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By the close of the Second World War in 1945, the Soviet Union had begun its reconstruction effort, focusing on rebuilding internal infrastructure, implementing massive agricultural reform, encouraging rapid industrialization, and initiating socio-political reformation campaigns. This latter included the cultural censorship of Soviet composers, prompting many musicians and music organizations to reform their practices to reflect Party-endorsed ideology. The Soviet government ensured that music compositions and scholarship articulated a specific Soviet “identity;” thus, composers and scholars were forced to alter their artistic methods and the bureaucracy of their establishments. Through an examination of Soviet cultural policies, in particular the use of terms like Socialist realism, formalism, and cosmopolitanism, I evaluate the effects of Party-sanctioned dogma on composers and scholars throughout the late 1940s and 50s in the Soviet Union.

In spite of the Allied victory at the end of the war, Soviet Russia suffered extensive losses and experienced morale and financial damage. The number of Soviet casualties is estimated at a staggering twenty million, a number significantly higher than

both France's one million and Germany's two million losses.¹ To rebuild its weakened economy and strengthen its devastated social infrastructure, the Soviet Union quickly sought a political and economic reorganization plan enforced through ideological reform. Due partly to the proliferation of under-qualified Party members, Soviet policy was often defined ambiguously and enforced irregularly. Kiril Tomoff notes in *Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939-1953* that "during the war, new recruits had joined the party in droves. Since party membership was often seen as an emblem of patriotism, new applications were frequently accepted despite their lack of even rudimentary ideological education."² A movement to tighten relaxed standards was executed by the stringent Central Committee chaired by Andrei Zhdanov.³ Werner G. Hahn describes Zhdanov's influence as one of Stalin's closest advisors:

Zhdanov triumphed by pointing out to Stalin the ideological and administrative laxity that had developed in the party apparatus, and by launching campaigns to restore the priority of ideology and rectify abuses in party administration, agriculture, and finally, literature and culture.⁴

Zhdanov's campaigns to restore nationalism and encourage hostility toward the Western capitalist economic model represented the beginning of a widespread anti-Western

¹ Bella Bychkova Jordan, Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov, and Alexander B. Murphy, *The European Culture Area: A Systematic Geography* (London: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2009), 82.

² Kiril Tomoff, *Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939-1953* (Ithaca: Cornell University, 2006), 97.

³ Werner G. Hahn, *Postwar Soviet Politics: The Fall of Zhdanov and the Defeat of Moderation, 1946-53* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982), 19.

⁴ *Ibid.*

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movement, one that included a series of “cultural purges” in the three years following the end of the war.⁵ Beginning in 1946, the Central Committee issued a series of resolutions covering a wide range of genres (including film, theatre, literature and music) in order to circumscribe liberalism in the arts and scholarship.⁶

The principles and characteristics of this new Soviet music were only nebulously identified, yet certain attempts to define a Soviet musical aesthetic had been championed by the Stalin government prior to the Second World War. The very public genre of opera met with criticism in the 1930s when Dmitri Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth* was publicly denounced by the press in an article that may have been written by Stalin himself.⁷ Two days after the performance, an editorial appeared in the government paper, *Pravda*, criticizing Shostakovich’s work as a “social satire” and a “rejection of the principles of classical opera” through its “petty-bourgeois” themes and “leftist distortions.”⁸ The editorial, entitled “Muddle Instead of Music,” proposed strict guidelines for the “ideal Soviet opera,” which should be “positive in outlook, socialist in content, and nationalistic in musical idiom.”⁹ Although Shostakovich admitted that his protagonist, Katerina, “[commits] a number of crimes

⁵ Boris Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia: Enlarged Edition, 1917-1981* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1983), 205.

⁶ Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 98.

⁷ The opera was performed at Moscow’s Bolshoi Theater in January 1936 with Stalin in attendance. “Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District, The.” In *The Oxford Dictionary of Music*, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca:2048/subscriber/article/opr/t237/e5846> (accessed November 16, 2008).

⁸ Laurel Fay, “Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online*, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://0www.oxfordmusiconline.com.catalog.libcmich.edu:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/O002507> (accessed November 16, 2008).

⁹ Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 141.

against accepted moral or ethical law,”¹⁰ the Party’s claims that the opera did not exemplify Soviet ideals (known as “Socialist realism”) remain unsupported.

Although Socialist realism tends to evade precise definition, today we associate it with artworks exhibiting an “intense enthusiasm for national culture” in line with Soviet party dogma.¹¹ Rebecca Schwartz-Bishir proposes a definition of Socialist realism:

There were three requirements that all artists’ work had to meet. First, the topics of Socialist realist art had to educate, instill loyalty in, and provide an attractive vision of the future Soviet Union for the citizens of the country. Second, all works had to be easy to comprehend in order for citizens to understand what to think and feel. Third, Socialist Realist creations were to perpetuate the idea that the party’s perspective was the only way to see the world...In the eyes of the party, art was inseparable from politics.¹²

However, even Schwartz-Bishir’s tripartite description leaves the specific musical manifestations of Socialist realism undefined.

In April 1932, an official Party resolution described the need to reconstruct and control artistic organizations and their output in order to promote Socialist realist principles and

¹⁰ Dmitri Shostakovich, “My Opera, Lady Macbeth of Mtzensk,” trans. unknown, *Modern Music* 12, no.1 (November-December 1934): 23-28. Cited in Piero Weiss, ed., *Opera: A History in Documents* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 298.

¹¹ Michael Rouland, “A Nation on Stage: Music and the 1936 Festival of Kazak Arts,” in *Soviet Music and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: The Baton and Sickle*, 181-208, ed. Neil Edmunds (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 188.

¹² Rebecca Schwartz-Bishir, “Aleksandr Nevskiy: Prokofiev’s Successful Compromise with Socialist Realism,” in *Composing for the Screen in Germany and the USSR: Cultural Politics and Propaganda*, 148-160, ed. Robynn J. Stilwell and Phil Powrie (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 149.

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denounce the “rebellious proletariat.”¹³ The Composers’ Union responded to the Resolution with a statement that “attention...must be directed towards the victorious progressive principles of reality, towards all that is heroic, bright and beautiful.”¹⁴ The Union demanded that artists focus on models of the past and adhere to typical nineteenth century tropes, such as the incorporation of folk song and overtly programmatic works. In contrast, the Union branded works rejecting this historical style in favour of “new-age” cultural diversity and anti-Socialist sentiment as “formalist.”¹⁵ “Formalism” in Party rhetoric became synonymous with “bourgeois decadence,” and works espousing (or seen to espouse) liberal ideology were rejected by the Soviet Nationalists.¹⁶ Schwarz explains that “as a result, advanced composers turned conventional, and conventional composers became commonplace. Young composers endeavored to be inoffensive, and conservatism became a cherished virtue, while musical nationalism experienced a revival.”¹⁷ Post-war Soviet doctrine retained a similar complexion of intolerant traditionalism.

In 1946, Zhdanov, a key contributor to the campaign in the 1930s for the establishment of Socialist realism in literature, became the head of the new anti-Western movement known as the *Zhdanovshchina*.¹⁸ In August of the same year, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party delivered three resolutions concerning the arts, one condemning a piece by N.V. Bogoslovskii for its “melancholy” character and for failing to resonate with its Soviet audience.¹⁹ These resolutions contained

¹³ Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 109-110.

¹⁴ Cited in *Ibid.*, 114.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 115.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 205.

¹⁹ Quoted in Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 98.

few musical specifics to justify the Central Committee's claims; instead, the proclamations relied on ideological rhetoric to compensate for an absence of concrete artistic exemplars.²⁰ Most importantly, the resolutions emphasized political power wielded by the arts, cautioning authors and composers against political ignorance.²¹ However, it was not until 1948, when the *Zhdanovshchina* issued a resolution entitled "On the Opera *Velikaya Druzhba* by V. Muradeli,"²² that the Central Committee overtly denounced the All-USSR Composers' Union, citing the offences of specific composers. Vano Muradeli, a native Georgian and, by extension, a representative of a composer minority in Moscow, wrote the opera in celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the October Revolution.²³ In the opera, various musical elements reflect the Georgian heritage that Muradeli shared with Stalin; in particular, the work features a Georgian libretto and a Communist leader who played an important role in the Sovietization of Georgia as its protagonist.²⁴ Zhdanov, however, was pleased with neither the music nor the libretto.²⁵ Boris Schwarz speculates that there was some "antagonism between Stalin and Ordzhonikidze, the hero of the opera."²⁶

During the "unmasking" of Stalin at the Twentieth Party Congress, Khrushchev intimated that Ordzhonikidze was

²⁰ Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 98.

²¹ The Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party, "Resolution on the Journals *Zvezda* and *Leningrad*," *Partiinaia Zhizn*, No. 1 (1946): 59-61. Quoted in George S. Counts and Nucia Lodge, *The Country of the Blind: The Soviet System of Mind Control* (Boston: The Riverside Press Cambridge, 1949), 80.

²² Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 206. The title of Muradeli's opera translates as "The Great Friendship."

²³ *Ibid.*, 212.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 213.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 214.

²⁶ *Ibid.*

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driven to suicide by Stalin; at any rate, the commissar had died in obscure circumstances during the 1937 purges. It may well be that Stalin did not like the idea of having “The Extraordinary Commissar,” as the opera was called originally, glorified on the stage. The alleged “historical inaccuracies” of the libretto – one of the major criticisms of the opera – may have been simply facts displeasing to Stalin.²⁷

The Central Committee thus quickly issued the above-mentioned resolution in February 1948 in direct response to Muradeli’s opera.

Despite claims that the opera was altogether “successful” musically, the Central Committee argued that *Velikaya Družhba* presented racial conflicts endangering relations between Soviet states.²⁸ Tomoff confirms that Muradeli portrays Ordzhoniskidze as a “mountaineer and freedom fighter rather than a Bolshevik who united the poor laboring classes among Russians and mountain dwellers alike.”²⁹ The depiction of national and political groups in *Velikaya Družhba* thus proved problematic for the Central Committee, whose members complained that Cossacks were “presented...as a reactionary mass monolithically opposed to Soviet power and the mountain dwellers as a unified, monolithic revolutionary mass without any class differentiation.”³⁰ Here too, the resolution contained very little *musical* criticism, focusing rather on vague ideology. Laurel Fay

²⁷ Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 214.

²⁸ Letter from Georgy Fedorovich Aleksandrov to Zhdanov (August 1, 1947). Quoted in Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 131.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 130.

points out that *Velikaya Druzhba's* “conventional, tonal language hardly warranted the charge of musical formalism.”³¹

Although the resolution named Muradeli's opera in its title, the main body of the edict criticized numerous Soviet composers for not adhering to Socialist realist principles. Specifically, the Resolution named six prominent composers, accusing each of composing formalist music: Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Khachaturian, Shebalin, Popov, and Miaskovsky.³² However, the derogatory “formalism” remained, like the acclaimed “realism,” only ambiguously defined. In retrospect, Piero Weiss and Richard Taruskin explain that formalism had been “defined by a Soviet musical dictionary of the time as ‘the artificial separation of form from content and the conferring on form or its individual elements of a self-sufficient and primary importance to the detriment of content.’”³³ Furthermore, formalism was associated with “the cult of atonality, dissonance, and disharmony,” practices perceived as particular to the Western tradition.³⁴ Characteristics of formalist music included the absence of a coherent melody, which, according to the Party, made music less accessible to the audience and limited the work's potential for integrating programmatic material.³⁵

Specifically, the Party questioned the dominance of “non-programmatic instrumental music at the expense of vocal

³¹ Laurel Fay, “Velikaya Druzhba,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://0www.oxfordmusiconline.com.catalog.lib.cmich.edu:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/O006500> (accessed February 15, 2009).

³² Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 219.

³³ Richard Taruskin and Piero Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” in *Music in the Western World: A History in Documents*, 499-501, ed. Richard Taruskin and Piero Weiss (New York: Simon and Schuster Macmillan, 1984), 499.

³⁴ Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 220.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

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genres.”³⁶ According to Anna Ferenc, “this trend towards the abstract in music was deemed antithetical to the aesthetic needs of the people.”³⁷ Furthermore, composing non-programmatic music was deemed intolerable by Zhdanov because he defined Russian classical music as inherently programmatic, stating that any diversion from program music would be a “retreat from progressive traditions.”³⁸ A departure from tonal music was not only seen as anti-Socialist but also represented a “total negation of musical art.”³⁹ This denunciation of absolute and atonal music indirectly subordinated Western music to that of the pro-socialist music of the Soviet Union. The resolution equated modernism with formalism, and some composers who had previously acquired international fame through modernist techniques found themselves ruthlessly censured.⁴⁰ The repercussions of this condemnation included the “loss of jobs, cancellation of performances, [and] delays in production plans” as well as the continued circulation of rumours of the “big composers” incompetency and lack of artistic taste.⁴¹ The Composers’ Union immediately met to discuss the resolution and eliminated the leaders of the current governing body while resolving to support the resolution.⁴² New leaders representing Zhdanov’s visions for musical productivity were elected at the First All Union Congress of Soviet Composers held in April 1948.⁴³

³⁶ Anna Ferenc, “Music in the Socialist State,” in *Soviet Music and Society Under Lenin and Stalin: The Baton and Sickle*, 8-18, ed. Neil Edmunds (New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004), 16.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Paraphrased in Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 220.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Taruskin and Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” 499.

⁴¹ Schwarz, *Music and Musical Life in Soviet Russia*, 219.

⁴² Ibid., 215

⁴³ Ibid.

In response, Sergei Prokofiev, one of the greatest Russo-Soviet composers of the twentieth century who lived in West Europe for more than thirty-five years, issued an overtly submissive statement to the Congress of Soviet Composers.⁴⁴ He addressed the censorship of his music on the grounds of a formalistic compositional methodology, claiming “poor health” prevented his attendance at a General Assembly of Soviet Composers.⁴⁵ In the statement, Prokofiev addressed the 1948 Resolution by the Central Committee and requested that his message be read to the Assembly:

I welcome the Resolution, which established the necessary conditions for the return to health of the whole organism of Soviet music. The Resolution is particularly important because it demonstrates that the formalist movement is alien to the Soviet people, that it leads to the impoverishment and decline of Soviet music. It points out with ultimate clarity the aims that Soviet composers must attain to be of the greatest service to the Soviet people...In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to our Party for the precise directives of the Resolution, which will help me in my search of musical language accessible and natural to our people, worthy of our people and of our great country.⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Dorothea Redepenning, “Prokofiev, Sergey,” in *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://0www.oxfordmusiconline.com.catalog.lib.cmich.edu:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/22402> (accessed November 20, 2008).

⁴⁵ Taruskin and Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” 499.

⁴⁶ Prokofiev to the General Assembly of Soviet Composers (February, 1948). Quoted in Taruskin and Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” 499-502. Also cited in Nicolas Slonimsky, ed. and trans., *Music Since 1900*, 4 ed., (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971), 1373-74.

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In his letter, Prokofiev goes on to assure the Assembly that he “has never questioned the importance of melody” and that any “formalism” in his previous work is due to a philosophical immaturity that has since been clarified by the Resolution.⁴⁷ Prokofiev also articulates his desire to change, stating that “the Resolution has shaken to the core the social consciousness of our composers, and it has become clear what type of music is needed by our people, and the ways of the eradication of the formalist disease have also become clear.”⁴⁸ Prokofiev’s career exemplifies that of the suppressed Soviet composer in post-war Russia.

Perhaps Prokofiev’s struggle with the Soviet aesthetic is due in part to the extensive time he spent in Western Europe and the influence of Igor Stravinsky, the quintessential modern “cosmopolitan” composer. Both Prokofiev and Stravinsky contributed radical symphonic works for the ballet in Paris under the extravagant direction of impresario Sergei Diaghilev. With Diaghilev’s patronage and support, the two composers produced experimental music that tampered with traditional rhythm, harmony, dissonance, and thematic material. Diaghilev also collaborated with experimental visual artists to create the scenery and costumes for his ballet projects. Among them was Pablo Picasso, who used primitive geometric shapes and patterns on his costumes for Stravinsky’s ballet *The Firebird* in order to depict the ballet’s prehistoric scenery and setting in pagan Russia.⁴⁹ Radical choreography was also incorporated into the ballet by Vaclav Nizhinsky, who attempted to choreograph each note of the music score as a physical gesture performed by the dancers.⁵⁰ In his work with Diaghilev on *The Firebird*, among other

⁴⁷ Quoted in Taruskin and Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” 501.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Jennifer L. Campbell, “Lecture on Igor Stravinsky’s Ballet: *The Firebird*,” (Lecture, Central Michigan University, School of Music, Mount Pleasant, MI, October 10, 2008).

⁵⁰ Ibid.

productions, Nizhinsky represented the antithesis of the form and style of traditional ballet. Musically, Stravinsky uses scattered, sharp rhythms that destroy any sense of rhythmic uniformity, creating an impression of disorder and chaos, suggesting a savage scene, and displaying a dramatic quality today called “primitivism.”⁵¹ Prokofiev also “[sought] to create just such a scandal, as Stravinsky had: to shock his audience and thus attract attention.”⁵²

With the public craving works that were original, modern, and that fused a combination of styles, Prokofiev exploited the experimental movement of Western Europe by incorporating novel methods of composition, including “harsh tone colours, frequent accumulations of dissonances,” and scores for an expanded orchestra that maintained a persistently loud dynamic level; Prokofiev explored these techniques freely during his time with prominent experimentalists in Western Europe.⁵³ However, when Prokofiev returned to the USSR in 1936, it became increasingly important to affirm his devotion to the principles of Soviet government and reevaluate his creative parameters.⁵⁴ His plan was to incorporate polyphonic textures using “interesting northern Russian folk songs...lucid melody and...a simple harmonic language” in works such as *The Story of a Real Man*, which he hoped to apply to a relevant, “contemporary Soviet subject.”⁵⁵ This opera was one of nine compositions composed during the 1930s and 40s and quoted in his final opera as “representatives of ‘contemporary Soviet reality’” since they “include additional mass songs, a couple of interpolated folksong

⁵¹ Campbell, “Lecture on Igor Stravinsky’s Ballet.”

⁵² Redepenning, “Prokofiev, Sergey.”

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Prokofiev to the General Assembly of Soviet Composers. Quoted in Taruskin and Weiss, “A Composer on Trial,” 501, 502.

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arrangements, a waltz and even a rumba.”⁵⁶ For instance, Prokofiev quotes his earlier folksong “The Song of the Fatherland,” which is sung by the chorus and serves as a resounding motto throughout the opera, representing a “higher reality” than the speech-song sung by some of the characters; as Taruskin notes, this integration of folk material reflected the Party dogma that “Socialist Realism was supposed to reveal a higher truth than what Soviet critics call naturalism.”⁵⁷

In spite of his apologetic statement to the Assembly of the Composers’ Union, some of Prokofiev’s works were banned “by the highest authority” on February 10, a mere four days after the 1948 Resolution became public.⁵⁸ Ten days later, his wife was arrested and sentenced to forced labour for allegedly “spying” and for acts of “treachery.”⁵⁹ Prokofiev, humiliated, committed himself to re-forging positive ties with the Soviet State until the end of his life.⁶⁰ He aspired to compose works that exemplified Socialist realism, displaying an “almost excessive tendency to simplicity” according to Dorothea Redepenning.⁶¹ Redepenning suggests that Prokofiev failed to secure Party favour for himself because his efforts were overly fixed on the demands of the Resolution; in trying to appease the Party, Prokofiev may have misinterpreted abstract and vague ideological standards by defining new creative limitations and translating them musically to no avail.⁶² In Redepenning eyes, the result was a “patriotic and

⁵⁶ Taruskin. “Story of a Real Man, The,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. Stanley Sadie, *Grove Music Online, Oxford Music Online*, <http://0-www.oxfordmusiconline.com.catalog.lib.cmich.edu:80/subscriber/article/grove/music/O007339> (accessed February 15, 2009).

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ Redepenning, “Prokofiev, Sergey.”

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

⁶² *Ibid.*

sentimental tone” that was “overdone.”⁶³ Due to increasing health problems, the intense criticism of his work by the Party, and his detrimental self-consciousness that contributed to his “enormous anxiety” and “psychological pressure,” Prokofiev died on March 5, 1953; the Resolution’s power, fueled by the *Zhdanovshchina*, may have “destroyed him...artistically” and certainly contributed to his failing physical health.⁶⁴

Despite strict censure, the activities of Socialist musicians, composers, and scholars within the Soviet Union at the end of the 1940s also reverberated throughout Europe’s music community; in particular, Soviet artists fuelled discussions in pro-Stalinist nations regarding the “ideological and social bankruptcy of the West” and its influence on the development of nationalistic music.⁶⁵ For instance, the Second International Congress of Composers and Music Critics, held in Prague in May 1948, was arranged by the Czech Composers’ Union.⁶⁶ This conference brought together composers, music scholars, and critics from other national communist parties, including those in France and many countries of the Eastern bloc.⁶⁷ A manifesto was produced by the Prague Congress that was “consistent with the socialist realist requirement that composers serve the interests of the State.”⁶⁸ Culturally, the Prague Manifesto addressed the problems inherent in the modern avant-garde movement and its relationship to social issues pertinent to the modern communist.⁶⁹ The officials at the conference concluded that serious art music was “too individualistic and subjective in

⁶³ Redepenning, “Prokofiev, Sergey.”

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Mark Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 37.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

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its content, and too complicated and artificial in its form.”⁷⁰ Following the release of the Prague Manifesto, composers such as Charles Koechlin began attacking other modernist composers in various publications.⁷¹ For example, Koechlin wrote that composers “had an obligation to eschew modernist tendencies in general and serial technique in particular.”⁷² The conference at Prague inspired ideological conformity among the attending composers and musicologists.

However, unlike the manifestos issued by the Soviet Union, the Prague Manifesto limited its evaluation to the social struggles associated with avant-garde music, which it saw as anti-socialist in ideology; significantly, the Prague Manifesto declined to “issue technical and aesthetic directives.”⁷³ Perhaps this reticence was due to the fact that the Prague Conference assembled musical figures connected to, inspired by, but not bound to the cultural policies of the Soviet Republics. Instead, the conference proposed to combine the efforts of its member nations in order to overcome the social issues presented in the *Zhdanovsbchina* through a “unified and bipartisan approach.”⁷⁴ The Conference concluded that the solution to the modernist problem could be achieved provided composers disposed to “extreme subjective tendencies” worked to “express the higher progressive ideals of the popular masses,” adhered to their own national cultural tendencies, and integrated their “diverse national characteristics” into a higher form of art music.⁷⁵ The Conference further suggested genres appropriate to the incorporation of these techniques, generally preferring choral genres since vocal music is

⁷⁰ Cited in Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe*, 38.

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid., 39.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Cited in Ibid.

more accessible and available to educate the people about Soviet ideals.⁷⁶

Beginning in 1949, attacks against music institutions began to appear in a new form of Soviet rhetoric known as “anticosmopolitanism.” This campaign refined the policies against formalism of the 1930s and 1940s by extending their scope to target institutions and professional organizations. The anticosmopolitan campaigns that continued until Stalin’s death in 1953 were dictated by policies that stressed patriotism and condemned foreign nationalistic trends in favour of pro-Russian culture. The campaign supported Russian-inspired cultural endeavours such as “popular music based on folk song rather than jazz” and stimulated movements toward “Russification.”⁷⁷ Initially, this movement resulted in a trend toward anti-Semitism, which was never fully acknowledged by the Party.⁷⁸ Instead, music expressing cosmopolitan ideology was labeled “rootless,” a term referring euphemistically to the “anti-Semitic element of anticosmopolitanism.”⁷⁹ The Party strove instead to emphasize the most important element of anticosmopolitanism: patriotism.⁸⁰ Yet despite the Soviet effort to thwart accusations that it endorsed a social campaign targeting specific ethnic groups, the majority of targeted “cosmopolitans” were Jewish; the Russian public easily recognized the relationship between the anticosmopolitan jargon that flooded the press and the rise in anti-Semitic bias.⁸¹

⁷⁶ “La crise de la musique: le manifest de Prague – les réactions des musiciens français,” (October 7, 1948). Quoted in Carroll, *Music and Ideology in Cold War Europe*, 39.

⁷⁷ Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 153.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

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At the same time, the Central Committee encouraged a reduction in its foreign membership and denounced foreign influence in Russian institutions.⁸² In an effort to override accusations of anti-Semitism, the Committee instituted the reorganization of personnel inside institutions like the Moscow Conservatory and the Composers' Union, "forcing" the admittance of "more Russian performers, composers, and musicologists."⁸³ Furthermore, this anti-Semitism became evident in the professional world of music scholarship and performance, especially in employment and membership in affiliated organizations and institutions; it was not the immediate goal of the Party to endeavour to dispose of Jewish culture specifically, but rather to promote patriotic Russification. As Tomoff explains,

The fact that Jews represented the largest minority and that anti-Semitism resonated with people both inside and outside the apparatus all but guaranteed that they would be the primary losers in the campaign to promote Russians. Anticosmopolitanism should be seen not simply as a euphemism for anti-Semitism but as a set of practices that encouraged Russification at the expense of Jews.⁸⁴

Still, the press made the distinction between art that was truly Russian in the cultural sphere and art responsible for "demoralizing" cultural value explicit.⁸⁵ Ultimately, cosmopolitanism represented the gravest threat to the Soviet vision of Russian identity because unlike formalism, which used Western models to express modern Soviet issues,

⁸² Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 154.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 174.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 154.

cosmopolitanism “praised unhealthy foreign influences and ignored Russian preeminence.”⁸⁶ As a result, minorities, especially Jews, suffered professionally and artistically under this pro-Russian patriotic movement and were often accused of “[political] dubiousness.”⁸⁷ Whether Soviet racism contributed to artistic censure or vice versa, the association between minorities (most often Jewish) and undesired musical characteristics was quickly solidified in the public’s eye. Tomoff remarks that this “guarded, but public, anti-Semitism...has been indelibly linked to the campaigns ever since.”⁸⁸

The Soviet cultural policies issued in the 1940s and early 1950s proved monumental in the development and reception of Soviet music. These documents also stimulated the reorganization of music institutions both inside the Soviet Union, like the Moscow Conservatory and the Composers’ Union, and internationally as in the 1948 Prague Conference. More importantly, the policies of the *Zhdanovshchina* and the antic cosmopolitan campaigns that arose around the time of Stalin’s death shaped the careers and compositional techniques of composers throughout Europe who strove to cooperate with the vaguely-mandated ideological parameters set by the Party. The political climate that dictated so much post-war music and scholarship continues to influence our historical understanding of Soviet culture as we struggle to better define – and understand – the ideological terminology of this turbulent era.

⁸⁶ Tomoff, *Creative Union*, 154.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 154.

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