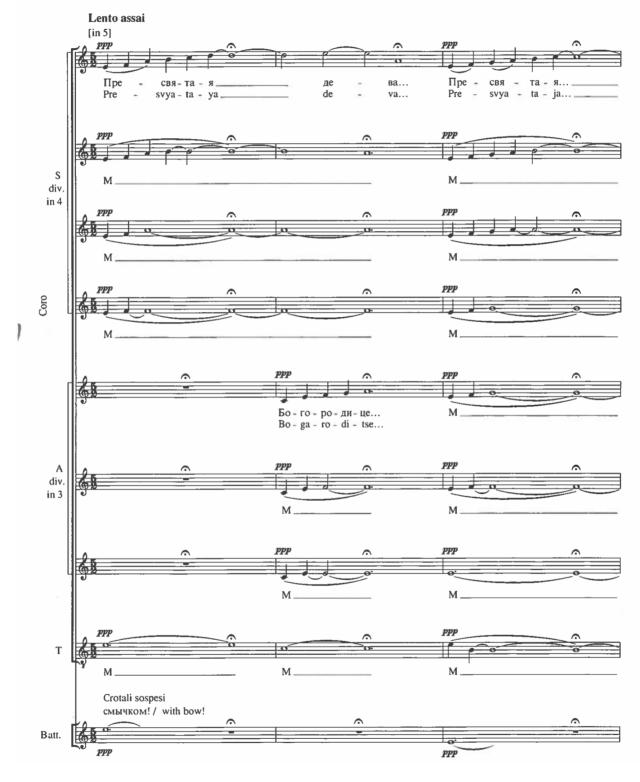


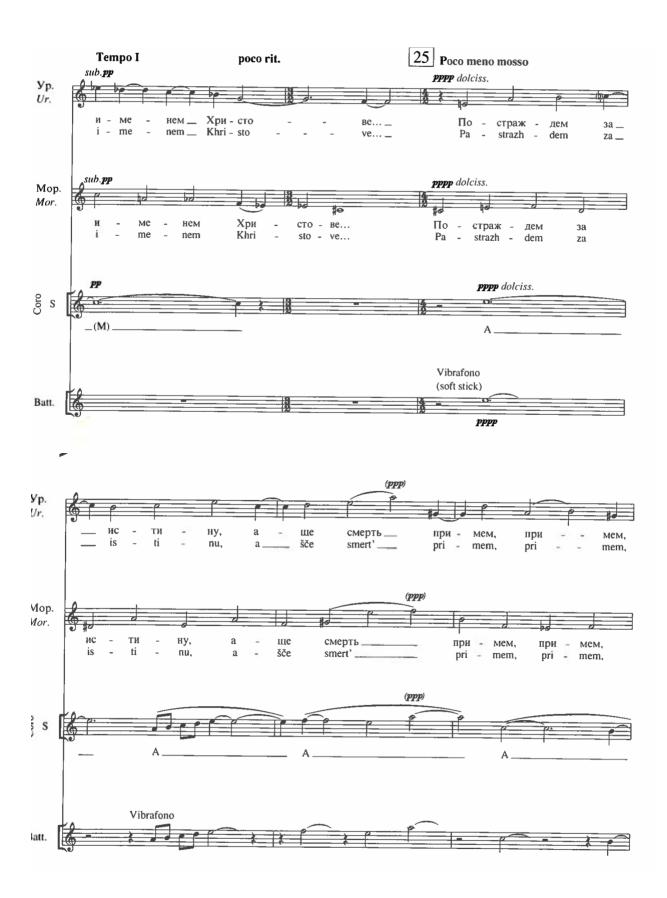




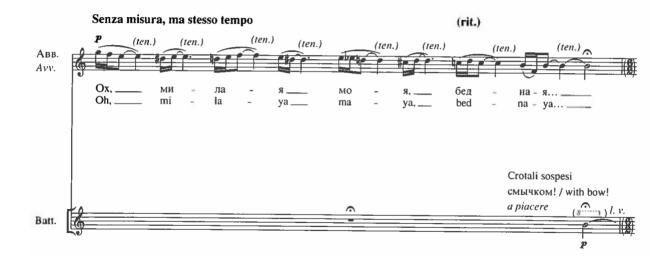
No. 16

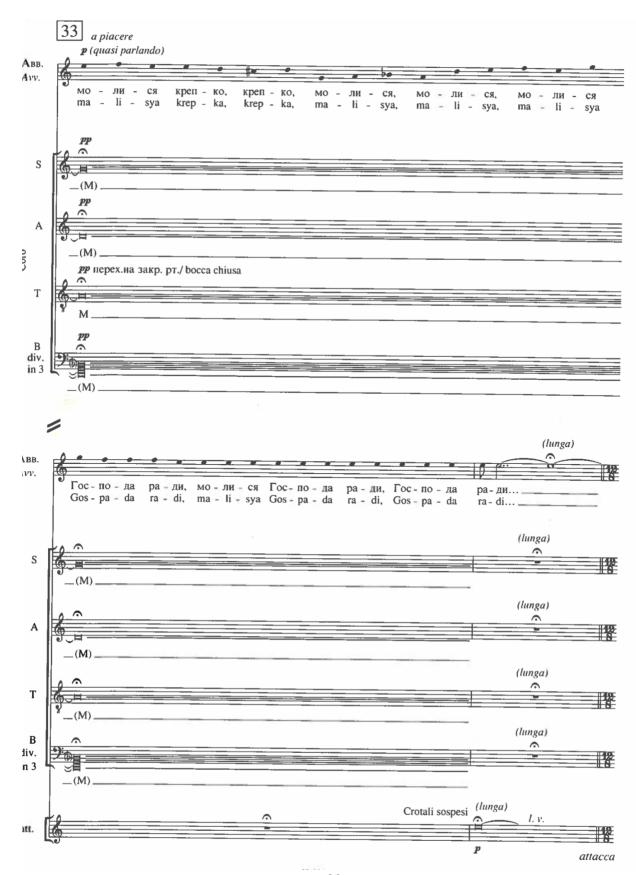


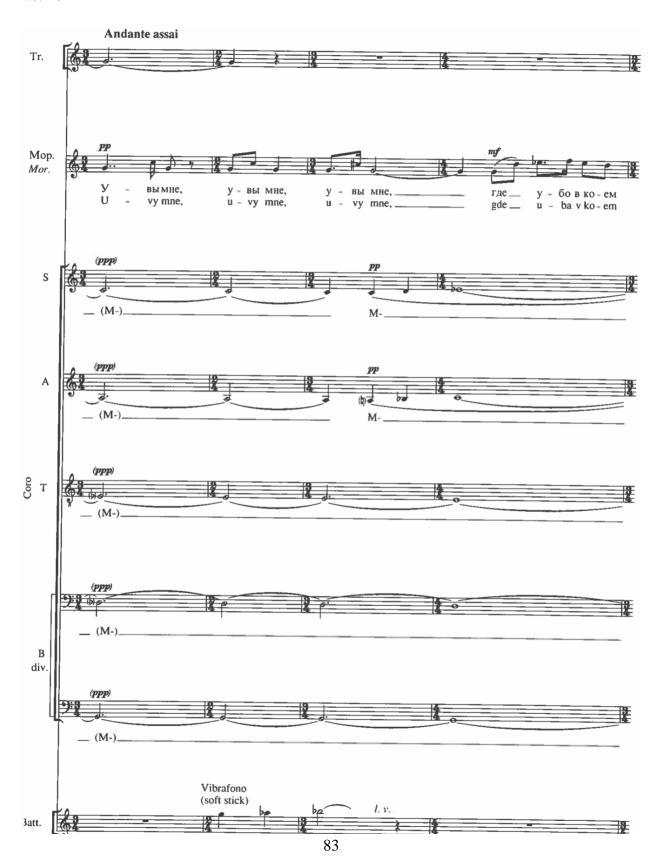




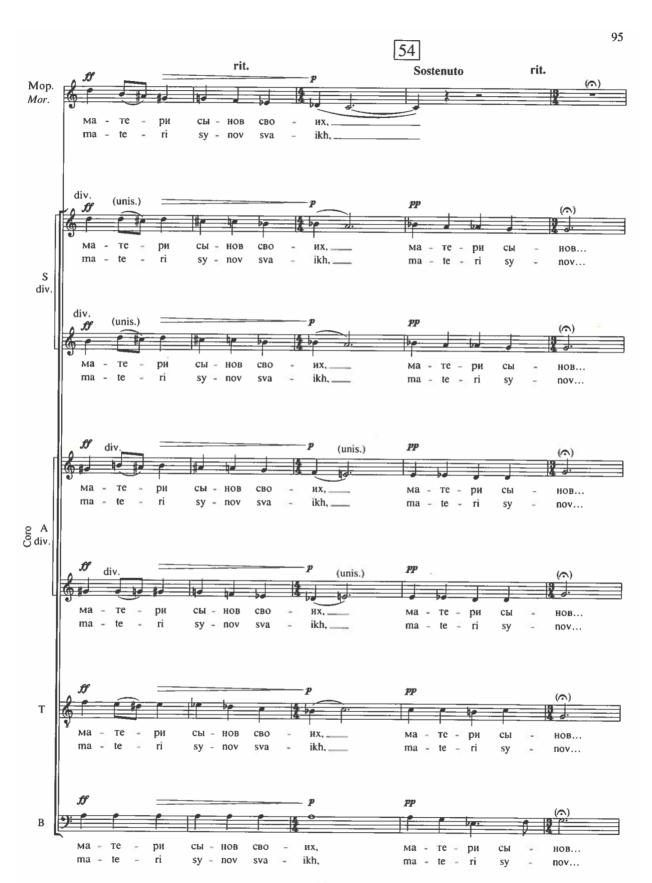
4. ABBAKYM (Lamento I) / Avvakum (Lamento I) Sostenuto assai, sempre poco rubato [in 4] (словно издалека / quasi from afar) pp dolctiss. О. ______ бед. на - я бо - я - ры-ня с сест-рой ____ му-чит-ся, му - чит-ся... О. ______ bed-na-ya ba-ya-ri-nyas sest-roy ____ mu-čit-sya, mu - čit-sya... Tenore solo Стотаli sospesi смычком! /with bow! 1. v. ______ (a)



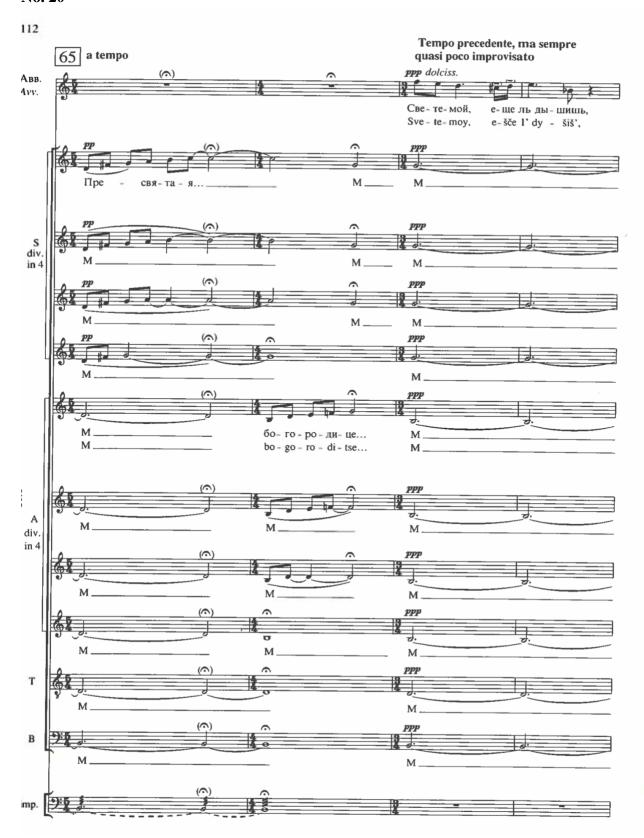




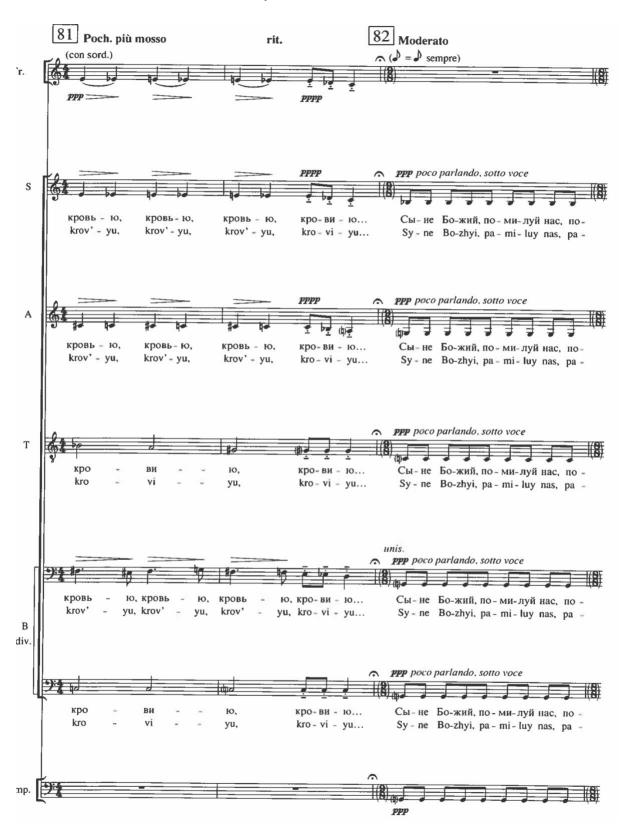


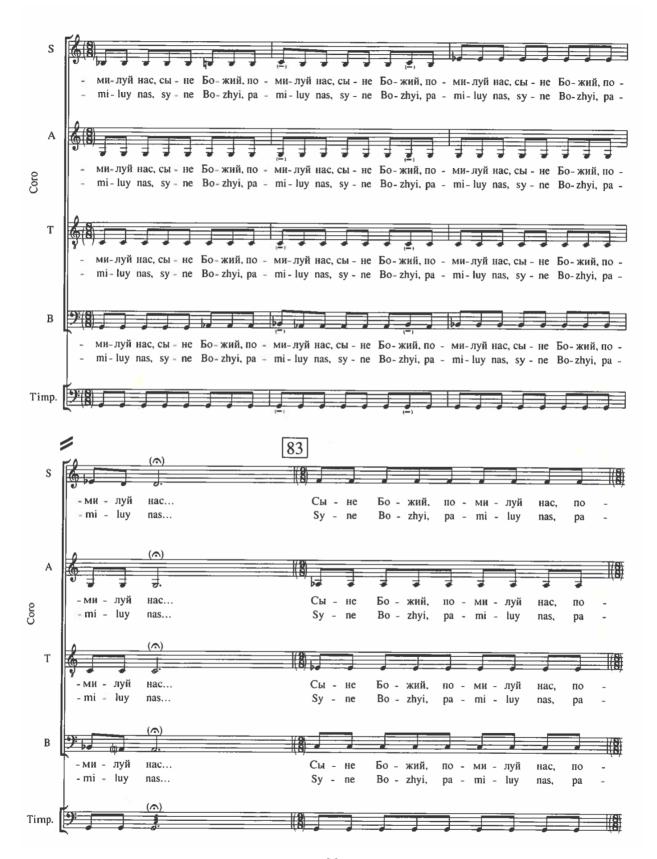


No. 20



No. 21 (a) - "Son of God, Have Mercy on Us"

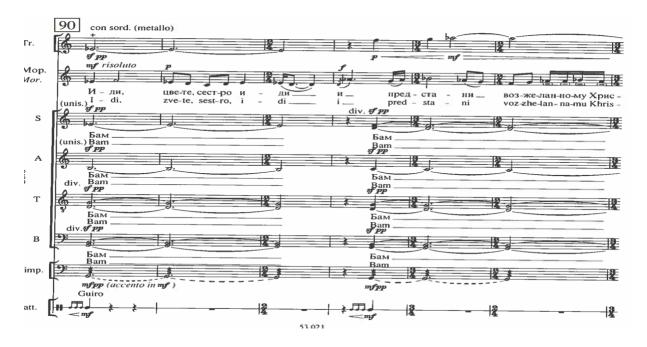




No. 21 (b) - a Prayer of the Virgin Mary



No. 21 (c) - Morozova's Leitmotif

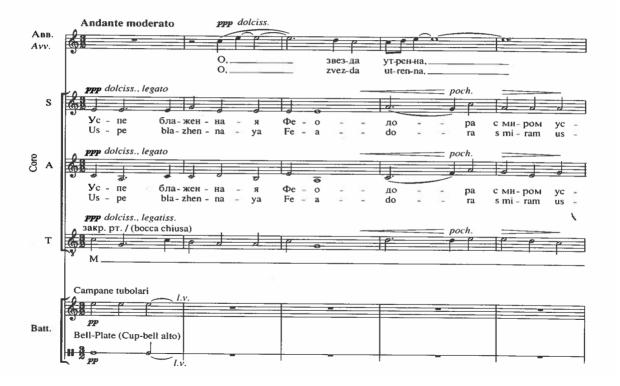


No. 22 (a)

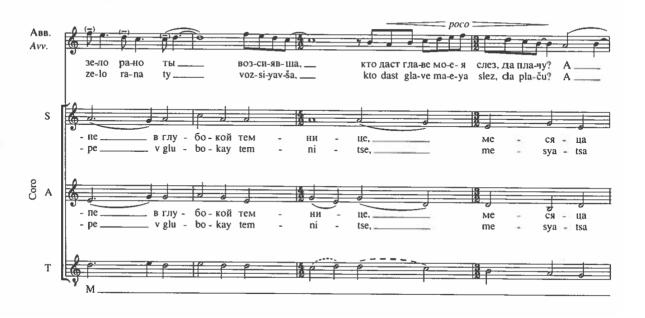




13. Эпилог (Аввакум: Lamento III) Epilogue (Avvakum: Lamento III)



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CURRICULUM VITAE

Graduate College University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Valeria Ore valeria.ore@unlv.edu www.uralmezzo.com

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Doctoral Document Examination Committee: Chairperson, Alfonse Anderson, D.M.A. Committee Member, Tod Fitzpatrick, D.M.A. Committee Member, Mykola Suk, D.M.A. Committee Member, David Weiller, M.M. Committee Member, Nate Bynum, M.F.A.

EDUCATION

2024	D.M.A., Vocal Performance, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2006	M.M., Collaborative Arts & Vocal Performance, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
1994	M.A., Choir Conducting, Urals Mussorgsky State Conservatoire
1989	B.A., Music Education, Choir Conducting, Sverdlovsk Tchaikovsky Music College

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

2014 - Present	Visiting Piano Lecturer, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2003 - 2014	Adjunct Piano Professor, University of Nevada, Las Vegas
2010 - 2014	Vocal Coach, Music Director, Piano Accompanist, Las Vegas Academy of the Arts
2003 - 2005	Piano Instructor, Music & Arts School, Las Vegas, Nevada
1992 - 2000	Piano Instructor, Accompanist, Choir Director,
	Tchaikovsky Music College, Ekaterinburg, Russia
1990 - 1999	Choir Director, Piano Accompanist, Singer, Ensemble of Ancient Music "Choral,"
	Ural State University, Ekaterinburg, Russia
1988 - 1990	Piano & Music Theory Instructor, Choir Director, Music Academy, Ekaterinburg,
	Russia