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### Cover Page Footnote

I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their generous feedback and to August Sheehy for commenting on the first draft of this article. My thanks to the Jordan Center for granting me access to NYU library and digital database of periodicals, which allowed me to complete research for this project. I also thank Gordon McQuere for drawing my attention to Schnittke's Requiem and for sharing his memories and documents from his personal archive.

# A Requiem for the USSR

## From Atheism to Secularity

Oksana Nesterenko

Why are we seeking religion today, as if it were a lifeline?  
Because religion is the establishment of the spiritual and ethical principles,  
the basis of morality; and morality is the shortest path to the spirit.  
And there is only one more alternative path of humans to their inner selves –  
a profound culture, where music is the driving force behind the ascent  
from human as an animal to human as a spiritual and moral being.<sup>1</sup>

– Dzhemma Firsova

On November 25, 1988, *Requiem* (1985–88) for choir and orchestra by Vyacheslav Artyomov (b. 1940), set to the text of the Catholic Requiem Mass, was premiered in the Moscow Philharmonic's Tchaikovsky Concert Hall. The event was held during the “week of consciousness,” announced in the widely read Moscow magazine *Ogonek* as a part of a broader project of memorialization of the victims of Stalinist repression across the USSR that also included performances of the canonic Requiems by Verdi and Mozart.<sup>2</sup> The premiere was advertised in several official publications; as a result, one of the largest halls in the Soviet capital was filled over capacity, with many people standing or sitting between rows. Even so, not everyone could get in.<sup>3</sup> As one reporter stated, the hall was “packed with the victims of repressions and relatives of those who passed away, who came to Moscow from all over the country.”<sup>4</sup> According to two accounts, the number of listeners was almost 2,000.<sup>5</sup> (The seating capacity of Tchaikovsky Hall is 1,505.)<sup>6</sup>

Before the music began, acclaimed poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko (1932–2017) introduced Artyomov's work. He described a stunning (and rather typical) example of Stalinist crimes: in the mid-1930s the

bodies of political prisoners who had been shot—“once outstanding revolutionaries, the . . . blossom of the [Soviet] army, the blossom of the [Soviet] intelligentsia and just workers”—were damped in a ravine in the center of Moscow and covered with mud; their fate was concealed from both their families and the public. He went on to say that true art “dares to cure the pain of the people by means of pain,” suggesting that Artyomov's *Requiem*, dedicated to the victims of Stalinism, was going to do just that.<sup>7</sup>

When Yevtushenko introduced the *Requiem*'s canonic text, he declared that an appeal to Christian values could help “heal the wounds of the Soviet people.” This explicit reference to Christianity, and more specifically to the Catholic liturgy, would have been unthinkable in a public space in the Soviet Union just a few years earlier, but by 1988 it had become acceptable. As will be discussed later, despite state atheism, Western classical sacred music, including requiems on canonic texts, had entered the concert halls of major cities in the USSR by the mid-1980s. Yet before this 1988 premiere these works, most commonly by foreign composers, were presented as

classical masterpieces and the text usually went unmentioned.

Yevtushenko further explained that Artyomov's Requiem "is not dedicated to Orthodox, Catholic, Jewish or Muslim believers in particular, but to all people, even including atheists, who were made equal by the cruelty of torture and suffering." This reference to religion in the framework of Christian humanism was rather typical in late Soviet discourse, in which the poet actively participated. He ended the speech by urging Soviet citizens to remember their difficult past, for "only then [would] all religions unite into a single religion," the ultimate goal of which was humanity (*chelovechnost'*).

Performed by over 200 musicians, Artyomov's modernist Requiem, featuring long dissonant passages and chromatic clusters along with mournful melodies, lasted over an hour. According to multiple accounts, it was greeted with a standing ovation, and the audience shouted "Thank you!"<sup>8</sup> The premiere received numerous reviews in the press, with most commentators agreeing that it had been a "great success."<sup>9</sup> Several reviewers mentioned that the work did not arise from a commission; rather, it was driven by Artyomov's religious beliefs, which were officially unacceptable at the time he started composing.<sup>10</sup> Indeed, Artyomov was a Christian believer and a proponent of the idea that music was a conduit between God and the world.<sup>11</sup> He had already composed a number of spiritual works throughout 1970s and 1980s, most notably his ballet *Sola Fide* (Faith Alone, 1984–87).

Nevertheless, the choice of Artyomov's piece for a highly politicized cultural event was unusual because of his strained relationships with official musical

institutions. Since he did not comply with the demands of socialist realism, very few of his compositions were purchased by the Ministry of Culture throughout his career.<sup>12</sup> (The ministry included the Purchasing Commission, which acquired works and gave permissions for their publication and performance in official venues.) The Requiem's pertinence for a specific moment of the state's repentance allowed Artyomov's music to finally be heard on an official concert stage without obstacles, and its success won coveted recognition for the composer among a number of culture critics and wide audiences.

In this article, I explore the reception of Artyomov's Requiem and, more broadly, the reception of the requiem genre in the late Soviet Union. What can it tell us about the return of religion to public life in the formerly atheist state? Was it the sound, the sacred genre, or the dedication that attracted the listeners?

While the USSR was officially atheist, religion was never completely relinquished; moreover, from the 1960s onward it ignited the interest of many members of the intelligentsia, and in the 1980s it gradually started penetrating public life. Artyomov and many other composers actively participated in the late Soviet spiritual renaissance. One example of this phenomenon that allows us to draw meaningful parallels with Artyomov's Requiem is Alfred Schnittke's (1934–1994) Requiem (1974–75), which was first performed on May 15, 1982, also in Tchaikovsky Concert Hall. Although this concert was neither announced nor reviewed in the press, it was much anticipated by Schnittke's admirers, who knew it from an unofficially distributed audio tape recording, and filled the hall close to capacity.<sup>13</sup> Both requiems are based on canonic texts, both

exhibit polystylistic characteristics, and both composers were invested in religion and spirituality and worked in opposition to the Soviet establishment.

The different receptions of the Schnittke and Artyomov Requiems illustrate the state's changing attitude toward religion as it moved from an atheist policy, where religion is denounced, to a secular one, where religion is acceptable but not officially imposed by the state. Charles Taylor defines a secular society as one in which belief in God is understood to be one option among others, which corresponds to the views that Yevtushenko expressed in his speech.<sup>14</sup> The 1988 premiere highlights the role of religion not only as faith or spiritual practice, but as a cultural reference that addresses social issues.

The enthusiastic responses to Artyomov's Requiem were to a large extent triggered by the work's dedication and the social and historical circumstances of its premiere, while the religious references amplified the emotions of some listeners. The concert was organized at the height of Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms. His glasnost policy was aimed at increased transparency in the discussion of Soviet history, including cultural and ethnic purges, gulags, religious repressions, and post-World War II injuries and traumas. Glasnost led to a vigorous public debate about morality and religion.<sup>15</sup> Gorbachev suggested that his policy was prompted by a "troubled conscience" and called for a national moral renewal;<sup>16</sup> in 1988 he allowed religion to enter public life. The memorialization of Stalin's victims announced in the dedication of Artyomov's Requiem, and the overt religious references in the piece, created special circumstances for the perception of the music.

I will begin by recounting the history of Soviet atheism, which, as a result of the state's failure to eradicate religion, evolved into a form of secular modernity. I will then outline the musical culture in which Schnittke and Artyomov lived, before returning to their Requiems in order to reflect on the official and audience receptions.

### **Religion and Spiritual Renaissance in the USSR**

The Soviet position on religion, grounded in Marxist-Leninist ideology, officially remained unchanged throughout the existence of the USSR. According to Karl Marx, religion produced an *illusion* of happiness that was required for the alleviation of human suffering, while the goal of communism was to create a harmonious and just world of *real* happiness where religion would become unnecessary.<sup>17</sup> In reality, the state's commitment to the liberation of Soviet society from religion through the official establishment of atheism underwent a transformation every time the leadership changed, and it eventually disappeared over the final decades of the USSR's existence.<sup>18</sup>

The implementation of atheism in the Soviet Union started with antireligious repressions in the 1920s and 1930s. Religious institutions were destroyed, religious property was nationalized, and clergy and believers were imprisoned and murdered; as a result, the religious life of Soviet citizens became confined to an extremely narrow private sphere. When World War II broke out, however, Stalin began to seek a compromise with religious leaders because he believed that the Russian Orthodox Church could help foster patriotism. Some churches were reopened, although all religious institutions

had to obtain official registration and their activities were restricted.

Yet the compromise between ideological purity (the pursuit of atheism) and effective governance (the mobilization of the masses to fight the enemy and work on the reconstruction of the country after the war) was short-lived. Stalin's successor, Nikita Khrushchev, remobilized the campaign against religion by imposing "scientific atheism."<sup>19</sup> However, cultural policies during the so-called Khrushchev Thaw of 1954–64 were in general more liberal than under Stalin, and Khrushchev's openness to the West facilitated foreign cultural imports that continued after the end of his rule in 1964.<sup>20</sup> For many Soviet citizens, this was an important way to gain access to foreign and prerevolutionary literature, including religious and philosophical texts.

A number of studies have addressed the spiritual revival during the final three decades of the Soviet Union, each focusing on different issues, such as the interaction of the Moscow intelligentsia with charismatic priests, attraction to religion among writers and cultural activists, interest in religious and philosophical topics among intellectually curious people of diverse professions in Leningrad, and the rise of religiosity among young people, prompted by their encounters with Western rock and popular music.<sup>21</sup> The majority of authors attribute interest to religion and spirituality among these diverse groups to the romantic allure of a forbidden practice and the desire to engage with culture outside of Soviet public life.

The major reasons for interest in religion and the initial encounters with it, discussed by these authors, are evident in composers' memoirs and interviews. Vladimir Martynov (b. 1946) wrote about

priests who initiated his Christian beliefs, as well as his interest in Eastern religions, partially triggered by Western rock music, in his memoir *Avtoatkheologia*.<sup>22</sup> Schnittke, Nikolay Karetnikov (1930–1994), and Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931) were influenced by texts or by conversations with the underground priests Alexander Men (1935–1990) and Nikolay Vedernikov (1928–2020), who played a key role in shaping the Moscow intelligentsia's engagement with Christianity.<sup>23</sup> Gubaidulina, Karetnikov, and other composers were also inspired by the renowned, devoutly religious pianist Maria Yudina (1928–1970).

Although many studies attribute the major role in the late Soviet spiritual renaissance to academic and artistic circles, the general population was often religious as well. In discussing Soviet citizens' encounters with religion, some of these texts create the impression that this experience was widespread, but they do not provide exact statistics. Given the unofficial nature of religious activities, each individual had different chances to participate in them. In the following paragraphs, I briefly map some of the main trends within the spiritual renaissance as it is discussed in existing scholarship.

From the late 1950s to the early 1960s, the Soviet intelligentsia, especially writers, became interested in diverse religious traditions and researched their national spiritual roots. They sought out religious literature in the form of self-published (*samizdat*) translations of religious texts and attended teachings by charismatic priests.<sup>24</sup> According to Russian historian Nikolay Mitrokhin, a significant portion of religious literature came from abroad, including both foreign texts addressing various world religions and works by Russian religious

philosophers who emigrated before the 1917 Revolution.<sup>25</sup> Pianist Alexei Lyubimov recollected that he received his first spiritual texts, the teachings of Indian spiritual leader Sri Aurobindo (1872–1950), from Karlheinz Stockhausen after their meeting in 1968.<sup>26</sup> Martynov received his first Bible in the 1960s as a result of a foreign business trip by his father.<sup>27</sup>

Mitrokhin suggests that the majority of the intelligentsia went through three main stages in their spiritual journeys. In the late 1950s and into the 1960s, they explored religious teachings in all their available diversity, while in the 1970s the majority began to focus on one belief, most often Orthodox Christianity, but also sometimes Catholicism, Judaism, or esoteric teachings.<sup>28</sup> In the 1980s some people began to share their beliefs more openly, in part because the official ideological grip was loosening. This general tendency—from exploration of a diverse range of religious and spiritual thought to the eventual choice of one belief—is evident in the biographies of both Schnittke and Artyomov, as well as those of other composers and musicians.

The intelligentsia's spiritual explorations became the basis for literary, artistic, film, and musical works addressing religious topics, all of which were subject to censorship. Yet the complexity of censorship procedures during the late Soviet period, when many decisions were made according to individual interpretations of official rules, sometimes allowed for limited screening or publication of works on religious topics. In literature, religious themes in the short stories have been much studied. Some novels, such as Vera Panova's *Skazanie o Feodosii* (The Legend of Feodosia, 1967) and Vladimir Soloukhin's *Pis'ma iz Russkogo muzeya* (Letters from the Russian Museum, 1967),

were deemed acceptable, while others, such as Vladimir Tendryakov's *Apostol'skaya komandirovka* (Apostolic Mission, 1969), were criticized.<sup>29</sup> Andrey Tarkovsky's *Andrey Rublev* (1966), a biopic about the famous icon painter, was renamed from *The Passion According to Andrey* and screened for a very limited audience.<sup>30</sup> Still, many paintings with Christian imagery were not exhibited. Religion was a forbidden subject at one of the first official exhibitions of nonconformist art in Izmaylovo Park near Moscow in 1974, which was organized two weeks after the infamous Bulldozer Exhibition.<sup>31</sup>

Composers' beliefs also manifested in works with religious themes, many of which were performed in the 1970s and 1980s, either because they were renamed, or because important performers managed to negotiate with concert venues, or because of fleeting or negligent oversight by the censors.<sup>32</sup> For example, Alemdar Karamanov's (1934–2007) symphonic cycle *Byst'* (It Is Done, 1980), inspired by apocalyptic images from the Book of Revelation, was retitled *The Poem of Victory* for performance in Moscow in 1982 and publication by Sovetskiy Kompozitor in 1985.<sup>33</sup> The titles of Gubaidulina's *Offertorium* (1980) and *Seven Words* (1982) were replaced in concert programs by *Violin Concerto* and *Sonata*, respectively.<sup>34</sup> (*Seven Words* appeared as *Partita* in the published score.) Arvo Pärt's *Missa Syllabica* was renamed *Test*, while Galina Ustvolskaya's *Dona nobis pacem*, *Dies irae*, and *Benedictus qui venit* (1970–75) were performed and published without their titles.<sup>35</sup>

During the Brezhnev era (1964–1985), state-funded sociological studies revealed the sustained interest of Soviet citizens in religion and subsequently led the government to redefine religion as

a spiritual rather than an ideological problem: the socialist way of life needed to be filled with meaning.<sup>36</sup> These findings substantially changed the tone of antireligious statements in the official press, as Soviet ideologues embarked on inventing “humanist atheism,” which would shift the critical spirit of scientific atheism to positive terms. As a form of humanism, atheism had to address happiness, suffering, and the meaning of life and death without an “appeal to otherworldly powers.”<sup>37</sup>

The 1977 constitution of the USSR proclaimed “freedom of conscience” and the separation of church and state. It further stated that “everyone [was] equal irrespective of attitude to religion.”<sup>38</sup> Yet it still asserted that the “Communist Party should give guidance on all creative endeavors . . . on a planned, scientific basis.”<sup>39</sup> Thus, even as Soviet citizens were ostensibly allowed to pursue religious beliefs in private, many of them, especially university students, were obliged to attend mandatory lectures on scientific atheism and sometimes to speak publicly on topics that contradicted their beliefs.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, the compulsory registration of religious institutions was not relinquished. As Martynov recalls, since all major churches were officially sanctioned, some priests could report on their attendees to their employers.<sup>41</sup> Overall, it remained impossible to maintain any public or academic position and simultaneously reveal or openly espouse religious beliefs. Artists or composers who retreated from state ideology to privately study religious texts or to worship could not refer to religious topics in their works unless they could find a way to represent them as secular. Any reference to religious topics on

paper without an acceptable explanation could be considered religious propaganda (a criminal offence).

In sum, from the late 1960s the USSR officially still maintained its atheist position, but in reality some Soviet citizens could practice religion privately. To some extent, then, late socialism was similar to other forms of secular modernity, in which religious institutions were separated from the state and public displays of religion were unwelcome. One crucial distinction was that the denial of God or supernatural powers, vigorously imposed by the Soviet state, was not associated with individual freedom or liberal values. Soviet citizens linked atheism to communism—an ideology that did not promote individual freedom and that by the end of the 1960s had already proved itself inefficient and outdated.<sup>42</sup> By the 1970s, even scientific developments and space conquest were no longer as novel as before, and indifference to ideological questions was growing, especially among young people.<sup>43</sup> Religion, on the contrary, seemed liberating for many.

A crucial turning point in Soviet atheism occurred in April 1988, when the general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party, Mikhail Gorbachev, officially met with the Synod of Bishops of the Russian Orthodox Church. At this meeting, Gorbachev called on the church to play a role in the moral regeneration of Soviet society, “where universal norms and customs can help our common cause,” marking the return of religion to public life.<sup>44</sup> This acceptance of religion at the highest official level had a direct impact on the performance of sacred music, including the premiere of Artyomov’s Requiem.

### Sacred Music in an Atheist Soundscape

By the 1960s, many Soviet citizens were tired not only of communist ideology, but also of the music that represented it. Since the 1930s, the only officially acceptable style in music (and other arts) in the USSR had been socialist realism—upbeat, broadly accessible in terms of harmonic and melodic language, free from abstraction or ambiguity, with the primary goal of idealizing everyday Soviet life. The Communist Party’s Central Committee and the Ministry of Culture were the state’s primary censorship institutions; they enforced the dominance of socialist realism in music and handed down orders to the Union of Soviet Composers and various concert organizations.<sup>45</sup> Composers could not earn a living by writing music if it was not approved by these institutions.

During the decade of the Khrushchev Thaw, as restrictions on international cultural exchange became more relaxed, some composers gained access to scores and recordings of new music from the West. They privately studied the techniques of the European postwar avant garde, including serialism, indeterminacy, collage, and electronic sound production, and incorporated them in their compositions. This music was not allowed to be performed in official venues, but many listeners who made their way to unofficial performances in small venues found it fresh and highly appealing.<sup>46</sup> Both Schnittke and Artyomov belonged to the group of unofficial composers who did not want to confine their musical style to socialist realism.

The early 1970s were a pivotal moment in the music of unofficial composers in the USSR. Having satisfied their curiosity about the novel techniques of the Western European avant garde, many of them

developed personal styles that were often influenced by exploration of religious and spiritual beliefs.<sup>47</sup> As discussed above, the phenomenon of religious revival was common among members of the creative intelligentsia, including composers. It was largely triggered by the search for an alternative to—and escape from—communist ideology. As Lyubimov stated, “At the end of the 1970s and 1980s the flavor of life forced everyone to go to church.”<sup>48</sup>

The majority of unofficial composers in the USSR who turned to Christian themes used musical forms from the tradition of Western classical sacred music, such as the Catholic mass and requiem. Table 1 on the following page lists the most significant works in this category.<sup>49</sup>

The major reason why primarily Russian Orthodox composers referred to Catholic tradition to incorporate their beliefs was inspiration from Western classical sacred music. Sacred works by Bach, Palestrina, Lasso, and Schütz had been presented as secular masterpieces and remained an acceptable, although limited, repertoire despite state atheism, even in the wake of the antireligious propaganda of the 1930s.<sup>50</sup> As the Khrushchev Thaw brought some relaxation of control over artistic expression, Western groups began making regular visits to the Soviet Union and brought with them a wealth of European sacred music from the last half-millennium.<sup>51</sup>

In the 1970s and 1980s, Western classical sacred music continued to be performed in Soviet concert halls, sometimes “rebranded” as secular, sometimes with extensive antireligious commentary, and sometimes without any texts or program notes. Rossini’s *Petite messe solennelle* (Little Solemn Mass, 1863) and Verdi’s *Messa da Requiem* (1874) were performed in

Composer and work	Date of composition	Year and details of first performance
Alexander Lokshin (1920–1987), <i>Symphony No. 1, Requiem</i>	1957	1987, Moscow, without Latin text
Alemdar Karamanov, <i>Requiem</i>	1971	After 1991
Alemdar Karamanov, <i>Mass</i>	1972	After 1991
Galina Ustvolskaya, <i>Three Compositions: Donna nobis pacem, Dies irae, and Benedictus qui venit</i>	1971–75	1977, Leningrad
Alfred Schnittke, <i>Requiem</i>	1975	1982, Moscow
Arvo Pärt, <i>Missa syllabica</i>	1977	1977, Riga
Sofia Gubaidulina, <i>Introitus</i>	1978	1978, Moscow, without the title
Alfred Schnittke, <i>Symphony No. 2, St. Florian</i>	1979	1980, London
Edison Denisov, <i>Requiem</i>	1980	1981, Hamburg
Sofia Gubaidulina, <i>Offertorium</i>	1982	1982, Moscow, without the title
Aleksander Knaifel, <i>Agnus Dei</i>	1985	1987, Leningrad
Vyacheslav Artyomov, <i>Requiem</i>	1985–88	1988, Moscow

Table 1. Catholic Mass and Requiem Works in the USSR.

Moscow in the 1980s on a regular basis and presented by official music critics as “operatic” masterpieces.<sup>52</sup> In a program note to a 1969 performance of the *St. Matthew Passion* in Tallinn, Bach’s masterpiece was presented as a work with an “antichurch character” that “breaks an obsolete structure of church ritual.”<sup>53</sup> Beethoven’s *Missa Solemnis*, when performed in Tallinn in December 1970, was described in a program note as “pertinent in terms of ideological purpose” because it addressed “the idea of the brotherhood of humanity and life, so typical of Beethoven.”<sup>54</sup> From 1966 to 1973, Andrey Volkonsky’s early music ensemble Madrigal performed European sacred music frequently in small venues in Moscow.<sup>55</sup> As pianist Boris Berman recalled, “the authorities got used to all kinds of Requiems, Sanctuses and all that,” but sacred music by Soviet composers would suggest their own religiosity and thus was not deemed acceptable.<sup>56</sup>

Scores and recordings of sacred music were also available, although such works

were normally not discussed in conservatory courses. Volkonsky found the scores of Schütz and Palestrina in libraries in Moscow and Leningrad, although in other cities they were not so easily available.<sup>57</sup> In the 1970s Artyomov, Martynov, and Gubaidulina formed an early music study group and regularly met at Martynov’s apartment to sight-read “a few masses of Palestrina, Orlando di Lasso or other Dutch composers, and, of course, . . . [Heinrich Isaac’s] *Choralis Constantinus*.”<sup>58</sup> In 1975, Artyomov, then an editor at the Muzyka publishing house, and Martynov coedited five volumes of medieval and Renaissance music, including sacred works by Machaut, Dunstable, Du Fay, Isaac, and Giovanni Gabrieli.

#### Alfred Schnittke’s *Requiem* (1974–75)

Starting in the 1970s, Schnittke explored various spiritual and philosophical systems. He studied and practiced yoga, read texts on Kabbala and I-Ching, and attended meetings of the anthroposophical society in

Germany.<sup>59</sup> Yet he found all of these systems too esoteric and eventually decided to convert to a traditional religion that would provide the order and structure he craved in his spiritual life. In 1983, he became a Roman Catholic.<sup>60</sup>

Schnittke had explored Western avant-garde techniques while studying at the Moscow Conservatory, from 1953 to 1961, and subsequently composed a number of works using the serial method.<sup>61</sup> Starting with his polystylistic Symphony No. 1 (1969–74), he combined a wide variety of styles, old and new, serious and entertaining, from jazz to serialism to Baroque, including quotations from his own film scores. From the mid-1970s through the 1980s, Schnittke used sacred concepts as a structural principle of composition in many of his works. These symbolic references were often inaudible or not disclosed to listeners, as in his Second Violin Concerto (1966), which was based on Christ's Passion.

In his four *Hymns* for cello solo and small instrumental ensembles (1974–79), Schnittke used Russian Orthodox chant melodies: in the first one, the original Old Russian chant *Svyaty Bozhe* (Holy God); in the third, his own stylized chant, composed earlier for the film *Day Stars*.<sup>62</sup> The *Hymns* were premiered at a meeting of the Moscow branch of the Composers' Union in May 1979, with the audience mainly consisting of composers and musicologists.<sup>63</sup> Schnittke's Symphony No. 2, *St. Florian* (1979) for orchestra and choir, premiered in London in 1980, is in six movements structured after the Ordinary of the Catholic Mass, with the text in Latin.

The idea of writing a requiem came to Schnittke when he was composing his Piano Quintet (1972–76) dedicated to the memory of his mother, Maria Vogel, who

died in 1972. He first conceived of one of the movements as a small instrumental requiem, but, having made sketches for all the major themes, decided they were more vocal than instrumental in character. He therefore set them aside to use in another work, which became his Requiem. The years of composition coincided with the composer's voracious study of diverse spiritualities, as well as with his work on other sacred pieces, such as the *Hymns*.

Schnittke considered his Requiem to be both a spiritual and a secular work; the form he chose—that of the Catholic Requiem Mass—was inspired by Mozart's Requiem (1791). Schnittke's Requiem consists of fourteen movements and deviates slightly from the canonical Latin text. He altered the traditional form in order to increase the dramatic effect, replacing the final movement, "Lux aeterna," with a reprise of the opening "Requiem" and adding an expressive "Credo," which is not a part of the traditional requiem mass.

- I. Requiem
- II. Kyrie
- III. Dies irae
- IV. Tuba mirum
- V. Rex tremendae
- VI. Recordare
- VII. Lacrymosa
- VIII. Domine Jesu
- IX. Hostias
- X. Sanctus
- XI. Benedictus
- XII. Agnus Dei
- XIII. Credo
- XIV. Requiem

The Requiem is written largely in a tonal idiom, but Schnittke noted that the

repetition of elements in some passages neutralizes their sense of harmonic direction.<sup>64</sup> He used contemporary instrumentation (trumpet, trombone, organ, piano, celesta, bass guitar, electric guitar, percussion) and a wide range of styles characteristic of his polystylistic works.

The first movement, “Requiem,” begins with the sound of bells and a quiet soprano voice singing a simple melody resembling Gregorian chant that ascends stepwise. As more voices and instruments gradually enter, the music becomes increasingly poignant without losing its sense of restraint and calmness, even with the entry of the guitars. After reaching a climax, the movement calms down as seamlessly as it developed. The impression it leaves is that of a ghost from the distant past visiting the contemporary world—or maybe a contemporary ghost visiting the distant past? A listener is not sure.

The work includes two more movements in a similar style, with a transparent texture and simple, sorrowful melodies sung in a restrained manner: “Lacrymosa” and “Sanctus.” All the other movements are more dramatic. Altogether, this creates a structure in which calm movements (I, VII, X, and XIV, the last an exact repeat of I) alternate with dramatic movements; in fact, the latter seem to exist merely to highlight the calmness of the serene movements. Schnittke’s long, diatonic, and memorable original melodies create an “experience of unearthly beauty” and are characteristic of spiritual music composed in the 1970s both in the USSR and abroad.<sup>65</sup> Musicologist Valentina Kholopova characterized Schnittke’s music of this period as illustrating a “new simplicity”—a term that has also been used to describe the music of Arvo Pärt, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, and others.<sup>66</sup>

One thing that distinguishes Schnittke’s Requiem from the spiritual works of these composers is that he does not completely give up his polystylism. The dramatic movements in the piece prepare listeners to experience the lucidity of the calm movements with even greater intensity. The most vivid example is “Credo,” which stands as the climactic movement of the piece. Starting in a low register with bass voice, trombone and chromatic clusters on the piano underscored with bass guitar, it breaks into a sudden outburst of rock beats and further develops into what could be a climactic point of a rock opera.<sup>67</sup> After “Credo,” the repeat of the “Requiem” movement comes as a revelation, with even greater transparency and serenity.

When Schnittke composed his Requiem, he could not present it as an independent piece. Even though the score of Mozart’s Requiem was available in the Moscow Conservatory library, Schnittke’s work in the same genre would have been treated as an active involvement with religious tradition or as a suggestion of his own religiosity. When Schnittke was commissioned to compose incidental music for Friedrich Schiller’s play *Don Carlos* (1787), to be staged at the Mossovet Theater, he proposed a requiem with the text in Latin. This idea was accepted by the director, Yuri Zavadsky. The commission from the state theater not only prompted Schnittke to complete the piece, but also allowed him to make a high-quality recording with the prominent choral conductor Tõnu Kaljuste, in Tallinn in February 1976. According to records of the Mossovet repertoire, the play was staged in December 1976.<sup>68</sup> It was so successful that it was televised in 1980.<sup>69</sup>

The complete recording of the Requiem as an independent piece, made in Tallinn,

acquired a life of its own. The audio tape was shared unofficially, mainly among the underground intelligentsia, a circle of Schnittke's friends and acquaintances. Kholopova and musicologist Yevgeniya Chigareva describe the reception in unofficial circles and the listeners' longing for spiritual music. Chigareva recalls that people cried while listening to the piece:

I remember the shock which I and [musicologist] Victor Bobrovsky experienced when we heard Schnittke's Requiem in his apartment. Having made a copy of his tape, we shared it with many different people – friends, acquaintances, listeners (mostly nonmusicians – artists and philologists). The impression was immense.<sup>70</sup>

Kholopova also recalled the great excitement the recording caused among musicians, musicologists, and curious listeners in Moscow, who “kept asking [Schnittke] to let them listen to his work” and, after hearing it, telephoned each other saying that “Schnittke composed an incredible Requiem, like Mozart!”<sup>71</sup> She describes highly emotional responses from listeners, caused by what she calls the “sacredness” (*sviatost*) of the music:

I brought a group of teachers to [Schnittke's] home and they were so impressed with this music that they couldn't catch their breath after the meeting, discussing how they cried while listening to the music. . . . The sacredness and sorrow of this music took people by surprise.<sup>72</sup>

In 1981, the Requiem was mentioned in the official journal *Sovetskaia muzyka* in the context of a profile of Schnittke that included a discussion of his major works. The profile consisted of statements by musicologist Svetlana Savenko, whose research focused

on nonconformist composers, and the official critic Igor Korev. Savenko described the piece in the following way:

The earthly, human character of [Schnittke's] Requiem is underscored by lively dramatic character and bright theatrical contrasts. This is a musical-philosophical meditation on the meaning of life, faith in life and tragic parting from it, a meditation grounded in a form, made venerable by the ages. Such an approach to this genre, which lost its liturgical meaning a long time ago, is deeply traditional.<sup>73</sup>

Savenko was aware of the work's genesis and presented it as secular, in line with the composer's ideas.<sup>74</sup> Notably, while she did not mention the religious origin of the genre, the editors still decided that it was necessary to deny any connections to the sacred. Korev wrote:

I am quite convinced that the Requiem and Second Symphony, *St. Florian Mass*,<sup>75</sup> completed in the 1970s, are by no means sacred works; their motives are humanistic rather than religious. . . . One could add: the reinstatement of truth and human feelings in these works is combined with the reinstatement of eternal life, peace on earth, emotional enlightenment in human souls. Therefore, these works are currently relevant (by the way, they are quite successful with audiences).<sup>76</sup>

In this statement Korev clearly demonstrates the official position on religion in the early 1980s – the implementation of what Smolkin called “humanist atheism,” with the emphasis on truth, humanity, and peace. An appeal to eternal values was ideologically acceptable, but religion could only be discussed as a superstitious relic of the past and references to it had to be vindicated by some connection to reality.<sup>77</sup> The spiritual qualities of religion, such as

devotion and transcendence that created “an illusion of happiness” and therefore contradicted the state ideology, were deemed unacceptable:

Let us ask, however: why should one dress eternal humanistic ideas in medieval clothes? How does this so-called holy neoclassicism benefit our master? Illusion of all humanity? Illusion of transcending time? But all of this is *only an illusion*. Yet the reality lies in something else – it is an active and politically relevant ideological battle!<sup>78</sup>

Korev’s rhetoric here speaks to careful readers of official Soviet journals more than the actual meaning of his words. His use of the word “illusion,” coupled with “political[ly]” and “ideological,” reveals his obligation to pepper his text with Marxist language. The presentation of the profile gives the impression that an official critic had to shout louder than a sympathetic one: Korev had to drown Savenko’s words in noise. Her article is printed in standard-size font, Korev’s in a larger one. She writes about several works, devoting about half a page to the Requiem; he focuses on the Requiem and the Second Symphony and goes on for two pages. Her statements are unambiguous, his are contradictory. In order to publish such an innocuous profile, the editor had to put on a show, which, as Savenko later explained, no savvy readers took seriously.<sup>79</sup>

On May 15, 1982, Schnittke’s Requiem was performed in Tchaikovsky Hall by the Moscow Philharmonic and the State Chamber Choir, conducted by Valeriy Polyansky.<sup>80</sup> After Vivaldi’s *Gloria* and sacred motets by Bruckner, the concert program listed “Requiem, incidental music for Schiller’s play *Don Carlos*,” with the movement titles in Latin. After the

eighteenth- and nineteenth-century works by canonic composers, with their movement titles also in Latin, Schnittke’s Requiem looked like a twentieth-century piece in the same category—Western classical (secular) masterpieces. There were no program notes or presentation to explain the history or meaning of these works.

By the 1980s, restrictions on musical repertoire, in terms of both style and content, in the USSR were gradually disappearing.<sup>81</sup> Yet the music of unofficial composers like Schnittke, as well as works with religious themes, could be performed in official halls only at the initiative of acclaimed performers. The performance of the Requiem was made possible because of Polyansky’s status and his desire to champion Schnittke’s works.<sup>82</sup> Similarly, the performance of Gubaidulina’s *Offertorium*, on April 15, 1982, in the large hall of the Moscow Conservatory, took place at the initiative of the acclaimed conductor Gennady Rozhdestvensky, with the title removed from the program.<sup>83</sup> Neither of these performances was widely advertised or reviewed in major music publications, which demonstrates that cultural institutions and publishers were still avoiding documentary evidence of public concerts of music with religious themes by Soviet composers. Nevertheless, Tchaikovsky Hall was full for the performance of Schnittke’s Requiem because of his popularity in the music community and among the intelligentsia.<sup>84</sup> Both eyewitnesses I was able to find had strong positive impressions and characterized the concert as successful, mainly because of the quality of the music.<sup>85</sup>

In 1975 Schnittke’s Requiem could not be performed at all or discussed in the press. In the early 1980s, however,

the composer's popularity among musicologists, performers, and audiences enabled him to break through the censorship machine despite his religiosity and the sacred genre of the work. To some extent, this supports Smolkin's claims that in the 1980s Soviet ideologues were forced to compromise the ideological purity of atheism because they could no longer fight against the public's interest in religion.

### **Vyacheslav Artyomov's Requiem (1985–88)**

Having started his career at the Moscow Conservatory during the Khrushchev Thaw, Artyomov was exposed to the music of the Western European postwar avant garde. Unlike Schnittke, however, he was not interested in serialism. Artyomov's early compositions were inspired by Polish avant-garde composers Krzysztof Penderecki and Witold Lutosławski, who developed "sonorism"—a compositional idiom that involved an emphasis on the timbre and quality of sound through the nontraditional use of conventional and electroacoustic instruments and through stark sonic contrasts. Artyomov collected rare folk instruments from Turkmenia, Georgia, and Armenia and, together with Gubaidulina and Victor Suslin (1942–2012), created an informal group called Astreya that explored timbral qualities during improvisation sessions.

As mentioned earlier, since Artyomov did not work in the socialist realist idiom, his music was rarely purchased by the Ministry of Culture; yet his works were performed abroad and in unofficial venues.<sup>86</sup> In 1979 he was blacklisted by Composers' Union Chairman Tikhon Khrennikov for his unapproved participation in festivals in the West, which led

to formal restrictions on the performance and publication of his music.<sup>87</sup>

Artyomov's major works from the mid-1970s continued to focus on timbre and orchestration and began to engage spiritual themes. His pivotal composition *Symphony of Elegies* (1977), for two solo violins, string orchestra, and percussion, is an immersive meditation and includes an epigraph by Zen Buddhist master D. T. Suzuki: "these are the moments of our inner life awakening and coming into contact with eternity."<sup>88</sup>

Artyomov was also inspired by the Symbolism of the Russian Silver Age and Alexander Scriabin. In the 1980s he started writing symphonic works in the spirit of late Romanticism. Among them, *The Way to Olympus* (1978–84) is based on the idea of ascending from a primary static state toward the final moment of lucidity embodied in a "chord of unity," which is reminiscent of Scriabin's *Poem of Ecstasy* (1908). Other notable works of this period relate to Christian themes, including *Tristia* (1983) for trumpet, piano, vibraphone, organ, and strings; *Laments* (1985) for choir; and *Gurian Hymn* (1986) for percussion and strings. Although biographers describe Artyomov as a Russian Orthodox believer since the 1980s, his faith was rooted in early twentieth-century Russian religious philosophers, mainly Nicholas Berdyaev (1874–1948), and his statements about his beliefs were ecumenical.<sup>89</sup>

The idea of writing a requiem came to Artyomov when he was composing the ballet *Sola Fide* (1984–87), loosely based on the novelistic trilogy *Khozhdenie po mukam* (The Road to Calvary, 1918–41) by Aleksey Tolstoy. Tolstoy's characters are mainly aristocrats whose lives were significantly altered by the Russian Revolution of 1917. Although the novel was

realistic and was even awarded the Stalin Prize, Artyomov focused on the spiritual struggles of the main characters and their “path to Golgotha.” The ballet included a requiem, in which Artyomov wanted to show the suffering of the Russian people. In 1996, he told the German musicologist Michael John that when he had considered this subject in 1984, it would have been impossible to perform a requiem, so he chose to integrate parts of a requiem into the ballet.<sup>90</sup> (The ballet was performed because Tolstoy’s name allowed it to pass censorial obstacles.)<sup>91</sup>

When he started composing the Requiem in 1985, Artyomov initially dedicated the score to “the martyrs of long-suffering Russia” and did not anticipate that a work in this genre and with this dedication could be performed in an official concert hall.<sup>92</sup> (He was probably aware of the performance of Schnittke’s Requiem, but thought of it as an exception.) When the piece was completed, the Soviet Culture Foundation provided necessary support for the organization of its premiere because it appeared to be a pertinent way to honor the memory of the victims of Stalinism.<sup>93</sup> The dedication was therefore adjusted to “the victims of Stalinism” specifically for the premiere.<sup>94</sup> However, twelve years later Artyomov told John that a canonic requiem could not represent social circumstances or history and that he finished composing his Requiem because “there was a social occasion to compose it, hence the dedication, but it was only an occasion.”<sup>95</sup>

Artyomov’s Requiem is scored for six soloists, two choirs, organ, and large orchestra. He departed from the canonic text of the Roman Catholic Requiem Mass by adding the final movement, “In paradisum,” an antiphon specified for a burial service.

- I. Introitus. Requiem aeternam
- II. Kyrie et Sequentia
  - Kyrie eleison
  - Dies irae, part 1
  - Dies irae, part 2
  - Tuba mirum
  - Recordare, Jesu pie
  - Confutatis maledictis
  - Lacrymosa dies illa
- III. Offertorium
  - Domine Jesu Christe
  - Hostias et preces
- IV. Sanctus
  - Sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth
  - Benedictus
- V. Agnus Dei
- VI. Libera me
  - Libera me
  - Requiem aeternam
- VII. In paradisum

The first movement, “Requiem aeternam,” begins with four loud, dissonant chords, highlighted by brass and organ. The choir enters and slowly moves in a dissonant progression that never resolves, resembling the micropolyphony of Ligeti’s Requiem. A mournful soprano in a high register occasionally emerges, as if a lost soul. These long dissonant stretches of choral sound, which collapse at the end with a strike of the tam-tam, create an impression of dark, thick air in the underworld.

The majority of the Requiem’s movements can be interpreted as different ways of representing suffering, most prominently, the first of the two “Dies irae” movements. Dotted rhythm and major sevenths in the large brass section; polyrhythm in the percussion section;

screaming, recurring glissandi in the violins; unexpected dynamic changes; organ clusters—all of these elements create a feeling of complete disorientation. The first “Dies irae” can easily be associated with both physical torture and psychological trauma.

Relief comes in the second “Dies irae,” which begins with a mournful chorale sung by male and female soloists, highlighted by the soft sounds of gongs that create an eerie feeling. Diatonic upward melodies, played softly on the violins, enter only briefly, as if showing that hope is fragile and illusory. As Artyomov explained, the second “Dies irae” “reflects the inner state of people, their fears, their anticipation of the Last Judgment.”<sup>96</sup> He added it in order to create a dramatic effect—otherwise, there would be two heavy, difficult movements following one another (since the “Tuba mirum” traditionally has to be expressive). The two “Dies irae” movements encapsulate the development of the entire composition, and Artyomov’s Requiem can be seen as a work built on contrasts, just as Schnittke’s is. Yet the emotional extremes are much stronger than in Schnittke’s Requiem, reflecting Artyomov’s Romantic orientation and echoing the extreme emotions in the spiritual music of Galina Ustvolskaya.

The intensity of emotions, large orchestra, and sheer length of Artyomov’s Requiem clearly differentiate it from those of Schnittke, Ligeti, and Mozart. The calmer movements project pain and uncertainty, just as the dramatic ones do, with a stronger passion than the majority of well-known works in this genre. Therefore, the final movement, “In paradisum,” creates a sharp contrast to the rest of the piece. With its consonant diatonic melodies on the violins, transparent texture, and tonal

harmony, it generates the impression of a bright vision of heavenly bliss. The soft sounds of bells in counterpoint with short motives on the flutes resembling singing birds are symbolic of paradise. Tarakanov described “In paradisum” as sounding like “a cosmic symphony of the singing heavens, turning into a symbol of eternal harmony and supreme accord.”<sup>97</sup> The movement is the longest in the piece and lasts for about twelve minutes.

As Maria Cizmic has shown in her discussion of the reception of Górecki’s Third Symphony (1976), live concerts devoted to causes and remembrances, program notes, and recording liner notes can shape a listener’s emotional perception by juxtaposing particular works with social, historical, and even fictional events.<sup>98</sup> Artyomov’s Requiem was presented during the “week of consciousness,” when both liberation of religion and rehabilitation of history were central to social discourse. As Kholopova wrote shortly after the premiere, “the tragic events of [Soviet] history and chilling facts of Stalinist crimes could not leave anyone indifferent,” and therefore concerts dedicated to victims of Stalinist repressions, organized across the USSR, “left the deepest responses among the audiences.”<sup>99</sup>

The dedication, Yevtushenko’s speech, a number of previews in the press, and Yulia Yevdokimova’s program notes all triggered listeners’ desire to establish a link between specific moments in the music and the ideas of suffering and trauma, and, in some cases, their own lives. One reporter suggested that the first impression of the listeners was “connected to their living sensation of tortures and torments that [were] reflected in the music,” and that allusions to those years of suffering were “very vivid and perhaps

quite obvious to those who lived through them.”<sup>100</sup> Yevdokimova also asserted that the audience, “among whom were many victims of the repression, could not hide their tears of delight and compassion.”<sup>101</sup> According to Kholopova, one listener who had spent many years in Stalinist camps said:

This work is a real monument to the tragedy of the people and human destiny, ruined by Stalinism. Every nerve in me trembles from this music. I see my entire life in it. Artyomov raised us, victims, living and dead, to a great moral height. He mourned all of us and at the same time elevated us.<sup>102</sup>

The perception of this particular listener supports Yevtushenko’s suggestion that Artyomov’s Requiem had healing power. As Cizmic discussed, the actual healing capacity of the work is hard to measure, but the idea that music’s therapeutic nature arises from its metaphoric and affective qualities is valid.<sup>103</sup> Music therapists indeed suggest that some of music’s powerful affect arises when people listen for emotional and psychological experiences that have analogies in their own lives.<sup>104</sup>

The specific references to Russian tradition, albeit brief, helped listeners perceive the Requiem’s relationship to their personal suffering. These included a stylization of Russian Orthodox liturgy in the “Domine Jesu Christe” and the use of bells throughout the entire work. The program note by Yevdokimova reinforced this connection:

One of those symbols, the Russian prayer for the repose of the dead in “Domine Jesu,” is that “specific” marker of the time and place of events. Ringing bells are imbued with symbolism; in almost every movement they appeal to the historical memory of the listener, and every time

they introduce a new, particular artistic meaning—now it’s a half-real echo, now an alarm bell; now it’s a knell, now a reminiscence.<sup>105</sup>

Tarakanov went further to relate this brief stylization to the “Russian idea,” as expressed in the writings of the philosophers Nicholas Berdyaev, Vladimir Solovyov, and Nikolay Fyodorov, who were influential among the Russian intelligentsia. He stated that Artyomov’s work is “a fruit of eschatological consciousness . . . which leads to the spiritual renewal of humanity.”<sup>106</sup> As Cizmic has shown, references to Polish music and literary texts in Górecki’s Third Symphony also resonated with listeners’ personal connections to the work and “a prevalent interpretation of Poland’s national suffering in messianic terms.”<sup>107</sup>

Many reviewers commented on the emotional qualities of Artyomov’s Requiem. Kholopova stated that the work was “balanced between falling into the total darkness of tragedy and flights into the mountain heights of suffering.” She suggested that “these emotional extremes were akin to what people feel during ordeals,” and that therefore the music reflected Artyomov’s dedication.<sup>108</sup> Firsova further stated that the music’s emotional power appealed to the “highest potential—the spirit.”<sup>109</sup> For her, the Requiem “accumulated energetically and emotionally . . . the entire challenging path of enlightenment,” and she experienced “almost physical suffering from everything that was revealed from the black recesses of the past” while listening.<sup>110</sup>

Firsova observed that the emotional power and sacred symbolism of the Requiem led her to catharsis and prompted her to think about “life and death, good and

evil, free will and responsibility.”<sup>111</sup> Olga Martynenko also developed the theme of humanity and morality in her review of the premiere:

Without faith, everything is permitted, as Dostoyevsky claimed. Looking at Artyomov’s art from this standpoint, we can see two poles: the tragic world with its passions on one hand, and the indelible hope for *moral revival* on the other, the hope that inspired his *Requiem* and echoes in the heart of every listener.<sup>112</sup>

Martynenko, Firsova, Tarakanov, and other reviewers echoed Mikhail Gorbachev’s statements that Christian values could help the USSR achieve moral regeneration, pointing to the idea that faith can fill life with meaning—the kind of meaning that communist ideology had failed to produce.

The ability to return to ancient sacred tradition in the music of national, rather than exclusively foreign, composers was applauded across the USSR. Artyomov recognized that he was not the only one to engage this genre and saw his work as a part of an important trend:

Look at this season’s concerts: Masses, Requiems, Passions. . . . The full houses attest to a strong public desire for moral purification and repentance through suffering. We have excluded tragedy from our life for too long and indulged ourselves with fairy tales. We were afraid to search our souls, reluctant to consider compassion and mercy, unwilling to cry. The fact that we are now turning to tragedy in the arts suggests that a certain change is taking place in public consciousness. We have begun to reflect on our life and our past without fear.”<sup>113</sup>

Nevertheless, the presentation of Artyomov’s *Requiem* played an important role in shaping the effect the music had on listeners. As Savenko suggested, some

audience members seemed to be attracted by the dedication and the atmosphere of the event and otherwise would not have attended a concert of contemporary music, but they definitely enjoyed the experience.<sup>114</sup> In his introductory remarks, Yevtushenko announced that the audience was about to hear the voices of martyrs “coming out of the ground” in the choir.<sup>115</sup> It is not surprising, then, that so many commentators focused on the literal depiction of suffering.

There is no doubt that the concert received so much attention in the press, at least in part, because it was presented as a politically relevant event. The political elites—in this case the management of the Soviet Culture Foundation, including Gorbachev’s wife, Raisa Gorbacheva, and prominent intellectual Dmitry Likhachyov—decided that Artyomov’s *Requiem* was exactly the kind of work that could represent their goals, and took the event under their patronage.<sup>116</sup> As can be observed from the reception of requiem works on the previously taboo themes of Soviet repression and trauma, the mere relevance of the topic was not enough to generate so many reviews in the press. Two counterexamples may serve to illustrate my point. Boris Tishchenko’s *Requiem* (1966), set to the eponymous poem by Anna Akhmatova, described the grim details of the Stalinist terror and included references to sacred music. This composition directly related to the discussion of Soviet repression and was premiered in June 1989 in the Great Hall of the Leningrad State Philharmonic.<sup>117</sup> Alexander Knaifel’s *Agnus Dei* (1985), premiered in November 1987 in the Small Hall of the Leningrad Philharmonic, included excerpts from the Catholic Mass and from the diary of a girl who died of

starvation during the siege of Leningrad.<sup>118</sup> Both works directly addressed glasnost concerns, but did not receive as much press coverage as Artyomov's Requiem, although attendance at both concerts was high. (Of course, the location of these performances in Leningrad rather than Moscow also played an important role; the aesthetic qualities of these works were not inferior to Artyomov's.)

Until the very end of the Brezhnev era, state functionaries resisted Soviet citizens' exposure to works inspired by the sacred

tradition, such as Schnittke's Requiem. Yet, when the political situation changed, they embraced Artyomov's Requiem and immediately used it to serve a new political agenda: the rehabilitation of history and the return of religion. Both Schnittke's Requiem, which showed Soviet society's longing for intimate sacred experiences, and Artyomov's, which marked the embrace of religion in public places, are symbolic of the path toward the end of an atheist state—a requiem for the USSR.

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## NOTES

1 Dzhemma Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," *Ogonek* 33 (August 1990): 16.

2 Valentina Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma: o Rekvieме V. Artyomova," *Muzykal'naiа zhizn'* 7 (1989): 8; Olga Martynenko, "Composer Vyacheslav Artyomov: The Hard Way to Mount Olympus," *Moscow News Weekly* 5 (Feb. 5, 1989): 16.

3 N. Sakharova, "Iz kontsertnykh zalov Moskovskoy filharmonii," *Teatral'no-koncertnaia Moskva* 36 (Nov. 23, 1988); Svetlana Savenko, "Rekvieм s 'khoroshim kontsom'?" *Sovetskaia muzyka* 5 (1989): 25.

4 Vincenzo Maddaloni, "Requiem for the Victims of Stalin's Terror," *Famiglia Cristiana* 51 (December 1988): 64, repr. in *Artyomov, Requiem: Points of Departure* (Moscow: Fond Dukhovnogo Tvorchestva, 1997), 26.

5 Ibid.; Yulia Yevdokimova, "Vyacheslav Artyomov—Requiem," *Govorit i pokazyvaet Moskva* 4 (Jan. 19, 1989).

6 Tchaikovsky Concert Hall official website: <https://meloman.ru/hall/koncertnyj-zal-chajkovskogo/> (accessed Dec. 11, 2020).

7 Yevgeny Yevtushenko, introduction to Artyomov's Requiem, Nov. 25, 1988 (video recording by the Moscow Philharmonic available on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLZMcupx-yE>); Catherine Merridale, *Night of Stone: Death and Memory in Russia* (London: Granta, 2000).

8 Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," 14; Yevdokimova, "Vyacheslav Artyomov – Requiem"; Yevdokimova, "Razmyshlenia o muzyke Vyacheslava Artyomova," *Sovetskaia muzyka* 5 (1989): 20;

Maddaloni, "Requiem for the Victims of Stalin's Terror," 25.

9 Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8; Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," 14. See the list of reviews in Michael John, *Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Geistigkeit?: Requiem-Vertonungen in der Sowjetunion (1963–1988)* (Berlin: Kuhn, 1996), 177–80.

10 Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8; Yevdokimova, "Vyacheslav Artyomov – Requiem."

11 Mikhail Tarakanov, *Vyacheslav Artemov: Ocherk tvorchestva* (Moscow: Fond Dukhovnogo Tvorchestva, 1994), 8.

12 Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," 15; Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8; Mikhail Tarakanov, "Vyacheslav Artyomov: In Search of Artistic Truth," *Underground Music from the Former USSR*, ed. Valeria Tsenova, trans. Romela Kohanovskaya (Amsterdam: Harwood Academic, 1997), 144–45.

13 I did not find any announcements or reviews of this concert in major music publications from 1981 to 1983, even though in the 1980s *Sovetskaia muzyka* regularly published reviews of concerts held in major concert halls in Moscow. Both eyewitnesses to the concert whom I was able to find mentioned that the hall was almost full (Gordon McQuere, email to author, Oct. 29, 2019; Tatiana Baranova Monighetti, email to author, Feb. 25, 2021).

14 Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018), 3.

15 For details, see Philip Boobbyer, *Conscience, Dissent and Reform in Soviet Russia* (London: Routledge, 2005), 186–202.

16 Mikhail Gorbachev, *Perestroika* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987), 25.

17 Karl Marx, “Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*: Introduction [1844],” in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2nd ed., ed. Robert C. Tucker (New York: Norton, 1978), 54–59.

18 The stages of transformation in the Soviet state’s handling of religion and atheism are most comprehensively addressed in Victoria Smolkin’s study *A Sacred Space Is Never Empty: A History of Soviet Atheism* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018).

19 See the detailed discussion of this policy in *ibid.*, chaps. 2 and 3.

20 Eleonory Gilburd, *To See Paris and Die: The Soviet Lives of Western Culture* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2018), 7–17.

21 Masha Gessen, *Dead Again: The Russian Intelligentsia After Communism* (London: Verso, 1997), chap. 3; Vladislav Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children: The Last Russian Intelligentsia* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2009), 241–58; Alexei Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever, Until It Was No More: The Last Soviet Generation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), 150–51; Sergei Zhuk, *Rock and Roll in the Rocket City: The West, Identity, and Ideology in Soviet Dnepropetrovsk, 1960–1985* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2010), chap. 11.

22 Nikolay Karetnikov, “Otets Aleksandr,” in *Gotovnost’ k bitiyu* (Moscow: Kompozitor, 1994), 141–46; Vladimir Martynov, *Avtoarkheologiia 1978–1998* (Moscow: Klassika-XXI, 2013), 6–11.

23 Ivan Moody and Sofia Gubaidulina, “‘The Space of The Soul’: An Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina,” *Tempo* 66 (259): 32; Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 154.

24 Gessen, *Dead Again*, 52–69; Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 237–54.

25 Nikolai Mitrokhin, “Sovetskaya intelligentsiia v poiskakh chuda: religioznost’ i paranauka v SSSR v 1953–1985 godakh [The Soviet Intelligentsia in Search of a Miracle: Religiosity and Parascience in the USSR from 1953 to 1985],” *Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye* 163 (March 2020), [https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/novoe\\_literaturnoe\\_obozrenie/163\\_nlo\\_3\\_2020/article/22225/](https://www.nlobooks.ru/magazines/novoe_literaturnoe_obozrenie/163_nlo_3_2020/article/22225/) (accessed Dec. 10, 2020).

26 Alexei Lyubimov, “Vremya radostnikh otrkitiy,” in *Eti stranniye semidesiatye, ili poteriya nevinnosti*, ed. Georgiy Kizevalter (Moscow: Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, 2010), 212.

27 Martynov, *Avtoarcheologiia*, 9.

28 Mitrokhin, “Sovetskaya intelligentsiia v poiskakh chuda.”

29 Smolkin, *A Sacred Space*, 200–203; Zubok, *Zhivago’s Children*, 251.

30 Tatyana Vinokurova, “Khozdenie po mukam Andrey Rublyova [Ordeal by Andrei Rublev],” *Iskusstvo kino* 10 (1989): 63–76.

31 In 1974, an open-air exhibition organized by nonconformist artists in Moscow was attacked by bulldozers: artworks were destroyed and artists were beaten by KGB agents.

32 For details see Oksana Nesterenko, “A Forbidden Fruit? Religion, Spirituality and Music in the USSR Before Its Fall (1964–1991)” (Ph.D. diss., Stony Brook University, 2021).

33 *Ibid.*, 48–57.

34 *Ibid.*, 57–64, 97–107.

35 *Ibid.*, 215–29, 131–45.

36 Smolkin, *A Sacred Space*, 6.

37 *Ibid.*, 150–51.

38 “Appendix B. Soviet Laws on Religion, 1918–1988,” in Kent Richmond, *The Puzzle of the Soviet Church: An Inside Look at Christianity and Glasnost* (Washington, DC: Multnomah Press, 1989), 385.

39 *Ibid.*, 386.

40 Yurchak, *Everything Was Forever*, 93.

41 Nikolay Bol’chuk and Vladimir Martynov, “Dlya khristian lyuboe vremya dolzhno vosprinimat’sya kak poslednee [For Christians, Any Time Should Be Perceived as the End of Time],” *Pravoslavie.ru*, April 18, 2018, <https://pravoslavie.ru/112285.html> (accessed Sept. 20, 2018). See also the documentary film *Heat: In Search of God in the USSR*, dir. Alexander Arkhangel’sky (2005).

42 More on this in Sonja Luehrmann, *Secularism Soviet Style: Teaching Atheism and Religion in a Volga Republic* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 1–4.

43 Smolkin, *A Sacred Space*, 196.

44 *Ibid.*

45 Peter Schmelz, “Selling Schnittke: Late Soviet Censorship and the Cold War Marketplace,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Music Censorship*, ed. Patricia Hall (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 418.

46 More on this in Peter Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009).

- 47 Ibid., 222–74, 326; Aleksandra Drozzina, “Schnittke, Gubaidulina, and Pärt: Religion and Spirituality During the Late Thaw and Early Perestroika” (Ph.D. diss., Louisiana State University and Agricultural and Mechanical College, 2020); Nesterenko, “A Forbidden Fruit.”
- 48 Valentina Kholopova, *Alexei Liubimov: Portrait of an Artist* (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2009), 29.
- 49 Other ways to represent religious themes were as symbolic representations of Christian concepts, quotations, or allusions to liturgical chant.
- 50 Pauline Fairclough, “We Should Not Sing of Heaven and Angels’: Performing Western Sacred Music in Soviet Russia, 1917–1964,” in Hall, *The Oxford Handbook of Music Censorship*.
- 51 Ibid.
- 52 V. Timokhin, “Requiem Verdi na stsene Bol’shogo Teatra [Verdi’s Requiem on the Stage of the Bolshoi Theater],” *Muzykal’naya Zhizn’* 1982/11: 17; V. Paskhalov “Gimn Cheloveku [A Hymn to the Human],” *Muzykal’naya Zhizn’* 1982/14: 12.
- 53 Eesti Teatri- ja Muusikamuuseum (Estonian Theater and Music Museum), f. 10, s. 20, 16.
- 54 Ibid., s. 20.
- 55 More details in Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 208–13.
- 56 Ibid., 210.
- 57 Elena Dubinets, *Knyaz Andrey Volkonsky: Partitura zhizni* [Prince Andrey Volkonsky: The Score of Life] (Moscow: Ripol Klassik, 2010), 62.
- 58 Martynov, *Avtoarheologiya*, 32.
- 59 Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke* (London: Phaidon, 1996), 156; Ivashkin, *Besedi s Al’fredom Schnittke* (Moscow: Culture Publishers, 1994), 116–20.
- 60 Valentina Kholopova, *Kompozitor Alfred Schnittke* (Moscow: Arkaim, 2003), 155.
- 61 For details about Schnittke’s exploration of serialism, see Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 233–51.
- 62 Ibid., 123.
- 63 Ivashkin, *Besedi*, 283.
- 64 Schnittke, program book for Kassel Music Days, 1983, quoted in liner notes to CD BIS-497 (1990).
- 65 Valentina Kholopova and Yevgeniya Chigareva, *Al’fred Shnitke: Ocherk Zhizni i tvorchestva* (Moscow: Sovetskiy Kompozitor, 1990), 111.
- 66 Ibid.
- 67 For details about Schnittke’s interest in rock opera at this stage of his career, see Ivana Medic, “I Believe . . . in What? Arvo Pärt’s and Alfred Schnittke’s Polystylistic Credos,” *Slavonica* 16/2 (November 2010): 104.
- 68 S. Korovkin, *Teatr Imeni Mossoveta* (Moscow: Iskusstvo, 1985), 290.
- 69 The televised version of the play, with Schnittke’s music, is available online: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wyC3WSEr108>. Note that Medic’ states that another piece was used for the 1976 performance (Medic, “I Believe . . . in What?,” 103). However, the televised version produced less than four years after the premiere of the play does include Schnittke’s music.
- 70 Yevgeniya Chigareva, *Al’fredu Shnitke posvyashchayetsya*, vol. 1 (Moscow: Kompozitor, 1999), 194.
- 71 Kholopova, *Kompozitor Alfred Shnitke*, 124.
- 72 Ibid.
- 73 Svetlana Savenko, “Portret khudozhnika v zrelosti,” *Sovetskaia muzyka* 9 (1981): 39.
- 74 Even though the profile was difficult to get in print, no significant part of it was censored because the editors wanted to create the impression of an open discussion (Svetlana Savenko, email to author, Jan. 4, 2020).
- 75 In Schnittke’s Symphony No. 2 (1979), the choral texts in all six movements correspond to sections of the Catholic Mass Ordinary.
- 76 Igor Korev, “Posleslovie [Afterword],” *Sovetskaia muzyka* 9 (1981): 45.
- 77 Ibid.
- 78 Ibid., 46.
- 79 Svetlana Savenko, email to author, Jan. 4, 2020.
- 80 The first formal performance of the Requiem as an independent piece—which Schnittke was not allowed to attend—was given in Budapest in the autumn of 1977 by the Kodály Chorus (Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 126–27).
- 81 Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 324.
- 82 Valeriy Polyanskiy, untitled reminiscences about Schnittke, in *Al’fredu Shnitke posvyashchayetsya* 3 (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2003), 256–57.
- 83 See details in Nesterenko, “A Forbidden Fruit,” 97–107.
- 84 Gordon McQuere, email to author, Oct. 29, 2019.
- 85 Ibid.
- 86 Olga Martynenko, “Composer Vyacheslav Artyomov: The Hard Way to Mt. Olympus,” *Moscow News* 5 (February 1989), 16; Firsova, “Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe,” 15.
- 87 Schmelz, *Such Freedom*, 325.
- 88 Tarakanov, “Vyacheslav Artyomov,” 144.
- 89 Ibid., 152–53.

- 90 John, *Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Geistigkeit*, 143.
- 91 Tarakanov, "Vyacheslav Artyomov," 153.
- 92 Maddaloni, "Requiem for the Victims of Stalin's Terror," 26. In the score as well as on the LP issued by Melodiya in 1990, the dedication is "To the Martyrs of Long-Suffering Russia" (Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," 14; Melodiya, A10 00547 006 [1990]).
- 93 Maddaloni, "Requiem for the Victims of Stalin's Terror," 26.
- 94 Firsova, "Vozvyshennoe i zemnoe," 14.
- 95 John, *Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Geistigkeit*, 143.
- 96 Ibid., 142.
- 97 Tarakanov, "Vyacheslav Artyomov," 154.
- 98 Maria Cizmic, *Performing Pain: Music and Trauma in Eastern Europe* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 156.
- 99 Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8.
- 100 Maddaloni, "Requiem for the Victims of Stalin's Terror," 27.
- 101 Yevdokimova, "Vyacheslav Artyomov – Requiem"; Yevdokimova, "Razmyshlenia o muzyke Vyacheslava Artyomova," 20.
- 102 Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8.
- 103 Cizmic, *Performing Pain*, 139.
- 104 Rachel Darnley-Smith and Helen M. Patey, *Music Therapy* (London: Sage, 2003), 5–68.
- 105 Yevdokimova, program note.
- 106 Mikhail Tarakanov, "Vyacheslav Artyomov's Requiem," *Music in the USSR* (July–December 1990), 16.
- 107 Cizmic, *Performing Pain*, 138.
- 108 Kholopova, "Pamiati zhertv stalinizma," 8.
- 109 Dzhemma Firsova, "Vspomni! Razdum'ya posle prem'yery Rekv'yema Vyacheslava Artyomova (1988 – 1989)," *Sovetskaia kul'tura* (March 29, 1989): 6.
- 110 Ibid.
- 111 Ibid.
- 112 Martynenko, "Composer Vyacheslav Artyomov," 16.
- 113 Ibid. His statement suggests that the audience perceived the performance of sacred music in official venues across the USSR as a liberation from the totalitarian regime and return of moral values, such as truth and compassion. Sacred genres, including the requiem, could attract listeners because they carried broader meanings.
- 114 Savenko, "Rekv'iem s khoroshim kontsom," 26.
- 115 Yevtushenko, introduction to Artyomov's Requiem.
- 116 Anonymous ("Our Correspondent"), "Novy Rekv'iem," *Kul'tura* (Nov. 29, 1988): 8.
- 117 For more details, see Nesterenko, "A Forbidden Fruit," 117–30.
- 118 For more details, see *ibid.*, 145–53.