

Russian Ultra-Moderners

Then comes the Allegro, to which is added ascending, and then following this, descending tones to impart the sensation of struggle, regret, and general sadness. The main theme grows out of the Largo melody as well as this latter one:

and is of the same fibre and spirit as both:

For the most part we find that joyful moments descend to gloomy ones, and all are adorned by intricate, little, minor key figures. The second

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melody illustrates the influence of Tschaicowsky in that it is passed from instrument to instrument, and is in general milder and more tranquil than most lyrics of the composer. It leads to a brief development of the notes of the Largo, and now the intricate adornments are disguised in varied ways. After a period of melancholy song there comes a medley of all the melodies, and then a variation of these, now eighteenth-century-like and sedate, now feverish, now brooding, now nervous. All finally end in a loud and sighing phrase.

The second melody is now introduced:

after which the brooding recommences, but this time in ascending motion. As Goepf remarks at this point, "To be sure the Russian at his gladdest seems tinged with sense of fate." The music continues in gloom, but now a certain brilliancy is noticeable because of the heraldry of brass and woodwind instruments.

Goepf describes it as "All absent is the former descent of minor tones. Instead, in solemn hush of tempest, without the poignant touch, the second melody returns with dulcet answer of strings." Almost to the end of the movement the mood is rapturous and freely-flowing, but finally everything sinks into the somber settings again and suddenly concludes

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in an unexpected burst of triumph.

Movement two (Allegro Molto) is in the mood of a delightful, savage, and primitive dance. There are hostile, clashing harmonies and opulent uses of bells as the main theme is introduced:

The next melody is quieter and more serene, even though it grew out of the preceding theme:

When melody one returns it is merely played by a great number of voices instead of being subject to development or variation, and suddenly it is interrupted and changes to a fugue-like form of "pomp and ceremony":

There suddenly sounds a bold hymnal chant that looms out of the continued chorus of other stray instruments softly keeping on with the

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fugue:

The fugal theme is composed of the first two notes of the symphony, and the hymnal chant is a slower form of the fugue. In the base can still be heard the first main motive of the symphony. Thus Rachmaninoff reveals excellent coherence in both form and mood, and we see that he is capable of mastery of mood-expression through combinations of themes.

The melodies are all repeated one after the other, and just before the end the hymnal chant is loudly played by the brass. Then everything dies away into somber silence.

Movement three (Adagio) is composed of one important theme that makes its first appearance on the violins and then on the clarinet:

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Goepp states of this section, "We are apt to find here an influence from a Western fashion, a taint of polythematic virtuosity, in this mystic maze of many strains harking from all corners of the work, without a gain over an earlier Russian simplicity."

The plot of the movement is too multiple for the average hearer to grasp at once, and Goepp correctly says, "It is here that the symphony is in danger from an exotic style that had its origin in German music-dramas." Thus again we note the far-reaching influence of Richard Wagner. Goepp continues by saying, "From this point the Rachmaninoff symphony languishes in the fountain of its fresh inspiration, seems consciously constructed with calculating care.***The listener's grasp becomes more difficult, until there is at best a mystic maze, a sweet chaos, without a clear melodic thought. It cannot be maintained that the perception of the modern audience has kept pace with the complexity of scores. Yet there is no gainsaying an alluring beauty of these waves of sound rising to fervent height in the main melody that is expressive of modern wistfulness."

Suddenly there is a break in the music as the first melody sounds again---defiant, regretful, reckless, and extremely effective and charming:

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A great medley of these melodies proves to be very sentimental and beautiful, and then, with a great cry, it plunges suddenly into the main Adagio theme. There is a pause, and then a series of refrains of solo instruments is played. Among these it is interesting to note the second theme of Movement Two in the bass.

The Adagio theme sings once more and then concludes the movement by dying down into nothingness.

In Movement Four (Allegro Vivace) "we rush into a gaiety long sustained."*:

It is ruthlessly merry, but suddenly hushed into "a whisper of drum, with strange patter of former dance."* Very interestingly, the reverse of the human chant heard in Movement Two follows:

*Goepp.

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Goepp describes the entire motion by saying, "The gay figures flit timidly back----, a struggle 'twixt pleasure and fate----but soon gain control. Again the change or series of moods is not clearly defined. They seem a parade of visions. The hymn may be viewed as a guise of the former chant of the Scherzo with the dance-trip in the lowest bass. Straight from the rush and romp we plunge anew into a trance of sweet memories. The lyric vein binds here together earlier strains whose kinship had not appeared. They seemed less significant, hidden as subsidiary ideas."

In answer to all this comes the last melody, one of sad farewell:

Beautiful and mystic, regretful, almost sobbing, this phrase well illustrates the spirit of the Russian style. The Adagio is combined with a dance-like caper, and both finally resolve into the hymnal march. The figures of all the movements return, including the descending scale of the Allegro, the Largo, the second Allegro melody, and the dance from Movement Two.

"Suddenly a new spirit enters with gathering volume and warmer harmony. As out of a dream we gradually emerge, at the end with a shock of welcome to light and day, as we awake to the returning glad dance. And here is a new

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entrancing countertune above that crowns the joy."*

In the midst of this revel, in which more savage melodies become calmer and more civilized, the conclusion of the symphony is reached. It is a fine work, typical of the composer's outlook and temperament, and deeply expressive of the Russian thought and style.

Outstanding among the composer's writings are his four piano concertos, his songs, and his piano preludes in C# minor and G minor. He also has a one-act opera "Aleko" to his name, and an interesting piano number entitled "The Island of the Dead."

Rachmaninoff is a product of the Tschairowsky School of Music rather than that of "The Five". He studied with Taneiev, a pupil of Tschairowsky, and as H.L.F. McCombs says, "His brilliant success was therefore, perhaps a little unwillingly, grounded in the strictest forms of counterpoint."

Regardless of his rather advanced age he has lost none of the technique of either composition or piano performing, and his languid and fascinating personality reflect in his music that subconsciously seems to cry out plaintively for his homeland.

Before leaving Rachmaninoff we should mention his choral work "The Bells"----music to the inspiring poem by Edgar Allen Poe. Knowing the style of the composer we can well imagine the effective musical score and quoting certain sections of the literary work may help to give us a better idea:

*Goepf.

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"How they tinkle, tinkle, tinkle,

 In the icy air of night!

While the stars that oversprinkle

All the heavens, seem to twinkle

 With a crystalline delight;

* * * * *

Through the balmy air of night

How they ring out their delight!----

 From the molten-golden notes,

 And all in tune,

What a liquid ditty floats

To the turtle-dove that listens, while she gloats

 On the moon!

* * * * *

Hear the tolling of the bells----

 Iron bells!

What a world of solemn thought their monody compels!

 In the silence of the night

 How we shiver with affright

At the melancholy menace of their tone!

 For every sound that floats

 From the rust within their throats

 Is a groan.

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And the people----ah, the people----
They that dwell up in the steeple,
All alone,
And who tolling, tolling, tolling,
In that muffled monotone,
Feel a glory in so rolling
On the human heart a stone----
They are neither man nor woman,----
They are neither brute nor human----
They are Ghouls:----
And their king it is who tolls:----
And he rolls, rolls, rolls,
Rolls
A paeon from the bells!
And his merry bosom swells!
With the paeon of the bells!
And he dances and he yells;
Keeping time, time, time,
In a sort of Runic rhyme,
* * * * *
To the throbbing of the bells----
Of the bells, bells, bells----
To the sobbing of the bells:----
Keeping time, time, time,
As he knells, knells, knells,
In a happy Runic rhyme,

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To the rolling of the bells----
Of the bells,bells,bells:----
To the tolling of the bells----
Of the bells,bells,bells,bells,
Bells,bells,bells,
To the moaning and the groaning of the bells."

We now turn to Stravinsky,a real ultra-moderner. Like Rachmaninoff, he resides today in America,but his music is considered as Russian nevertheless. He is a real impressionist,actually a neo-impressionist, advocating cubism and da-da-ism for music. As MenckelAKomberg says, "Picasso and Stravinsky! These two alone have survived the Europe of 1914."

Stravinsky brings out the true Russian spirit----primitive,essentially savage,colorful,and wild----he dotes on folk-lore,pagan worship, and popular street tunes in his compositions. He had one thing in common with Scriabin----the desire to include new modulations and expressions in music. Being far in advance of the musical opinion of today he naturally includes frightfully bold dischords in his music. These, despite the first shock they give us,are nevertheless sensibly constructed. Some critics claim that Stravinsky writes as a "salesman"of music; that is,his expression is influenced and even guided by what he knows the public will revise. They claim he writes to be different,that his boldness is a form of egoism,and so loud and proclaiming that the public forgets its customary antipathy against living artists,and wildly hails him as a genius they cannot thoroughly understand. If this be so,it is

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an excellent thing. For the old prejudice that a man must be dead for a decade or so before he can be fully appreciated should be thoroughly crushed out of the minds of both audiences and music-critics, and if Stravinsky is the man to do it, the more power to him.

To be sure, he is different, and I would seriously recommend more than one hearing of his works before criticizing them. He is brilliant, technically bold, and novel----he is powerful and represents the deliverer of democracy and freedom of music, and perhaps his best point is that he excellently portrays the spirit and life of our own times. In this he characterized the highest and the lowest, making full use of his musical conditions----fads and fashions of our age, etc., and upon this most of his success depends.

Stravinsky is an innovator, not because he especially sought to be one, but because he knew that to be modern he must assume that guise. Yet it is natural with him----he expresses what he feels, not what he would like to feel. His music is purely objective; he does a perfect job in concealing his own personality, especially making sure not to confuse it with those of his characters. Sabaneyeff calls his music "openly picturesque in the extreme."

Now innovation is one means of making a composer noticed, regardless of the quality of his innovations. But Stravinsky's innovations arose from his own inspiration; he did not expressly seek after new musical sounds. He is more an inventor than a creator. He is extremely original, poorly gifted in the field of melody, but a great genius as far as invention and orchestration is concerned. In this he resembles

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his teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff. Through his unusual gift in the field of invention he has discovered vast new worlds in the art of color and rhythm. His orchestral coloring is gorgeous and highly spiced; he uses new combinations of instruments and also for ironic effects the hurdy-gurdy, false notes, and popular street tunes. In pre-World War#I days he spent some time in France, and as a result several of his works contain popular French street-songs. The following is merely one example used in "Petroushka":

His music in general combines the achievements of both the Russian National School and the French Neo-Impressionist School. It is very complicated and specialized, anti-European, yet filled with European methods. In its barbarism it frequently leans towards the Oriental, thus accounting for some of its magnificent colors. It is wild and full of contrasts, beautifully ironic at times, and extremely unusual in its deftness at musical characterisation.

The irony is most evident in "Petroushka". This ballet tells the story with puppets as characters, thus satirically expressing the weakness and insignificance of man. At a carnival in Petrograd a showman demonstrates his puppets, all of whom have human feelings.

Petroushka, the most ugly and sensitive, tries to win the love of the Ballerina, but loses his life to a Moor doll, brutal and dashing. The latter, jealous of Petroushka, slays him just as the carnival is at its height. When the crowd around the puppet-show is aroused at the

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unhappy and unjust ending, the showman appeases them by reminding everyone that the show only concerns puppets, after all. But finally, after the crowd has dispersed, the showman is haunted by the pathetic and almost comically tragic vision of Petroughka's ghost.

The opening music has a very expectant character. Single melodies are treated with varied rhythm, and the entire atmosphere of festivity and excitement is presented. A Russian dance that is an exact reproduction of Rimsky-Korsakoff's "Kitej" is introduced in the course of the music, and throughout excellent counterpoint is displayed, especially in the combined dances of the final tableau of the carnival. In this number we find the music and story of equal importance, both beautiful illustrations of the modern era and machine age.

In the ballet "Oiseau de Feu" ("The Firebird") the story is more important than the music. Here we have a splendid legend that deals with fairies and ogres----nothing of the bitter realism of the twentieth century. It is a good example of Stravinsky's musical flexibility. And it indirectly represents the modern era in story, in that we are quite aware of our modernism and enjoy the contrast of fantasy and imagination. In music, of course, it is modern also, but not the most modern of what the composer has written.

Its charm can be best captured by relating a summary of the story. Ivan Tsarevich (the hero), wandering alone at night, sees the Firebird trying to pick golden fruit from a silver tree. He follows and then chases her. When he has finally captured her he plucks out one of her feathers and then releases her, only to discover that he is lost on the grounds of a large castle. At dawn thirteen maidens come out to dance, and when

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Ivan reveals his identity he receives a golden apple from the tree. As soon as the maidens leave Ivan recognises the castle as that belonging to Kashchei, a fearful ogre who imprisons travelers. Ivan boldly enters the castle, is met by the ogre and his monsters, but remains protected because of the feather of the Firebird. While they try to fascinate him the Firebird appears, and breaks the spell of the ogre and the monsters by forcing them to break into a wild dance. When they are thus preoccupied, she shows Ivan where the basket containing the ogre's "death" is hidden. Ivan takes the egg out of the basket and, breaking it, sends the "death" to its owner. The ogre expires, his monsters vanish, and, having freed the travelers, Ivan weds the most beautiful of the dancing maidens.

The music is weird and fantastic, and serves to prepare the audience for what the eye is about to visualize. In parts it is colorfully melodic, and in general the ballet continues along lines set out by Glinka, in that it introduces folk-lore into music.

The most advanced of Stravinsky's ballets is "Sacre de Printemps" ("Rites of Spring"), which is, oddly enough, the most barbaric of all. When heard at the same time as the ballet is seen, every motion of the music, every clashing tonality and weird modulation makes sense. The music is perfectly fitted to the physical rituals. Listening to it without the benefit of color and motion before the eyes is a bit more difficult, but can be enjoyed after about two hearings. It is a work of ~~fine~~ value, typically Russian, impressionistic, and of great beauty.

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Here finally we reach the point where the music assumes far more importance than the story.

Stravinsky's wit is delightful; it appears throughout his music and prevents its massive cubism and boldness from becoming too overwhelming. By using it he inaugurates himself as perhaps the first composer to immortalise popular music. Sabaneyeff calls him "The supreme leader in the field of musical creative art." He also describes him as a "contemporary phenomenon" and a "successor to the throne of Debussy and Strauss".. It is interesting to compare Stravinsky to his teacher Rimsky-Korsakoff. The latter is more naive and mystical than his pupil. Sabaneyeff says, "Stravinsky can compose a mystery 'Sacre de Printemps', but he has just as little faith in his 'ancestors' and the rites of 'kissing the earth' which appear there, as the skeptical and wise old man Rimski-Korsakoff had in his musical fairy-tales." He continues, "Stravinsky, on the other hand, does not believe in anything at all, he only pretends he believes."

He has immeasurably increased the importance of the ballet, as well as helped to nationalize Russian music. He represents the Slavonic Russian despite the fact that he so often leans towards the Oriental. As Montague-Nathan says, "He appears to cherish a profound belief in the possibility of composing music that is significant both as music and as an expression of race."

Sabaneyeff says of him, "He does not, like Beethoven, listen to the 'voice of the soul whispering melodies.' He does not burn up in the intense fire of his musical visions, like Wagner. He is not tortured,

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like Chopin, with an insane thirst to seize and grasp the flitting fragments of inspirations as though heard in other worlds. He firmly knows that one must be an innovator, or one would not make one's way, or one would miss the precipitous train of modernism, would not attain the reward which one's gifts promise." To put it simply, "Stravinsky is immeasurably more a genius of musical business rather than purely of music."*

Merle Armitage says of him, "He is a man of the present. Not knowing the music of tomorrow he knows and holds to the truth of today."

And as a final tribute let us quote the words of Komroff, which include the essential characteristics of this composer whose music calls to mind machinery; "In Stravinsky you find no alien sun. His figures are warmed by an ancient and natural heat. They sing, they love, they dance and they die with passionate fervour, without foreign aid and without instruction. They move in their own shadows and they are so much part of the shadows they cast before them that it is impossible to separate the figure from the reflected image.

"The colors, too, have a magical way of changing and at moments one would almost believe that the shadow was actually the figure and the figure no part of reality. It is in this transposition that real greatness lies. And the color, too, even that of the shadow, takes to itself a hue from the ground. And the figure, the shadow, and the ground, all three are bound together by a passionate religious zeal that is the essence of Stravinsky himself.

"He writes of the land and of the people of the land. He writes of

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their joys and of their sorrows. He writes of clouds and of the blazing sun, of forests deep and dark and of long rolling fields. Somewhere there is a peasant's hut and his little row of beans and somewhere also he has recorded the great forces of nature and you feel how they unfold before you and raise man to such heights that he sees a new horizon, and what he sees he understands. No silly birds chirp in this land and no cock crows in the peasant's yard. Nature is never copied except by the clowns of art. Stavinsky's world is crowded with the vital forces of nature that are born with struggle and live and die with passionate earnestness."

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The Revolution of 1917 was the event that once and for all lifted the ban of oppression and slavery from the Russian people. Whatever faults the government it established may have cannot obliterate or even detract from the good of this one accomplishment. For now the peasants are beginning to sing, no longer so much to ease their souls from suffering as to hear the sound of their voices, newly freed. There is fresh joy in their songs, unusual beauty in the qualities of harmony and inspiration unknown before. And moreover, the individually talented musicians and composers among them form a generation as promising in the field of music, if not more so, than any Russia has ever known before.

There are various trends and styles of new Soviet music, but generally it may be said to be becoming more profound and poetic. Technically, musical forms are being better mastered by the composers today; we find less faults in basic structure and elementary points.

Reinhold Gliere was strongly influenced by Tschaicowsky, yet in sympathy with French ideals. Through his methods he may be considered one of the founders of the most modern Russian school. He strives after the nationalistic manner without ruggedness, using much folk-lore in his music. Some musicians believe, however, that he is too spell-bound by the glamor of musical writing, being influenced by Armensky. In other words, they feel he would be much greater under different training. He is weakest in his solo

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instrumental compositions, but his symphonic work is on a high plane and his orchestration is masterfully written. He is regarded as a very high figure in present-day Russian music, and his symphonic suite based on the legend of "Ilia Mourometz" is often performed in Kieff. In it he emulates Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakoff, but it is nevertheless a very popular number in Russian concert-halls.

His music is very rich and colorful, and he is an industrious song-writer. "The Sailor's Dance" from the ballet "The Red Poppy" is a most beloved work internationally, the main melody being the following one:

"The Sirens" is another composition of Gliere's, notable for its French coloring. Also to his credit are a suite for women's voices based on the four seasons of the year, and the first symphony opus number eight in E flat.

During the second World War he has written several military songs for his nation's armies, among which is a marching song called "Hitler's End Will Come". Of this tendency (which practically all modern Russian composers are exhibiting), namely, that of composing army music, Gliere says, "When we write these songs we feel we are forging weapons for the front, weapons making it easier for the Red Army men to fight and win."*

*Part of a cablegram sent to United States on July 6, 1941.

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Another part of his message reads as follows: "We Soviet intellectuals work calmly, fruitfully, conscious that the Red Army, defender of the culture of the entire world, will emerge victorious from battles against barbarism, and the forces of darkness. Until now we have been helping the Red Army with our art, But at the call of our Government we are ready at any moment to take rifle in hand and fight along side the Red Army."

Before leaving Gliere, it is interesting to mention that he dedicated a composition of his entitled "Fete Fergainiase" to the Chicago Symphony Orchestra on its fiftieth anniversary, January, 1941. The number was enthusiastically received and performed by Dr. Frederick Stock, who is noted for his conducting of the concerts without the musical scores before him.

Our next outstanding Soviet musician is Nikolai Myaskovsky*, who reached his sixtieth birthday in April, 1941. Shaverdyan sums up his outstanding characteristics by saying, "His path has been one of tireless quest for realism, for a style that is replete with ideas, clear as to structure and organically linked with the traditions of national Russian art."

His twenty-first symphony seems to have reached the goal of his searchings and expectations. It is extremely lyrical, fine, philosophical, and completed mature. Also it is full of warmth and power.

*Not to be confused with the ^{Soviet} poet Mayakovsky.

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Myaskovsky was a student of Rimsky-Korsakoff and Liadoff, for orchestration and composition respectively. Today he is considered the greatest symphonic composer of the Soviet Union. He is now (1941) working on a symphony with a choir, which he intends to dedicate to the twenty-fifth anniversary of the October Revolution of 1917, which falls in 1942.

His first significant works were a symphonic poem (after Edgar Allen Poe), and another symphonic poem called "Alaster" (after Shelley). During the 1905 revolution his works were permeated with gloom and pessimism. Among these are his first three symphonies (all very promising compositions), vocal lyrics entitled "Meditations" (opus 1), and seven romances set to the sorrowful songs of a nineteenth century poet by the name of Baratynsky.

Myaskovsky was profoundly interested in the symphonies of Beethoven and Tschaiowsky. The works of these masters, opposite from each other in character and style, gave Myaskovsky a broader outlook on symphonic composition. Traces of their influence may even be found in his latest works.

It was in his fourth symphony that Myaskovsky shows ^{first} evidence of overcoming the depressing moods of the past. In his fifth or "pastoral" symphony are the first tendencies of incorporating folk-music in his own symphonic composition. The scherzo (third movement) of this symphony is built on Glaician folk-songs that the composer himself recorded when he was at the front during the first World War.

The sixth symphony was written from 1922 to 1923, and represents the composer's impressions of the Revolution of 1917. It is considered

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to be one of the most forceful works of the first quarter of the twentieth century.

After this Myaskovsky's style changed considerably. He now concentrated more on thematic material, his twelfth symphony being the first important one of his works on a collective-farm theme. The rest of his symphonies reflect the development of this new style. Also outstanding are his fifth quartet and his "Congradulatory Overture", the latter composition being presented to Joseph Stalin on his sixtieth birthday.

Myaskovsky is an extremely liberal person, as is evidenced by his endless work on self-improvement in music, and his lack of complete satisfaction with what he has so far achieved. He takes great interest in music of younger composers, and claims that he himself plans and conceives new phases and structures of music which he intends to explore.

Yuri Shaporin is what is known as a "traditionalist"----the opposite of an innovator. Like Tschaicowsky, he is one of those composers who develops unexplored fields of music faintly touched upon by discoverers, who are always hurrying on to something new, and rarely find time to develop their own findings.

Gayamov says of him, "The Russian people's heroic history is his beloved theme, and his music is a picture of the past through the prism of the present."

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In private life he is a lover of antiques, and this tendency, this love of the archaic, reflects in his music. He is a follower of Glinka and Borodin, and his music sings the essence of classical art---freshness, charm, and truth. He is excellent in the field of creating heroic or historical music.

Before beginning a single note of a planned composition, he steepens himself in his subject (like Hugo Wolf), but his method of profound research into historical events for his composition resembles that of Borodin when planning "Prince Igor". His first outstanding work was a monumental symphony with choral parts (developing an idea touched upon by Beethoven), and was written in 1926. About the same time he began a historical opera called "Decembrists" and a symphony-cantata for solo voice, chorus-parts, and orchestra which was entitled "On Kulikovo Field". He writes slowly, with much interruption, and the result is that the opera is now under rehearsal for its first performance, and the symphony-cantata was first performed not long ago. In America and England his clever suite "The Flea" * is frequently enjoyed.

The data he collects for his compositions is fascinating, but we have neither the space nor the time to examine it thoroughly here. When he wrote music for a film entitled "Minin and Pozharsky" he studied intensively these two Russian leaders of the early seventeenth century who led the troops against Polish interventionists.

His music is very emotional, but in a simple way. It is full of images and enthusiasm, and its ideas are of universal interest.

*Not to be confused with Moussorgsky's charming "Song of the Flea".

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Sergie Prokofieff is a name more familiar to American audiences than those of the modern*Russians so far discussed. His outstanding contributions to modern music are an opera called "The Love for Three Oranges" and a composition (excellent for ballet interpretation) entitled "Peter and the Wolf". The beautiful melodies of his works are enhanced by rich new harmonies, and he seems to be attracted by legendary and fairy-tale subjects.

"The Love for Three Oranges" is delightfully nonsensical, and, as Hansl and Kaufmann say, "brought grand opera down to earth with a stimulating shock."

There is a power, boldness, humor, and rough contempt in his music that enchants all types of audiences with its freshness and originality. He seems to have retained a certain mischievous and wit, together with an "inability for growing up", from his youth.

The ballet "The Prodigal Son" marks a turning point in his career, for from then on he concentrated more on design rather than color, striving for simplicity, sharp rhythm, and concise melodic pattern. He lost none of his humor, but it became more subtle and subdued. His music grew less emotional, and much simpler. In general, there was a tendency to portray the industrial development----the rise of steel frameworks and factories and strong machinery.

Of him Hansl and Kaufmann said, "This Revolutionary, who looks like a clear-eyed boy has done his best to mask with humor the curiously tender spirit which peeps through his grinning mask despite his shamefaced attempts to hide it. In expressing his musical ideas, he has

*We mean by modern, in this case, only post-revolutionary.

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been wholly fearless, wholly himself, wholly modern, and so has earned the title of founder of a new Russian school, the first of a new musical era."

At present he is at work on a ballet called "Cinderella", based upon Anderson's fairy-tale of the same name, as well as on music to a film dealing with the subject of "Ivan, the Terrible".

Now we come to perhaps the best-known moderner of Soviet Russia ----Dmitri Shostakovich. This young writer of symphonies also excels in mathematics and literature, and as a child showed absolutely no remarkable inclination for music. He even says of himself, "I became a musician by pure accident. If it had not been for my mother, I would probably never have become one. I had no particular inclination for music. I cannot recall a single instance when I evinced any interest in or listened to music when someone was playing it at home. My mother was quite anxious, however, that all her children be, even in a small way, musicians; each of us, upon reaching the age of nine, took his place at the piano. This is what was done in the case of my older sister, with me, and with my younger sister."

He displayed an unusual talent, however, in his very first lessons, and throughout his schooling he attracted the attention of musical authorities. It was Glazounov who first recommended that he study composition in addition to piano.

He was always a great admirer of Chaliapin and Yershov, and later studied Wagner completely. He spent one complete period of his student years studying only Tschaicowsky. When he returned from concerts

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he would always analyse the music he had just heard.

The beginning of his career saw him influenced by Western urbanistic modes, but in 1928 and 1929 we find him trying to break away from this tendency more and more. He has so far written two operas, one of which is the much talked-about "Lady Macbeth of Mzensk". Also to his credit are six excellent symphonies (through which his development and splendid progress may be followed), a quartette, three ballets, several piano pieces, and a quintette that won the 1940 Stalin Prize. This composition and Myaskovsky's twenty-first symphony were judged as the best Russian musical works of the year. His latest work, a quartette, has already won popularity and recognition among Russian audiences.

It seems that the public of the Soviet Union is always led to expect some new solution to a creative problem in his works. He always strives towards a philosophical conception of life, towards a concentration of thought, and at the same time maximum simplicity and "classic lucidity of expression".* The fugue of his piano quintette shows marks of unusual genius. While it sounds typically Russian, it nevertheless is an organic product of German culture. "In listening to it, images of the Russian autumn landscape ever arise in the mind's eye; broad, boundless vistas, and looming grey skies covered with overhanging clouds."* The intermezzo is notable for the penetration and depth it achieves**, while the fourth part (Scherzo) contrasts with the quiet preceding fugue and even with

*Press Dept. of Russian Embassy, V O K S.

**The intermezzo is the slow second part.

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the intermezzo because of its noisy, tacotta-like motions. It bursts out from the sensitive alertness of the fugue like a joyous expression of the vitality of life. The finale is replete in color and picturesque movements----it is marked by a more chromatically developed treatment of the piano part.

In the more nationalistic works of Shostakovich there is a profound unity of idea and harmony of conception. In his latest works he attains a high level of free, natural expression and complete technical mastery. He is now working on a composition concerning Vladimir Lenin, despite the fact that in the summer of 1941 he volunteered to go to the front to help fight the German invasion of Russia, and was accepted.

A few years ago there was a rumor of an argument between Shostakovich and Joseph Stalin. The latter claimed that the young musician was not composing music that was sufficiently militaristic, national, and constantly in praise of the new type of government. It is known that after a time Shostakovich changed his type (and slightly his style) of composition, probably to suit the demands of the Russian leader. Now this is a rather indirect indication that young musicians of Russia are not altogether free to compose as they desire, or, to put it differently----that they may not express everything that they wish to. There is no definite proof of this, however----as I said before, this was a rumor and not evidence. But it must be acknowledged that even if this were the case, Russian music is very promising in this generation and has made great headway after the 1917 Revolution.

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Marian Koval comes from Northern Russia. He is only thirty-three years of age (1941), but has already produced some unusual compositions. He was under the impression for some time that the field of orchestral writing was too vast for him, and so he wrote mainly for the voice---beautiful but small songs for solo voices or choruses. However, in 1939 he finished an oratorio, and it was indeed this first venture away from vocal forms that brought him recognition.

The work was dedicated to the memory of Pugachev, leader of the peasant revolt against the autocracy in 1773, and is called "Yemelyan Pugachev" Oratorio. The music is very colorful---there are a series of vivid, expressive episodes and dynamic, powerful mass-scenes. The oratorio depicts the people's wrath and rebellion. Their leader is described musically (as well as in a poem by Vasili Kamensky) as a warm-natured, passionate, yet iron-willed man whose devotion to his people and the woman he loves are supreme.

Koval's music is fresh, but emotional, and he displays a great flair for dramatic situations and their handling. His character portrayal is splendid, his tonalities and harmonies distinctive.

Schneerson says, "Koval's songs are altogether devoid of any false emotionalism or sentimentality. There is at once a severity and warmth about them that seems to be inspired by the north Russian landscape."

The composer claims that his greatest ambition is to write an oratorio about the October Revolution of 1917. (He witnessed both

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that one and the February Revolution of the same year at the age of ten in Petrograd.)

When his musical career began, Leningrad composers were Stravinsky-mad, in contrast to those of Moscow, who had suddenly discovered the value of Scriabine's music and were worshipping at his "shrine". Thus Koval started with distinct modernistic imprints upon his music, but later he broke away from this and turned to Moussorgsky as his idol of truthful interpretation. His main quest is ^{for} the proper medium of expressing revolutionary music.

His songs about Lenin and Stalin are considered the best vocal music of the present-day Soviet output. As he writes poetry, short stories, and dramas himself, he finds it easy to catch the mood of a verse and set it to music. He is now putting the finishing touches on an opera bearing the same name as his outstanding oratorio.

These are the main outstanding composers of present-day Russia. But there are countless others, promising, important, too numerous to discuss in detail here. They come from all parts of the vast Soviet Union, and each has something new and worth-while to offer to the art of music. I shall merely mention their latest activities to give the reader an impression of latest musical events in Russian composition.*

*I do not expect the reader to attempt to remember all these names. They are merely listed to give an idea of the profuse flourishing of musical composition in the Soviet Union.

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Perhaps most notable of the composers I am about to mention is Aram Khachaturyan, whose violin concerto, a dazzling, passionate, Southern composition, well represents the Armenian composer's temperament. It was performed at one of the recent annual Soviet Music festivals. These are held in more than one hundred cities, and give the public an idea of the accomplishments of that year. The concerto is filled with scintillating melody, and fine Armenian rhythms and spirit. There are dizzy feats of technique for an ambitious violinist in the finale, which represents a national holiday. The composer is now planning a symphony called "Lenin" and a ballet by the name of "Spartacus".

Leonid Polovinkin is composing music for a ballet entitled "Ivan Belotnikov" (also a popular Russian hero.)

Vladimir Yurovsky is working on "Crimson Sails", another ballet. It is based on a novel by a Soviet author, Alexander Green.

Gregory Egiazarov is another Armenian busy with a new ballet. His is called "To the Mountain Peaks".

Many composers are writing pianoforte concertos. Among them are Kabalevsky and Levin, while Biryukov is composing one for two pianos.

Nina Makarova, an outstanding woman composer, is working on an opera "Courage". It deals with the training of young people who built a city in the taiga.

Verikovskiy, a Ukrainian, recently completed an opera which was

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broadcasted over the radio for the benefit of the opera theaters of the republic. It is entitled "Naimichka".

Revutsky, winner of the Stalin annual prize, is now working on a symphonic poem based on a theme of the Classic Ukrainian poet Ivan Franko.

Composers of Kharkov have recently written several splendid works. Borisov composed a "Heroic-Funeral Poem" dedicated to the Soviet flier, Chkalov. Meitus wrote a suite on a western Ukrainian theme, and Klebanov has just finished a concerto for violin and orchestra. Tiz has a chamber music trilogy for violin, violincello, and piano. Rybalchenko has some fine songs to words of the poet Mayakovsky.

Kiev held a festival of operatic and ballet art, where outstanding works of these two fields were presented. Among these were the operas "Perekop" by the Ukrainian composers Meitus, Rybalchenko, and Tiz, and the ballet "Lilea", also by a Ukrainian, Dankevich. (Based on verses by Shevchenko). Classical operas, such as "Ivan Susanin" ("same as "A Life for the Czar") by Glinka, and several by Tschaikowsky were also presented. There was another interesting Ukrainian opera called "Zaporozhietz Beyond The Danube" also given.

Georgian composers have also been busy lately. They wrote many compositions to celebrate the twentieth anniversary of the establishment of Soviet rule in Georgia. Arakishvili, who is the oldest contemporary, wrote a cantata; Kiladze, winner of the Stalin prize, composed a poem for solo ^{or choir} ~~eloquentist~~ and a symphony orchestra,

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Mshvelidze has a work called "Vow" for a solo elocutionist and orchestra. Gudiashvili wrote a new pianoforte concerto, and Shaverzashvili has a new poem for the piano. Avetisov composed a violin concerto, Megvinet-Ukhutsessi a symphonic poem, and Gabichvadze several symphonic etudes.

There seems to be no end to the new compositions now under way. But the tendency is encouraging, and it might be wise for all countries to designate special occasions for cultural celebrations in order to advance their art.

Russian music is very promising as it looks today. There is a recent tendency towards numerous new modes----some classical, some ultra-modern, some individualistic, all very encouraging, as they show an interest and dependence upon music for a certain expression on the part of a nation who once was a "silent giant", waiting to be aroused from his slumber.

Whether this music will continue along typically national lines, or whether it will evolve slowly, along with music of other countries, into a universal flow of song is something that the future alone can decide. But one thing is certain----the Russian music has scarcely begun the development that awaits it....it has far to go into the forms of symphony, sonata, opera, song and ballet....and perhaps even into the unexplored realms of color-music that so fascinated Scriabine. The music of Russia has just begun to speak----after keeping silent for so many centuries before Glinka set it free, it passed through periods of trial and conflict, of argument and experimentation, and now it has so much to reveal of its dreams before its awakening and its ideals for coming years that we may be certain it is awaited by a great and promising future.

CONCLUSIONS

In the preceding pages we have covered a period of several hundred years in a phases of Russian and German culture. It could be noticed that as the spiritual strength of the people in each country increased, their music developed from simple, disconnected snatches of folk-melody to the beautiful symphonies, operas, and ballets we know today.

We find the Russian composed music remarkable for brevity when compared to the prolix character of much of the German. We find it forceful through simplicity, yet strangely impartial and objective. German composers, generally speaking, project their entire souls into their compositions----we know of the intellectual superiority of Beethoven, the patriotism of Wagner, the humorous warmth of Haydn, the child-like simplicity and sincerity of Mozart, the mathematical precision of Bach, the religious serenity of Handel, the bold modernism of Strauss----but what do we know of the Russian composers aside from biographical sources? With the exception of Tschaicowsky*, who paid for this distinction by being dubbed an "internationalist", we must admit that we have found out little about the personalities of the Russians directly. But instead we have learned much about the land and the general character of the typical Russian. We have discovered him through an objective study in which he tried to hide himself behind bright, colorful tonalities and pictures of his country!

*As well as Scriabine, to a certain extent.

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He is excellent in self-analysis, although he rarely admits it is himself he is analysing.* He often curtly restrains his emotions, this occurring usually in individually composed music. In his folk-songs he gives himself more freedom, but even here a single mood seldom prevails. His lengthy experience as a peasant-slave has developed in him a sense of justice and a deep pain, yet a certain indolent inconsistency prevents him from directly revolting to overcome his obstacles. Thus his emotion is rather hysterical, and when it is too much for him to control it rises in sudden outbursts of laughter, melancholy, or loquaciousness. Otherwise we find him a quiet, placidly patient individual---- kindly, sincere, and good-hearted.

The German people, who did not suffer so much as the Russians, are of a serene, consistent, meticulous nature, as reflected in their music. Their folk-songs reveal them as quite a joyous people ----contented, less sentimental than the Russians, calm, and orderly. ----Perfect training seems to characterize them; it is outstanding not only in their militant music, but in the smooth, even phrasing of their folk-songs as well.

The German folk-tunes, like the Russian, are direct in expression, but there the resemblance ends. They exhibit a good-natured fellowship instead of the Russian comradeship that ^{more} resembles brotherly-love. There is a dignity in the songs polished to absolute perfection through the centuries----a certain self-

*In literature we have the examples of Tolstoi and Dostoevsky.

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restraint that lends itself perfectly to the mood of church-music in which it was later used. While Russian church-music does use folk-tunes to some extent, the proportion is very small in comparison to the German.

The structure of the German folk-song is exactly opposite from what we find in the Russian melodies. In the former is a predominance of one tempo, and a simple one, at that (either 2/4 or 4/4, as triple time is a dance rhythm), while Russian songs are notable for their complexity and constant changing of odd rhythms (5/4 to 3/4 to 7/4, etc.) The German folk-song achieves simplicity by using diatonic intervals and a lack of harsh dissonances and distant modulations. The Russian does just the opposite, yet somehow never becomes really complicated. While the German folk-song usually consists of two phrases of even length, with the first one ending on dominant and the second on tonic, the Russian tune is inconsistent in the number of its phrases, the length of each, and usually makes its business to end on notes other than tonic. In the German folk-melody the compass of notes used is small, and there is steady adherence to the original key. The Russian folk-song knows no restrictions---its compass extends over a wide range of notes, and chromatic tones are frequently to be found. It switches not only from major to relative minor key, but from seemingly disconnected and unrelated scales to others. The German folk-tune is full of the joy of living and a sound heartiness, but in the Russian one senses a weariness from

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toil, a "sickness" of soul, and a longing for the sleep of death as peace.

There is humor, as illustrated in the music, in both the German and Russian melodic expression. In the former it is outstanding in "Rondo A Capriccio" by Beethoven, "Surprise Symphony" by Haydn, and "Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks" by Strauss, while Russian wit is evident in Moussorgsky's "Pictures in an Exhibition" and also Stravinsky's "Petroushka" is comical, but in a pathetic way. But we find throughout Russian music tiny sprinklings of humor that lead us to believe that the musicians of that country are not the completely gloomy individuals they are usually represented to be. Russian humor is either wild hilarity or a sly chuckle, while German humor is quiet, rather cheerful merriment.

The church music of Germany was created in the beginning with the intention of developing German melody, as well as general culture. In Russia the church proved to be an institution of restriction, and music grew out of it in the hard way, because the church considered song as something unholy leading to sin. A comparison of the broad full tones of A Capella songs with the cheerful simplicity of Lutheran hymns again illustrates the difference of Russian music (appearing complicated when compared to German) and the German structures.

Minnesingers and Meistersingers of Germany helped plant the seeds of individual musical thought in the German people, and this thought was directed towards the creation of a German style of music. The

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only persons in Russia who can be said to correspond to these wandering "minstrels" of Germany were Italian (and later, German) music teachers who resided in large cities and impressed upon all their young Russian pupils the styles of the former's native songs. Again this proved a handicap to Russian music, as it delayed it from starting by making it so much harder for the Russians to discover their own style and mood of national expression.

Glinka set the Russian music free and gave it a fresh start. He was to the Russians what what Bach was to the Germans, a leader and the originator of music as they know it today. Glinka's ideas were later developed by the Five, but Rubinstein, who followed him before, (chronologically speaking) this group profited only by the fact that there now existed such a thing as real Russian music, and did not develop it along nationalistic lines. He compares well with the German Mendelssohn because, since both men were of Jewish blood they seemed to have imparted to their music a quality of mysticism and Hebrew coloring. (This is only slight, however, and should not be taken too seriously.) It is nevertheless easy to fuse the music of Rubinstein with that of Mendelssohn, for both wrote (to again quote that excellent expression of Romain Rolland's) "sweet emptiness".

Tschaicowsky and Beethoven, although their moods and what they stand for differ profoundly, can nevertheless be compared as outstanding pinnacles of musical mastery. After each of them came something new in music: after Beethoven the German Romantic period,

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after Tschaicowsky the Nationalists. Beethoven was more the soul of intellect and philosophical conceptions; Tschaicowsky was the heart of Romantic sentimentality.

The aim of the Russian nationalists was to establish once and for all a Russian style of music.* Thanks to the efforts of one of their members (Cesar Cui) they loudly rebuked Wagner and idolized Glinka. This attitude seems excusable only when one considers the difficulty the Russians had in attaining their own type of music. Two of the members of the group (Cui and Balakirew) depended on folk-music too much for their own good, for they neglected the possibilities of their own talents. Moussorgsky represents the primitive Russian, while Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakoff glorified the Oriental strains in the Russian nature.

The aim of the German Romanticists was to get away from Classicalism into the realm of freer expression. Their music developed out of Beethoven's ideas. Schubert was not only the first of the real Romanticists but he turned out to be one of the greatest song-writers the world has ever known. Schumann and Brahms developed Romanticism to its limits.

Wagner cannot be compared with any Russian simply because no musician of any country can compare with ^{him} Wagner. Whether he or Beethoven ranks as greatest is a matter only of opinion. **

*They were extremely opposed to Tschaicowsky's ideas. Incidentally, Tschaicowsky should be mentioned as the greatest of Russian song-writers.

**The fact that I compared Beethoven with Tschaicowsky does not lower the greatness of either. In my arrangement of this study, I found this comparison obvious.

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The Russian ultra-moderners belong to the same period as Hugo Wolf and Richard Strauss. All are noted for their explorations into the new. Scriabine investigated color-music, Rachmaninoff found new expression for the piano, and Stravinsky is an innovator in orchestral coloring. Hugo Wolf wrote songs that were among the most natural and perfect of compositions the world has ever known, and Richard Strauss introduced strange new harmonies and dischords into music that is still considered great.

Schoenberg is the latest of the Germans, and some consider his music so weird that they denounce him and claim he will never rank with the other masters included in this paper. Again I can only mention that this is a matter only of opinion.

The modern Russian composers are paving the way for a new era in the development of their country's music. They are attempting to express the confined spirit of the Russian that knew little utterance before. A list of new names----to long to begin to enumerate----embodies great promise of future music in this nation.

In both countries there are tendencies to revert to the Classical modes of the forerunners of Beethoven. And may I here mention that lack of space, and time prevented me from mentioning Gluck as a Classical composer whose contributions to opera are significant to its later development.

A few more differences between German and Russian music: The Russian composer (generally speaking) provides his love-interest in

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a mechanical way. Examples of this are in the opera "Prince Igor", in the ballet "Petroushka", and in "The Golden Cockerel".* Also "A Life For The Czar", "Khovanshchina", and "Boris Godinof" illustrate this point. This seldom occurs in German opera.

Russian music, as is seldom the case with German, frequently deals with and delights in grotesque ideas. Excitement in Russian music is usually physical; in German it is spiritual. It is a quality in the music of both.

German composer§ begin a work with the plan of the whole in mind; Russian concern themselves with the present moment in sound and devote little attention to their climaxes. "The Firebird" by Stravinsky is an example. (A Russian composer develops his music often by the insertion of arpeggios which later broaden into the next idea.)

Another Russian trick is to remain pivoting on one or two notes not in order to modulate. Abraham calls it a "right-angled turn of thought".

Russian music got a later start than that of Germany, but by today it seems to have almost completely caught up. After the present conflict in Europe has ceased each will undoubtedly continue to develop its music. Whether this will still further encourage nationalistic tendencies, or whether the two will some day merge in a great international music is still only a matter of contemplation. But one thing is certain----there await the people not only of Germany and Russia, but of the entire world as an interested spectator, new hopes and joys and understandings in the songs of ^{their} ~~its~~ peoples.

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