

**THE SIGNIFICANCE OF RIMSKY-KORSAKOV IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF  
A RUSSIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY**



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**The significance of Rimsky-Korsakov in the development of a  
Russian national identity**

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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Cover illustration: ***Rus': The Soul of the People* Mikhail Nesterov (1914-16)**

Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

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## ABSTRACT

Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov was a significant figure in both the Russian society and culture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. In addition to being a founder member of the *Kuchka*, he taught at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire from 1871, when he was appointed Professor of Practical Composition and Instrumentation, to 1907. He had a decisive influence on improving musical education in Russia and was instrumental in ensuring the talents of his contemporaries and students were recognised internationally. Through his position as a teacher, composer and within society he was able to strengthen the criticism of the arts towards the old-fashioned and censorial attitude of the bureaucracy who were blind to the changes in society.

The starting point of this thesis is the 1833 Official Nationality ideology founded on 'orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality'. The thesis examines Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions in the light of these concepts and shows that he questioned the validity and relevance of them in the developing socio-political climate of the time. The composer was a significant player in these developments, however, this role has not previously been studied.

The thesis examines the question of why national identity was an issue in the Russia of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The main theories of national identity based on primordialism, ethno-symbolism and modernism are examined and observations made concerning their application to the development of a Russian national identity through the arts and particularly music. The modernist theory of Miroslav Hroch is supported.

It can be concluded that the majority of Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions had a political orientation criticising the policies and actions of the Tsar and the bureaucracy. He demonstrated that religious attitudes needed to encompass 'double faith'. National identity was also defined by an interaction between the arts in folklore and music. Rimsky-Korsakov redefined the interpretation of 'orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality'.

## Acknowledgements

Throughout my working life, which was in a totally different sphere, I have been kept alive and balanced not only through my love of music but having the opportunity to be actively involved on both sides of the stage. From an early age, not only was I fascinated by the world of opera as a complete art form but also found the art and literature of Russia exciting. In fact, one of the first operas I saw was *Eugene Onegin* which has also remained a favourite. My dissertation for my degree in opera studies concerned nationalism in the operas of Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov. It became obvious to me that not only was Rimsky-Korsakov concerned about the meaning of Russian national identity but also his contribution in this field was not fully appreciated.

During my long association with the Mikkeli Music Festival, I had had many opportunities to discuss Russian music with Professor Eero Tarasti. I thank him for giving me the opportunity to develop and deepen my skills in music at the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies of the University of Helsinki. I also thank Eero for his guidance in looking at the broader spectrum of possible influencing factors. The day-to-day burden of reading, correcting and questioning my style and arguments fell on Docent Alfonso Padilla. He has always been readily available and I thank him for the many hours spent, for instance, on Skype during the times I spent in the UK in the last two years. Working with him has always been easy since he brings humour and life into the discussions. Unfortunately the questions addressed in the thesis were not purely musical but inter-twinned with broader questions of Russian culture, history and literature. I have been very fortunate to have had Professor Pekka Pesonen, the former head of the Department of Slavonic Studies at the University of Helsinki as a mentor. Pekka has always been quick to comment, give advice and encouragement and his support has been invaluable.

Already at the outset I was adamant that the work should find acceptance in Russia. I was delighted that Professor Andrei Denisov of the Herzen State Pedagogical University and the St. Petersburg Conservatoire agreed to be the pre-examiner and opponent at the defense of my thesis. Maître de conférences Jean-Marie Jacono from the Université d'Aix-en-Provence, the other pre-examiner, as a specialist on Mussorgsky, posed interesting comments and queries which needed addressing and for which I am most grateful.

Throughout the work I have been supported by the staff and students in the Music section of the Department of Philosophy, History, Culture and Art Studies through joint workshops and seminars. However, I would particularly like to thank Ms Irma Vierimaa for her support in dealing with the numerous administrative-related issues. It goes without saying that, in a similar fashion the Department of Slavonic Studies (now a part of the new Department of Modern Languages) has given comments and support through discussions and seminars. In particular I would like to thank Docent Ben Hellman and Professor Tomi Huttunen for pointing me in the right direction in the early stages of my thesis. I have also been ably supported by Professor Markku Kivinen and the Aleksanteri Institute, where I have been an associate member, and particularly the

comments and encouragement received from Dr Sanna Tuomaa and including the so-called 'Small-group' led by Dr Suvi Salmenniemi. Dr Arseniy Svyrenko was an inspiration for me in studying and learning more about the rich culture and history of the Ukraine which is a major issue of the thesis. Dr Meri Herrala has given me continual support, advice and assistance from the conceptual stage to the present. For me it has been a blessing that within the Music Department we have native Russian help readily at hand. Ms Alla Ablova has always been keen and eager to assist not only in translating texts but also in being able to find and copy much needed texts and manuscripts. Ms Svetlana Toivakka has also provided me with useful basic information concerning Russian traditions.

For five months in 2012 I was on an Erasmus exchange at the School of Music, Cardiff University. I would like to thank Professor David Wyn Jones and his staff for all their encouragement and support whilst in Cardiff. I would particularly like to highlight Professor Stephen Walsh who agreed to read through sections of the initial draft and drew my attention to areas where I was perhaps entering into deep water unnecessarily; his assistance has had a defining role for which I am indebted.

Behind a venture of this kind there are people who continually given valuable support in finding source books, articles, writing letters and giving assistance in many forms. These include Ms Irina Lukka, Ms Anneli Ojala, Mr Lyle Neff, Mr Jaakko Tuohiniemi, and Mr Andreas Agopov. Particular thanks are due to Ms Heljä Suuronen-Geib and Ms Anastasia Potakhina for their help in correcting the Russian and Ukrainian texts. Chibun Jimmy Chiang was a great asset for me in the early stages of the work by playing through and recording Rimsky-Korskov's collection of folk songs. I also wish to thank Mr Viachaslev Lupachev and Ms Katya Sirakanian, of the Mariinsky Theatre, and the Director, Ms Susanna Tsiriuk for arranging for me to see a number of Rimsky-Korsakov's opera productions in St. Petersburg. However, it was the late Ms Vera Prokhorova, during many discussions, who continually encouraged me and pushed me towards looking for and understanding the "Russian soul" in that country's art and music.

Financial assistance has been received from the Niilo Helander Foundation and the University of Helsinki for which I am most grateful.

But behind every successful study there is a family and relations who give loving encouragement and understanding. My wife Liisa has had the patience needed in having a continual student as a husband but has always been there giving support and encouragement to study but also to relax. My daughters Norah and Sarah have always willingly given support through reading and correcting texts in English and Finnish, discussions at all stages of the work, and in their positive attitude to life. Without my sister-in-law Helena's extensive knowledge on graphical matters the thesis would have lacked style.



*I first saw the fantastic form of Rimski-Korsakov descending the grand staircase of the St. Petersburg Conservatory – in August 1906...I knew but one image of him: a giant of the northern sagas with the wide eye of a benevolent sorcerer, a tenderly passionate and delicate artist-aristocrat, religiously in love with the freshest, airiest walk in art.*

*Lazare Saminsky*

*Rimsky-Korsakov: the forgotten centenary.*

*Tom Service, The Guardian, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2008.*



**Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov (1844–1908)**

Ilya Repin 1893. The State Russian Museum, St. Petersburg.



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## **Note on use of Russian language**

For both interpretation and clarity the thesis uses both Cyrillic and English text when both have been accessible. Since many of the documents referred to were printed prior to the spelling change introduced in 1917–18, the original Cyrillic text is quoted.

When a musical or literary text is initially referred to, both the Cyrillic and English titles are given but subsequently only the English is used. Appendix 2 lists both the Cyrillic and English names for works mentioned in the text.

Where a term has become established in a transliterated form both the Cyrillic and transliteration is given.



## 1. Introduction

The decade of the 1860's was dominated in the musical world by the controversy concerning the founding of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862 under the direction of the pianist Anton Rubinstein (1829–94).<sup>1</sup> Although Russian, Rubinstein had a background in Central Europe and brought a Germanic concept to the teaching of music. However, there also existed a group of talented amateurs around Mily Balakirev (1837 – 1910), the *Kuchka*<sup>2</sup> who opposed the concept of formal training. This controversy concerning training and natural talent was to dominate Russian music life for the rest of the century, as was the question of what could be called national music.

The question concerning Russian national identity emerged as a major point of discussion already at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Nikolai Karamzin (1766 – 1826), the renowned Russian historian had already questioned the use of French language and mannerisms in 1802. And later in the 1830's, with the advent of Mikhail Glinka's (1804 – 57) opera *A Life for the Tsar* (Жизнь за царя)<sup>3</sup> in 1836, numerous commentators were publically discussing the meaning of national identity, *народность/narodnost*,<sup>4</sup> and questioning whether music could exude identity in the same way as literature or the pictorial arts. It was Juri Lotman in his groundbreaking work on the semiotics of Russian culture that drew attention to the psychological and behavioural conflicts in Russian society at that turn of the century.<sup>5</sup> The aim of the policies of the Tsars from Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> onwards was one of repression, increasing censorship and a centralisation of resources to ensure that the Official Nationality policy of 1833 with its embodiment of orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality (*Православие, самодержавие, народность*) concentrated on reaffirming a strong imperial centre.

The one member of the *Kuchka* who had a decisive influence on the development of a Russian identity through the auspices of music, Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov,

<sup>1</sup> The dates of people closely associated with Rimsky-Korsakov are given in the main text whilst a total list of those mentioned in the text are given in Appendix 1. The dates of the reigns of the mentioned Tsars and Tsarinas are also given in this appendix.

<sup>2</sup> *Могучая кучка*, the Mighty Handful, a term introduced by the critic Vladimir Stasov (1824–1906) in an article he wrote in the St Petersburg Bulletin (Санкт-Петербургские Ведомости) newspaper in 1867 "God grant that our Slav guests may never forget today's concert; God grant that they may forever preserve the memory of how much poetry, feeling, talent, and intelligence are possessed by the small but already mighty handful of Russian musicians." The group included Mily Balakirev, Aleksandr Borodin (1833 – 87), Cesar Cui (1835 – 1918), Modest Mussorgsky (1839 – 81) and Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov (1844 – 1908). Subsequently this group will be referred to as *Kuchka*.

<sup>3</sup> The names of works cited in the text are given in both Russian and English in Appendix 2.

<sup>4</sup> In general the cyrillic term is used in conjunction with the English translation. However, for some terms a transliteration is given in the form it appears in many English texts. Descriptive terms used are given in Appendix 3.

<sup>5</sup> See Lotman Juri. *The Poetics of Everyday Behavior in Russian Eighteenth Century Culture* in Lotman Yuri.M, Uspenskij B.A. 1984 in *The Semiotics of Russian Culture*. Ed. Ann Shukman, Michigan, Ann Arbor: 231–256.

has in my opinion been overlooked and his dedicated work for the recognition of a Russian identity, ignored. Of his operas, prior to the recent extensive recordings undertaken by the present Director of the Mariinsky Theatre, Valery Gergiev, the most well known in the West have been *Sadko* (Садко) and *The Golden Cockerel* (Золотой петушок), and the latter due to Serge Diaghilev's modernist production in Paris in 1914.<sup>6</sup> However, it is Rimsky-Korsakov that we need to thank when considering the success of *Boris Godunov* (Борис Годунов), *Khovanshchina* (Хованщина), *Prince Igor* (Князь Игорь) and many other works on the Western stage and for them having an established place in the repertoire of many of the major opera houses. Without his work they may never have left the Russian shores. It was Rimsky-Korsakov who valued his fellow *Kuchka* composer's talents so highly that he dedicated much of his life to ensuring that their compositions met the high standards required by European music circles which were based on a long and established history in music development. It was also Rimsky-Korsakov who most effectively embodied the concepts of the *Kuchka* concerning Russian folk music and developed its use into an acceptable art form. It was his dedication and focus on the essentialities of this projection that led to a purposeful study of instruments, orchestration and harmonisation. The testing ground in his own compositions led to the *Practical Manual of Harmony* (Практический учебник гармонии) and *Principles of Orchestration* (Основы оркестровки), a textbook which is still used today worldwide. It was also his teaching which influenced numerous household names of Russian composers, Prokofiev, Stravinsky and Skriabin, to mention a few.

Rimsky-Korsakov's compositional output spanned from halfway through Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>'s reign through to Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>. During his lifetime the emancipation reform was enacted, the secret police activity increased in an attempt to suppress the demands from an emerging and active liberal society and the 1905 revolution, in which he had a role, occurred. The significant events, reigns of the rulers and closely associated influencers in music are shown in Appendix 5. This was a time of increasing social agitation in Russia due the increasing criticism of the regime through the writings of social commentators such as Nikolai Chernyshevsky (1828 – 89) with his *What is to be done?* (Что делать?), Alexander Herzen (1812 – 70) with his newspaper *The Bell* (Колокол) published in London and writers such as Fyodor Dostoevsky (1821 – 1881) and Ivan Turgenev (1818 – 83). Alongside this written agitation was the failure of Tsar

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<sup>6</sup> A complete list of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas, their source and premières is given in Appendix 4.

Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>'s Emancipation Manifesto of February 19, 1861 (March 3).<sup>7</sup> This failing involved the lack of an equality based legal system, questions involving relations with peripheral countries within the imperial sphere of influence such as the Ukraine and Poland, increasing censorship in the press and control of educational institutions, a humiliating foreign policy exemplified by the Crimean War and Tsushima Straits, and an increasingly vociferous middle and professional class, *разночинцы/raznochintsy*.

Unlike the Imperial Academy of Arts where ranks were awarded, musicians did not have a recognised rank, *чин/chin*, in society.<sup>8</sup> However, musicians such as Rimsky-Korsakov and the other members of the *Kuchka*, who were upper class, already had acceptable positions. However, unlike the others in the group, it was a mixture of Rimsky-Korsakov's compositional skills and fortunate circumstances that led to his appointment to the Conservatoire as Professor of Practical Composition and Instrumentation as well as leader of the Orchestra Class. Nikolai Zarembo (1821–79) had retired as Director of the St.Petersburg Conservatoire in 1871. The new Director Mikhail Azanchevsky (1839 – 81) had been impressed with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko* at a Russian Musical Society concert in March 1871. In his autobiography the composer wrote: "Evidently Azanchevsky's idea was to invite new blood in my person and thus freshen up teaching in the subjects, which had grown mouldy under Zarembo."<sup>9</sup>

Although the reason for Balakirev's support for Rimsky-Korsakov's acceptance was to introduce a *Kuchka* member into the hostile academic world of the Conservatoire, the composer saw it as a way to improve his own abilities in many fields. In all things that he undertook he dedicated himself to the task. This can also be traced in his approach to his position as Inspector of Music Bands of the Navy Department in 1873 as well as ten years later, in 1883, with his appointment as assistant superintendent of the Court Chapel.

When he accepted the professorship he started to teach subjects which were for him new. To prepare himself for this teaching role, he took a three-year sabbatical from composition and studied at home, carrying out extensive exercises in the basics of counterpoint, fugue and chorales. In this respect he also received help from Pyotr

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<sup>7</sup> The first date given is the Julian calendar, the second, in brackets, the Gregorian. After 1918 Russia adopted the Gregorian calendar.

<sup>8</sup> An explanation of *чин* (rank) is given, for instance, in Hassell James 1970. Implementation of the Russian Table of Ranks during the Eighteenth Century. *Slavic Review* 29, (2): 283-295.

<sup>9</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolay Andreyevich 1989. *My Musical Life*. London, Faber and Faber: 116 (subsequently designated as MML).

Tchaikovsky (1840–93). Quoting from a letter to Rimsky-Korsakov from Tchaikovsky from Moscow dated September 10<sup>th</sup> (22<sup>nd</sup>), 1875:

You must know how I admire and bow down before your artistic modesty and your great strength of character! These innumerable counterpoints, these sixty fugues, and all the other musical intricacies which you have accomplished – all these things from a man who had already produced a *Sadko* eight years previously – are the exploits of a hero [...] I am a mere *artisan* in composition, but you will be an *artist*, in the fullest sense of the word [...] I await your ten fugues with keen impatience.<sup>10</sup>

By 1874 Rimsky-Korsakov was also teaching harmony and counterpoint. The demand for knowledge and perfection was a feature of the composer throughout his life; he continually returned to compositions and revised them.

Although he had already accepted the position of Professor at the Conservatoire, Rimsky-Korsakov continued in active service in the navy. On a suggestion by the Secretary of the Navy Admiral Nikolai Krabbe, in the spring of 1873, Rimsky-Korsakov was summoned to the Chancellery of the Navy by the Director Konstantin Mann. The navy realising the complexity of his situation allowed him to resign his commission; however, a new post had been created for him of Inspector of Music Bands of the Navy Department.

I had been chosen for the post; that a compliment of musician pupils was being organised, as holders of Navy Department fellowships at the St. Petersburg Conservatory; and that their immediate supervision was entrusted to me. My duties included the inspecting of all Navy Department Music Bands throughout Russia; thus I was to supervise the bandmasters and their appointments, the repertoire, the quality of instruments, etc.; I was also to write a program of studies for the newly appointed fellows, and to act as an intermediary between the Navy Department and the Conservatory.<sup>11</sup>

The order for this promotion to Collegiate Assessor, a civilian rank, was given on May 8th (20<sup>th</sup>) 1873. Rimsky-Korsakov was kept on the navy payroll and listed on the roster of the Chancellery of the Navy Department.<sup>12</sup> This work gave him the opportunity to become acquainted with the construction and playing techniques of a number of instruments which he also learnt to play and provided him with better professional skills for orchestrating for military bands. This led to the concept of writing a textbook of

<sup>10</sup> Tchaikovsky Modest 2004. *The Life and Letters of Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky*. Ed. Rosa Newmarch. Reprinted from 1904 edition. Honolulu, Hawaii: University Press of the Pacific: 172–173.

<sup>11</sup> MML: 135.

<sup>12</sup> *Ib.*: 135–36.

instrumentation. Borodin already notes this in a letter to Lyubov Ivanovna Karmalina on April 15<sup>th</sup> (27<sup>th</sup>) 1875: “Korsinka...is writing a course of instrumentation – phenomenal, the like of which does not and never did exist”.<sup>13</sup> This work, *Principles of Orchestration* was completed posthumously by Maximilian Steinberg, Rimsky-Korsakov’s son-in-law, in 1912.

On March 19<sup>th</sup> (31<sup>st</sup>) 1884, by Order of His Imperial Majesty, the Office of Inspector of Bands was abolished. As a result Rimsky-Korsakov notes in his memoirs that "my government service was confined exclusively to the Chapel—that is, the court Department"<sup>14</sup>. Here he worked under Balakirev in the Court Chapel as a deputy. Together with Balakirev he was responsible for the choir, its repertoire and performances in the Imperial churches, the musical education and a comprehensive study programme for the orchestra and the Precentors classes and orchestral arrangements of major works to be performed by the orchestra.<sup>15</sup> During this time he wrote his *Practical Manual of Harmony* which was first published in 1885 for the classes he took at the Chapel. In addition this position gave him an opportunity to study Russian Orthodox Church music. After ten years at the Chapel, and because of increasing difficulties with Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov ‘retired’ in 1894.

The composer was in a prominent position in St.Petersburg society as one of its leading composers and from 1871 to 1907 Professor at the Conservatoire and consequently was in a position to influence public opinion in many ways. Through his work he was able to introduce a new interpretation to the concepts of orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality.

### 1.1 The scope of the thesis

This thesis analyses the work of Rimsky-Korsakov reflected against the political and social background of Russia in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries and shows that the composer gave a new meaning to the prevalent concept of national identity. In this respect it can be considered a contribution to both the history of Russian music as well as contributing to Russian socio-political understanding. As a consequence of the analysis, the thesis shows that the socio-political developments in Russia from the late 18<sup>th</sup> through to the dramatic events of 1917 support the modernist national identity theory as outlined by Miroslav Hroch.

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<sup>13</sup> *Ib.*: n136.

<sup>14</sup> *Ib.*: 269.

<sup>15</sup> Dunlop Carolyn 2000. *The Russian Court Chapel Choir 1796 ~1917*. Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers,; 36–44.

Previous research concerning ‘Nationality’ as a concept related to music in Russia has concentrated almost exclusively on the ‘mechanisms’ of music, elaborating what is the Russian sound and analysing the history and revisions of operas, rather than on the fundamental questions of why certain operas and compositions were composed. The Conservatoire set up by Anton Rubinstein in 1862 was the embodiment of a Germanic approach to music based on the sound teaching of music fundamentals, the tools of the trade, whilst Balakirev projected his ‘amateurs’ who were essentially untrained but had natural talent. It is pertinent to question which approach led to a recognised and lasting ‘Russian school’ and would influence identity?

At the outset of Rimsky-Korsakov’s life the Official Nationality ideology of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> was ingrained on the nation and throughout the bureaucracy. Throughout his life it will be shown that he questioned this policy and the consequences of it in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. When undertaking an overview of Rimsky-Korsakov’s life it is apparent that we are dealing with an organised, dedicated and calculating mind. I believe he was clear in what he aimed to achieve and how to attain it. Having trained in mathematics and navigational sciences he would have had a focussed tendency to carry out tasks in a logical and organised form and this can be seen throughout his life. In view of this dedication it is essential to examine the reasons for his choice of opera themes. Is *The Maid of Pskov* (Псковитянка) aimed at showing a curtailment of individual freedom and a forced subjection to the imperial centre? Why, for instance, did he resort to using Gogol’s *Evenings Near the Village of Dikanka* (Вечера на хуторе близ Диканьки) at a time when the Ukrainian language and culture was being banned? The criticism and political messages found in the libretti will be analysed to show his political views.

He opposed the restrictions of the tsarist bureaucracy which covered not only censorship, with its random and illogical interpretations, nationality issues, the restrictive practices of the Theatre Directorate, the indirect imperial control of music education and the inability of the government to understand a changing society. This thesis shows that there were four distinct phases of the composer’s life, and the music composed in each of them reflected different aspects of the development of a national identity.<sup>16</sup> It will show that the political messages of the leading thinkers of the day from Chernishevsky and Herzen, and authors from Alexandr Pushkin (1799 – 1837) through to Nikolai Gogol (1809 – 52) were reflected in the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov from *The Maid of Pskov* through to *The Golden Cockerel*. In addition to this the

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<sup>16</sup> These phases are shown in Appendix 6.



compositional themes chosen throughout his life will be shown, in general, to have a national identity content.

One of the three mentioned pillars of Official Nationality was that of religion, Orthodoxy. Many of the Russian pagan customs are linked to the elements of water, air, fire and earth. Sacrifices were made to water and many of these feature in Russian Christianity.<sup>17</sup> The significance of the earth, the seasons, and fertility became incorporated into the Christian calendar. Rimsky-Korsakov strongly believed that in the spiritual make-up of the country, both pagan and Christian elements, had an equal place and formed an essential part of the nation's identity. This thesis will also examine and show the relationship between these religious and spiritual aspects in the light of Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions and beliefs.

One of the important controversy's between the Rubinstein and Balakirev schools concerned the role of folk music within a classical genre as a determinate of national music. This thesis does not take issue on questions related to folk and art music definitions. The thesis will show that irrespective of his position in the Conservatoire, Rimsky-Korsakov was the *Kuchka* composer who most dedicatedly maintained and projected the notion that folk music was an essential part of a nation's identity. Rimsky-Korsakov incorporated both folk and classical forms in his compositions and indicated to future generations of composers the role folk music and folklore could take.

It will be shown that although Liszt and Glinka did have an influence on Rimsky-Korsakov, his music extended and developed previously used musical harmony. The development of his own skills sharpened his own appreciation of the musical talent of his fellow *Kuchka* members but he also realised that their works would only gain a deserved international recognition through musical editing to which he dedicated considerable time. In addition, as a teacher, he ensured that the generation of Russian composers he taught would be tested to the limits of their musical abilities to ensure that they would continue the development of a Russian national style in music. It will also be shown that the skills employed by Stravinsky and other 20<sup>th</sup> century composers were initially learnt from Rimsky-Korsakov.

The concerted aim of this thesis is to show that Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, in a similar vein to Beethoven, Verdi and Smetana, for instance, clearly projected a political message. He challenged the authority of both the State and the musical society, the

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<sup>17</sup> Warner Elizabeth 2002. *Russian Myths*. London, The British Museum Press: 21.

concepts of religion and he knew that in the changing social and political environment of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, the arts and, particularly music, could have a significant effect on the way people considered their inheritance, their Russian identity. He gave a new interpretation to the terms ‘orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality’ and ensured that through the changing and easier access to theatre he could pass this message on to a more cosmopolitan and representative audience. This aspect and focus of his work has not been analysed and presented in previous studies.

## 1.2 Source material

When reviewing the existing literature concerning Russian music and, in particular, the period when Russia moved from being enamoured with Glinka to the foundation of formalised musical education in the country, it is surprising to find that there has been little analysis of the close link between the historical circumstance and ideological thought and tradition which resulted in the formation of movements such as the *Association of Travelling Art Exhibits* or *peredvizhniki* (Художники передвижники) in the pictorial arts, and the *Kuchka* in music. These movements tend to be treated in isolation and not viewed as a protest which together led to a critical path of political, social and ideological upheaval that would eventually result in revolution.

There have been many histories written concerning Russian opera from the groundbreaking work of Rosa Newmarch in 1914<sup>18</sup> as well as the many analyses of Rimsky-Korsakov’s individual operas.<sup>19</sup> The source material for this study has been the numerous works written both in Russian, some with English translations, and English concerning historical, social and political developments in Russia. This has encompassed the major changes in both secular and religious life in the post-Petrine period.<sup>20</sup> These changes also reflected extensively on the musical field and its development. An important factor which has received attention in recent years is the social implications brought about by the developing people’s theatre.<sup>21</sup> To understand the folk element in Russian mentality it is also important to understand the ancient

<sup>18</sup> Newmarch Rosa 1914. *The Russian Opera*. London, Herbert Jenkins Limited.

<sup>19</sup> See, for instance, Abrahams Gerald 1931. Rimsky-Korsakov’s Gogol Operas. *Music & Letters*, 12 (3): 242–252; Calvocoressi Michel-Dimitri 1931. Rimsky-Korsakov’s Operas Reconsidered. *The Musical Times*, 72, (1064): 886–888; Edmunds Catherine 1985. *Puškín and Gogol’ As Sources for the Librettos of the Fantastic Fairy Tale Operas of Rimskij-Korsakov*. Ph.D thesis. Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Seaman Gerald 1988. *Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov. A Guide to Research*. New York & London, Garland Publishing Inc; Morrison Simon. 2001 The Semiotics of Symmetry, or Rimsky-Korsakov’s Operatic History Lesson. *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 13 (3): 261–293.

<sup>20</sup> The post-Petrine period refers to the period after Peter the Great’s reign.

<sup>21</sup> See Swift Anthony 2002. *Popular Theatre and Society in Tsarist Russia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press; Hadley Olga 2010. *Mamontov’s Private Opera. The Search for Modernism in Russian Theatre*. Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press.

agrarian cycles and beliefs associated with them and how these together with the relevant folksongs and practices were used by Rimsky-Korsakov to give authenticity to situation in his operas. A fundamental source has been Tatyana Popova's work and that of Alexandr Afanasev to which the composer refers to already in 1875-76.<sup>22</sup>

Since Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire from 1807 to 1917 it has also been possible to study original texts of both journal and newspaper reports of the period under consideration lodged in the Finnish National Library in Helsinki.

Many of the major Russian composers of the period have been studied and books published concerning their lives, letters, relationships with their contemporaries and their works; the Bibliography refers to a number of these. Rimsky-Korsakov is an exception to this rule in the Western world since apart from his own autobiography and Yastrebtsev's diary the only biography is that of Gerald Abraham from 1945<sup>23</sup>; in Russia, however, there are many analyses of his life and works.<sup>24</sup> Facsimile copies of the original piano scores of most of the important operas of the period, published by Bessel and Belaëff, are readily available and, in some cases, full scores. There are numerous Russian recordings of most of these operas available. All of these have formed source material and are listed in the Biography and Discography.

The methodology used has been to contrast and compare the different phases of Rimsky-Korsakov's life and career, the subject matter of his works, and particularly his operas, with the social developments and political policies enacted by the Tsarist bureaucracy and the events resulting as a consequence. Through this comparison it has been possible to formulate a view of the composer's convictions and beliefs that supported his actions.

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<sup>22</sup> Порова Т. 1964. *Русское народное музыкальное творчество. Том второй* (Russian folk musical works. Vol.2). Москва, Издательство «Музыка»; Афанасьев А. 1994. *Поэтические воззрения славян на природу* (The Slavs' Poetic Views of Nature). Москва, Издательство «Индрик».

<sup>23</sup> MML; Abrahams Gerald 1945. *Rimsky-Korsakov. A Short Biography*. London, Duckworth; Ястребцев В.В. 1959. *Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков – Воспоминания* (Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov. Reminiscences). Ленинград, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство; Yastrebtsev V.V. 1985. *Reminiscences of Rimsky-Korsakov*. Ed. and transl. Florence Jonas. New York, Columbia University Press.

<sup>24</sup> See, for instance: Гозенпуд А. 1957. *Н.А. Римский-Корсаков. Темы и идеи его оперного творчества* (Themes and ideas in his operatic work). Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство; Соловцов А. 1964. *Жизнь и творчество Н.А.Римского-Корсакова* (The Life and Works of N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov). Музыкальное издательство; Орлова А.А., Римский-Корсаков В.Н. 1971, 1972, 1973. *Страницы жизни Н.А.Римского-Корсакова* (Pages in the life of N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov). Ленинград, Издательство «Музыка»; Кунин И.Ф. 1983. *Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков* (Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov). Москва, Издательство «Музыка»; Рахманова М.П. 1995. *Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков* (Nikolai Andreevich Rimsky-Korsakov). Москва, Российская Академия Музыки им Гнесиных, Государственный институт искусствознания.

### 1.3 Factors influencing the concept of Russian identity

In a previous paper I have referred to ‘a lost society’.<sup>25</sup> Peter the Great’s<sup>26</sup> reforms had resulted in the influx of new social customs and dress, music and language. As mentioned previously, the prominent historian Karamzin already in 1802 drew attention to the language and identity confusion which more recently was analysed and supported by Lotman in his work in the 1970’s and early 1980’s. It was this confusion that led to a need to define ‘national identity’ officially. However, as public discussions at the time showed identity is a more tangible literal, visual and aural matter. How music, related to this discussion became more prominent with the première of Glinka’s opera *A Life for the Tsar* in 1834 at the height of these identity discussions, will be examined in greater detail.

### Music and politics

The imperial views led to an explosion of literary works criticising and commenting on society. The significance of writers such as Gogol, Turgenev and others and the literary and political thinkers Herzen, Chernishevsky and Vissarion Belinsky (1811 – 48) will be examined since their output was influential during the formative years of the composer. With an increasingly critical society, throughout the period of the composer’s lifetime the views of the imperial court and the resultant censorship extended to also encompass music and opera. The effect of this on the libretti, stage sets and performance will also be considered.

When one further considers the political messages associated with music and particularly opera, there is a long tradition in Western music. Opera developed as a public entertainment and as such attracted a large and dedicated audience. This opened the door to questioning facets of society, the distribution of power and the involvement of individuals. Mozart’s operas pointed towards class conflict at the time of the Enlightenment. This was followed by highlighting unjustified terrorism and oppression at the time of the French revolution as shown in Beethoven’s *Fidelio*. Verdi uses choruses to effect in a number of his operas *Nabucco* and *Il Lombardi*, to mention just two which gave voice to Italian patriotic sentiments during the Risorgimento. Russia was no exception to this rule. Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar* was aimed at emphasising dedication to the Tsar and Russian sovereignty over Poland. Mussorgsky’s use of the chorus in *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanshchina* emphasised the vacillation of an

<sup>25</sup> Nelson John 2010. *Rimsky-Korsakov – A decisive influence in the search for a Russian national identity* in Адер.Л. et.al. (Eds) Н.А.Римский-Корсаков и его наследие в исторической перспективе (N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov and his heritage in a historical perspective). Материалы международной музыковедческой конференции 19–22 марта 2010 года, Санк-Петербург: 323.

<sup>26</sup> The names *Peter the Great* and *Peter I<sup>st</sup>* are used synonymously in the text.

oppressed people. Consequently in any study on identity it is essential to examine the reasons for composing a particular opera vis-à-vis the social and political circumstances at the time. In addition, the writing of the libretto has often been a matter of concern for the composer since certain specific messages needed to be emphasised and conveyed.

Rimsky-Korsakov altered known texts to highlight a message of political criticism. In *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* (Сказка о Царе Салтане) the dialogue between the *skomorokh* (скоморох) and The Old Grandfather in Act I: *Oh my sire, my dearest grandfather* (Государь ты мой, родный дедушка) appears to be based on Alexey Tolstoi's poem *Your majesty, our father* (Государь ты наш батюшка) which achieved popularity in the 1860's.<sup>27</sup> The poem is a dialogue criticizing the reforms of Peter the Great for causing the misery of the Russian peasant. The message would have been clear especially as this opera, like many others of the composer's, had its première at the Russian Private Opera where the audience was more cosmopolitan.

### **The role of folk music**

The question of the role of folk music as a constituent of the developing art music of a country has been a major topic of discussion and controversy. What constitutes Russian music was a topic discussed already at the time of Aleksey Verstovsky's (1799 – 1862) operas and certainly from the advent of *A Life for the Tsar*, and became a topic of controversy between Anton Rubinstein and Balakirev's *Kuchka* in the 1860's. It continues to be a subject for discussion in academic circles even today. Béla Bartók in his essay of 1937 "Folk Research and Nationalism" discusses the kernel of the subject:

It cannot be denied that the impulse to begin folk research, as well as any folklore science in general, is attributable to the awakening of national feeling. The discovery of the value of folklore and folk music excited the national pride, and as there were no means of comparison at the outset, the members of each nation were convinced that the possession of such treasures was their only and particular privilege. Small nations, especially the politically oppressed ones, found a certain consolation in these treasures, their self-consciousness grew stronger and consolidated; the study and publication of folk music values were adequate means of re-solidifying the national feeling of the more cultured strata which in consequence of oppression has suffered damage on more than one point.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> <http://www.litera.ru/stixiya/authors/tolstoy/gosudar-ty-nash.html>. 22.11.2011. Tolstoi's political views can also be seen in Tolstoi A.K. and Harkins William.E. 1968. A.K.Tolstoi's Parody History of the Russian State. *Slavic Review*, 27 (3): 459–469.

<sup>28</sup> Bartók Béla 1976. *Béla Bartók Essays*. Selected and Edited by Benjamin Suchoff, London, Faber & Faber: 25.

There is no doubt that this interest in ‘national pride’ appeared in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century in Russia with the first collections of folk music by Lvov and Prach. However, Russia was not a small and oppressed nation. Consequently it is important to examine what was missing in the Russian cultural environment to warrant such an interest. There are a number of records of foreigners, such as William Coxe,<sup>29</sup> visiting Russia already prior to the 19<sup>th</sup> century who commented on the daily use of song in all walks of life. Consequently this must have been a noticeable difference to other countries visited. Similarly numerous Russian writers, such as Gogol, and Turgenev have music significantly in their writings and works. Unfortunately the majority of studies of folk music are, in my opinion, often too pedantic, looking in too much detail as to what constitutes theoretically and musically a ‘Russian sound’. I believe one should be questioning what role folklore and folk music has in everyday life in Russia and whether the music is a significant element of Russian identity.

How did the composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries use folklore and folk music? Could it constitute an element of a country’s art music? Again reverting to Bartók:

It is the general view that only in the nineteenth century did folk music begin to have a significant influence, especially on Chopin’s and Liszt’s art, later on the Slavonic composers [...] Pure folk music begins to exert an overwhelming influence on our higher art music only at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth.<sup>30</sup>

This can be clearly seen in the compositions of Rimsky-Korsakov.

### **Pagan and Christian influences**

There has been considerable discussion concerning the acceptance and meaning of ‘dual faith’ (*двоеверие/dvoeverie*) in a Russian context. Rimsky-Korsakov confessed to having an enthusiasm for pagan worship and a fear that “all signs of ancient pantheism are evidently vanishing”.<sup>31</sup> He particularly drew attention to the fact that “The people, as a nation sing ceremonial songs by force of habit and custom, neither understanding nor suspecting what really underlies these ceremonies and games”.<sup>32</sup> Consequently it is necessary to consider the interaction within the Russian spiritual mentality between paganism and Orthodox Christianity. How effective was Prince Vladimir’s adoption of

<sup>29</sup> See Coxe William 1784. *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark*. London, J.Nicols, for T.Cadell in the Strand.

<sup>30</sup> Bartók Béla. *Op.cit.*: 317.

<sup>31</sup> MML: 208.

<sup>32</sup> MML: 207–8.



Byzantium Christianity in 988 into Rus? James Billington maintains that this helped to establish Russia's first distinct culture and a basis for artistic expression.<sup>33</sup> It was the upper class who adopted Christianity whilst the coexistence of Christian and "pagan" elements was a facet of the uneducated peasant.<sup>34</sup> The continuing struggle for dominance can be seen from chronicles appearing as a result of the *Stoglav*, the Moscow Council of 1551, entitled "Struggle between Paganism and Christianity", which condemned and prohibited "pagan," "barbarian," and "devilish" festivals, customs, and songs popular among Russian peasants whilst also examining customs undertaken in the parishes having their origin in paganism.<sup>35</sup>

The Nikon<sup>36</sup> reforms which were introduced between 1652 and 1666 led to the separation of the "Old Believers" from the established church in protest. Hellberg-Hirn points out that in Old Believer hand-painted religious pictures the mythical bird with a woman's head, Sirin, is depicted.<sup>37</sup>



*Sirin and Alkonost – Birds of Joy and Sorrow*. Viktor Vasnetsov. 1896. Russian Museum, St.Petersburg, Russia

<sup>33</sup> Billington James 1970. *The Icon and the Axe. An Interpretative History of Russian Culture*. New York, Vintage Books: x.

<sup>34</sup> See Arzhanukhin V. 2000. *A Temptation in the Concept of "Dual-Belief in Christianity and Shamanism*. Ed. S.A.Mousalimas. Proceedings of the First Seoul International Consultation (25-30 June 2000, Seoul, Korea). Online publication February 2001. <http://www.OxfordU.net/seoul/chapter7/>; Mazo Margarita 1991. "We Don't Summon Spring in the Summer" in *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*. Eds. Brumfield William C. and Velimirovich Milos.M. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 77; Hellberg-Hirn Elena 1998. *Soil and Soul: The Symbolic World of Russianness*. Aldershot, Ashgate: 81–82.

<sup>35</sup> Mazo Margerita. *Op.cit.*: 76-7 and Arzhanukin V. *Op. cit.*

<sup>36</sup> Nikon, Patriarch of Moscow 1652–1658.

<sup>37</sup> Hellberg-Hirn Elena. *Op.cit.*:193–94.

These birds are also found in *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia* (Сказание о невидимом град Китеже и деде Февронии). The Old Believers also feature in *Khovanshchina*, which the composer completed; this can perhaps be interpreted as giving a balanced view to spirituality in Russia.

#### 1.4 Previous studies

The question of nationalism and national identity has been a subject of discussion, study and interest from the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. In European terms it emerged out of the reorganisation of borders and allegiances following the Napoleonic Wars. The struggle for the language and culture of the Poles, Czech's and Hungarians in Central Europe, for instance, to be recognised has been extensively studied. Out of a continuing interest in the subject today has arisen three main theories of 'nationalism': primordialism, ethno-symbolism and modernism. However, whilst these are often examined in light of the emergence of small nations, there has been little interest in applying theories of nationalism to a large, historically established country such as Russia. However, as will be shown, Russia lacked an 'identity' for numerous historical and geographical reasons. It is the modernist theory of Miroslav Hroch which can be seen to fit into the Russian mould. The question of how musical life can effect this discussion has tended to concentrate on the emergence of a united Germany in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through a socio-political discussion centred around, Wagner, for instance,<sup>38</sup> and the work of Verdi in Italy. Russia has not been examined in these terms.

There have been no studies that solely look at the question of Rimsky-Korsakov and his influence on a Russian national identity. A number of eminent researchers on Russian music fall into the trap of confusing 'nationalism' with 'national identity'. The former is more concerned with physical attributes such as borders and allegiances whilst the latter deals with both conscious and sub-conscious elements of a nation's attributes. Frolova-Walker falls into this trap when calling her recent book *Russian Music and Nationalism from Glinka to Stalin*. There is a continual tendency in the studies of Abrahams, Taruskin and Frolova-Walker to define a type of 'Russianness', a deviation from Western music harmony. However, the many arguments presented in the Russian press in the 1830's were nearer the essential point when they discussed the role of music as being a defining part of 'identity'. Ridenour in 1981 discusses "Nationalism" in 19<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> See, for instance, Deathridge J. 1991. *Germany: the "Special Path" in The Late Romantic Era*. Ed. Jim Samson. Prentice Hall: 50–73; Applegate Celia & Potter Pamela 2002. *Music & German National Identity*. Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press.



century music” but discusses the role of the Russian Music Society and the Conservatoire and the rivalry between them and essentially the *Kuchka*.<sup>39</sup>

There are those such as Taruskin in *Defining Russia Musically* who has a chapter entitled “Who Am I? (And Who Are You?)” which concentrates on David Brown’s analysis of Tchaikovsky and whether the music can be considered truly Russian. In addition he examines the *юродивый/yurodiviy*, the Holy Fool and his association with fate. However, the question of Russian national identity is not addressed.<sup>40</sup> Frolova-Walker in Franklin and Widdis’ *National Identity in Russian Culture* addresses the question of “The Music of the Soul” and, in a similar way to Taruskin, considers the question of the “tragic soul” as a facet of the Russian peasant culture. The analysis draws on the descriptions by the great writers, Pushkin, Gogol and Turgenev and particularly specifies the drawn-out song, the *протяжная/protiazhnaiia* as a paradigm for Russia and the Russian soul<sup>41</sup> Marina Ritzarev has a better approach to the relationship between Russian music and identity. In her paper she examines the historical influences and refers to the east-west conflict and its affect on musical ideologies. The analysis is very general looking at the summation of composer’s outputs but does not go into any detailed analysis of the works.<sup>42</sup> Margarita Mazo highlights the Russian rural culture, its artifacts and the traditional beliefs that have led to the so-called “dual-faith” and also into music.<sup>43</sup>

It can be seen that although the question of music and national identity has been addressed in a variety of ways, the studies invariably impinge on individual aspects of Russian cultural life related to music, try to analyze the broad interaction between composers, schools of musical thought and the east-west divide or try musically to define a ‘Russian musical sound’. It is, however, necessary to take into consideration that individually composers encompassed different aspects of the Russian ‘soul’ in their music contributing towards the development of that identity. It cannot be defined singularly as emanating only from specific aspects of music harmony but encompasses the variety and interaction of subject matter and context. In this respect Rimsky-Korsakov was the composer of the *Kuchka* and era who utilised all aspects of the Russian identity in his compositions to constitute a total picture.

<sup>39</sup> Ridenour Robert C. 1981. *Nationalism, Modernism, and Personal Rivalry in 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Russian Music*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press.

<sup>40</sup> Taruskin Richard 2000. *Defining Russia Musically*. Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press: 61–80.

<sup>41</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina 2004. *Music of the Soul?* in Eds. Franklin Simon and Widdis Emma. *National Identity in Russian Culture*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 116–131.

<sup>42</sup> Ritzarev Marina. “A Singing Peasant”: An Historical Look at National Identity in Russian Music. [http://www.biu.ac.il/HU/mu/min-ad/07-08/Ritzarev-A\\_Singing.pdf](http://www.biu.ac.il/HU/mu/min-ad/07-08/Ritzarev-A_Singing.pdf). 19.02.2013.

<sup>43</sup> Mazo Margarita. *Op.cit.*: 73–94.

### 1.5 Rimsky-Korsakov and his driving force

When dealing with historically related topics it is essential to consider the methodology, outlined by Quentin Skinner,<sup>44</sup> for instance, to avoid drawing unfounded conclusions. As an example I believe comments related to Rimsky-Korsakov in the previous works of Richard Taruskin, Francis Maes and Marina Frolova-Walker, amongst others, rely heavily on the composer's letter to his wife in August 1891 drawing attention to his total disillusionment with the concept of a Russian national music and the aims of the *Kuchka* without examining the possible reasons for the composer's state of mind at the time and which are not borne out by his later activities. It is interesting to note that of his operas alone, after 1891 he composed a further ten operas eight of which were on Russian themes. Can one discern reasons for what he wrote, particularly if we look at the most visible aspects, the operas? How does the choice of themes match the political and social arena of the times when they were written? Many critical views presented and developed in the 20<sup>th</sup> century not only by his pupils, whose views changed as their fame increased, but also by other musicians concerning his orchestrations of his fellow composers works have been presented. However, these do not take into consideration his motivation and are criticisms which are easily made in hindsight and without considering the historical evidence of performance. What was his aim in orchestrating and/or completing these works? One must also speculate on Rimsky-Korsakov's views of his fellow composers and their works. Does subsequent history show any benefit from his work? It is essential to try to understand the man, Rimsky-Korsakov, what was the background and environment within which he was born and grew. What were the driving elements at various stages of his life and how did they manifest themselves?

### 1.6 The structure of the thesis

The question of what constitutes 'national identity' has been a major academic discussion throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is a way not only to understand the nationalistic developments of Europe with the emergence of the central European countries, Hungary, the Czech and Slovak Republics but also the Risorgimento in Italy. However, a major controversy arises concerning Russia vis-à-vis these other countries. They were breaking away from larger entities to establish themselves independently, however, Russia was an established country with a long and chequered history. Why then did Russia need to find an identity? The introductory, second chapter, to the thesis examines the question of national identity and how the main theories of identity based on primordialism, ethno-symbolism and modernism are reflected in Russia through

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<sup>44</sup> See, for instance: Tully James (Ed.) 1988. *Meaning & Context. Quentin Skinner and his Critics*. Cambridge, Polity Press.

concentrating on the significant developments within the music community following the establishment of the St.Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862 against the cultural controversies that arose out of the reforms of Peter 1<sup>st</sup>.

The third chapter examines how the stagnation and duality of Russian society began to reflect on the arts. With increasing fears of open criticism following the Decembrist uprising<sup>45</sup> and particularly the events in Europe in 1848 the Tsarist bureaucracy increasingly censored and controlled the population. The Official Nationality policy of 1833 was questioned leading to the writings of Chernishevsky, Herzen and Belinsky at a time when Rimsky-Korsakov was in his late teens and early twenties. Throughout the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the politics of censorship became more aggressive and also affected the theatre and music. Linked to this was the repression of the language and culture of the periphery countries such as the Ukraine. A view is taken concerning how these factors are reflected particularly in Rimsky-Korsakov's operas.

The question of the role of 'dual faith' is examined in the fourth chapter. Although Rimsky-Korsakov was pantheistic he also understood how the question of religion was viewed as a class issue. Pagan rituals existed alongside Orthodox Christianity, particularly in the lives of the ordinary people and, as such, was an essential part of identity. Religion, culture and identity are discussed with an analysis of how this is reflected in the composer's works.

The role of folklore and folk music in defining a national identity through music continues to be a subject for discussion. It was the basis for the disagreements between Anton Rubinstein and Balakirev's *Kuchka*. However, for Rimsky-Korsakov Russian folklore and its rituals and the associated music whether authentic or modified was essential for an audience increasingly made up of the growing middle and professional classes. The use of this music and traditions in the composer's works is examined in chapter five.

Whilst developing his skills in classical harmony, Rimsky-Korsakov was fascinated by the possibilities that extensions to what was acceptable offered. The seeds for his study can be found in Glinka and Liszt, for instance, and these were later developed and

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<sup>45</sup> The Decembrists were a group of army officers from the upper strata of society who, having extensive knowledge of Western liberalism wanted to establish constitutionalism and a more democratic society in Russia and abolish serfdom. In the confusion surrounding the death of Alexander 1<sup>st</sup> and the accession, the Northern Society of the Decembrists, refusing to acknowledge Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>, staged a rebellion on December 14<sup>th</sup> (26<sup>th</sup>) 1825 which was put down by force and several of the leaders were executed.

included in his textbooks and studies. This thesis outlines in chapter six how Rimsky-Korsakov's development as a musician and his views and appreciation of the talent of his fellow composers gave him the tools and determination to ensure for them the recognition on both the national and international stage that they deserved. A study of his dedication to this task is examined and analysed in light of historical developments. In addition, as Professor at the Conservatoire at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire he was able to instil in his pupils an interest in extending the boundaries of classical musical tradition and romanticism. Consequently it is not surprising to find his pupils extending his own musical philosophy. Many foremost, essentially Russian, composers who were his pupils subsequently achieved world fame. His legacy will also be examined in this thesis in terms of how a Russian identity was carried forward.

At a time when Russian society was changing and liberal elements were making their views known, Rimsky-Korsakov was aware of the need for a changing society to be united through a national identity. The summary shows how he was able, not only to piece together the essential elements which help in determining an identity, but also to make his critical voice heard. In this respect he made the message even clearer by uniting music not only with Russian literature but also with the powerful visual impact of the art world. The 'Official Nationality' elements of 'orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality' were clearly reinterpreted and updated by Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov and earns him greater recognition than is given to him today.

## 2. The complexity of understanding Russian national identity related to music.

Rimsky-Korsakov was born at a time when the Official Nationality policy was being enforced due to fears of the European revolutions of 1848 spreading into Russia. Although he was in his late teens when the Emancipation Manifesto was eventually enacted he was active and influential as the liberal policies of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> hardened and the Tsarist bureaucracy became more centralised, repressive and locked by confusion and uncertainty. This was also when the liberal intelligentsia was developing their ideological views of a 'new' Russian society. It was a time when the imperial view as expressed by Count Uvarov:

Our common obligation consists in this that the education of the people be conducted according to the Supreme intention of our August Monarch, in the joint spirit of Orthodoxy, autocracy, and nationality.<sup>46</sup>

was being questioned. A fundamental question which will be addressed is whether the compositions of Rimsky-Korsakov were deliberately coloured to support the questioning views of the liberal intelligentsia and acceptable to an increasingly cosmopolitan audience.

### 2.1 Introduction

In order to understand the controversy which existed in mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Russia concerning the state of Russian music and its relationship to the identity issue, it is important to consider how the Petrine reforms<sup>47</sup> and the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century rulers had influenced its course. The initial starting point of the study is the historical background to political developments in Russia in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century with a particular reference to the developing interest in national heritage which already started in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Reference is particularly paid to the advancements brought about by Peter the Great through his interest in the West and the criticism levelled by respected statesmen

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<sup>46</sup> Riasonovsky Nicholas.A. 1969. *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia, 1825-1855*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 73

<sup>47</sup> Following his travels in Western Europe at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Peter the Great introduced reforms into Russian society which changed Russia into a European power with European culture. The tsar's reforms included the establishment of a navy, the modernization of the army, a restructuring of the government, introduction of new arts and sciences, a new dress code and a reform of the Church. All this also had an enormous impact on language.

such as Karamzin,<sup>48</sup> at the time, and highlighted by many of the leading authors starting from Pushkin.

At the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century the leaning in Russia towards the culture and religion of the Byzantine East led to the church having a greater hold on society than in Western Europe. Central to the Orthodox Church philosophy is that the place of worship is where man is in communion with God. Consequently there are strict regulations concerning churches; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Council of Nicaea in 787 emphasised the importance of icon. In terms of music this was only to be sung unaccompanied.<sup>49</sup> However, the 18<sup>th</sup> century was dominated by the Westernisation of the country and with this a secularisation of music. A dominant feature was a theatre together with artists and musicians who were essentially serfs and were directed by foreign Directors of Music (*kapellmeisters*) generally with either a French or Italian background.

In considering the role played by music and, in particular, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov in the development of a Russian national identity it is necessary to highlight numerous contentious issues which emanated from Peter 1<sup>st</sup> views and subsequent actions in modernising Russia. His own extensive visits to Western Europe at the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century opened his eyes to a society where commerce, art and music flourished. In moving the capital from Moscow to a newly established St. Petersburg in 1712, together with the implanting of an imitation of Western European identity on a centuries old and established society, he introduced confusion and a loss of identity into society that would have serious consequences for Russia as a whole and led to the disastrous events of 1905 and eventually 1917. With the move of the capital it seemed as if he was ignoring the vast empire to the east and Russia's Asiatic traditions. Russia's centre of power shifted to the western edge of the country. Moscow, Russia's holy city, was abandoned and with it the rich history of that city. These changes followed the reforms of the Orthodox Church introduced by Nikon, Patriarch of Moscow from 1652 to 1658, which had already split the religious community, the effects of which were experienced by Peter in the early years of his reign. Later he used this Church instability to

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<sup>48</sup> Карамзин Н. 1964. *О любви к отечеству и народной гордости. Избранные сочинения в двух томах* (On the love of patronum and national pride. Selected works in two volumes). Москва ~ Ленинград, Издательство «Художественная литература».

<sup>49</sup> For historical background see, for instance, Billington James 1970. *Op.cit.*: 26–40; Vladyshevskaja Tatiana 1991. *On the Links Between Music and Icon Painting in Medieval Rus*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 14–18, in Brumfield William and Velimirovic Milos *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*; Riasanovsky Nicholas and Steinburg Mark 2005. *A History of Russia. Vol. 1: To 1855*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 111–122.

advantage when subjecting the Orthodox Church to the rule of the sovereign.<sup>50</sup> The unseverable link between religion and the State was later used as a definition of ‘national identity’ which was formally proclaimed by Count Sergei Uvarov, Nicholas I<sup>st</sup>’s Minister of Education, in 1833.

## 2.2 What is ‘National Identity’

National identity is a concept which is very difficult to define. Its definition depends very much on the discipline of the definer, whether it be, for instance geographical, political or sociological. The terms ‘citizen’, ‘patriot’ and ‘nationalist’ do not necessarily have anything to do with national identity; an immigrant can be all of them, however, he is unlikely to attain the national identity of his chosen nation. To quote the words of Jean-Jacques Rousseau “The first rule which we have to follow is that of national character: every people has, or must have, a character”.<sup>51</sup> Lev Tolstoi in *War and Peace* (Война и мир) underlines the essence of national identity when he describes Natasha’s dance:

Где, как, когда всосала в себя из того русского воздуха, которым она дышала, эта графинечка, воспитанная эмигранткой-француженкой, откуда взяла она эти приемы (которые *pas de châte* давно бы должны были выгнать), но как только она стала [...] Она сделала то самое и так точно, так полно это сделала, что Анисья Федоровна, которая тотчас подала графинечке необходимый для ее дела платок, Анисья Федоровна прослезилась, глядя на эту тоненькую, грациозную, такую чуждую ей, в шелку и в бархате воспитанную графиню, которая умела понять все то, что было и в Анисье, и в отце Анисьи, и тетке, и матери, и во всяком русском человеке.<sup>52</sup>

Where, how and when could this young countess, who had had a French *émigrée* for governess, have imbibed from the Russian air she breathed the spirit of that dance? [...] But the spirit and the movements were the very ones – inimitable, unteachable Russian [...] she [Anisya Fiodorvna] watched the slender, graceful countess, reared in silks and velvets, in another world than hers, who was yet able to understand all that was in Anisya and in Anisya’s father and mother and aunt, and in every Russian man and women.”<sup>53</sup>

<sup>50</sup> The Orthodox Church reforms are outlined in, for instance, Preobrazhensky Alexander (Ed.) 1988. *The Russian Orthodox Church 10<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries*. Moscow, Progress Publishers: 89–102 and 104–118; Riasanovsky. *Op.cit.*: 182–186 and 213–216.

<sup>51</sup> See Franklin S. and Widdis E. (Eds.) 2004. *National Identity in Russian Culture*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1. This was stated in Rousseau’s Constitutional Project for Corsica drafted in 1763.

<sup>52</sup> Толстой Лев 2000. *Война и мир*. Москва, Захаров: 548 – 49

<sup>53</sup> Tolstoy L.N. 1967. *War and Peace*. Transl. Rosemary Edmunds. Harmondsworth, Middlesex, Penguin Books: 604.

The German-Swiss jurist and political theorist Johann Kaspar Bluntsch (1808–81) in his *Theory of the State* has outlined identity in perhaps the most direct way as a “national spirit embodied in common language, customs, and outlook of the people”.<sup>54</sup>

Any discussion on national identity needs initially to consider the ideas of Johann Gottfried Herder and especially his concept of ‘*Volk*’. It was also Herder’s concepts that formed a basis for the development of political thought in Russia. Herder underlined the importance of language both as a means to understand the inner-self as well as understanding outside relationships; ‘Climate, water and air, food and drink, they all affect language’.<sup>55</sup> The *volk* or nationality is spiritual but embodies a historical development and an awareness of an inherent surrounding and culture. This arouses a sense of identity with the community. However, the political connotations of this were that an ideal *volk*-State would not have any need for a sovereign or body having extensive political powers. In this it is interesting to note that Herder distinguishes between the *bourgeoisie* (*das Volk der Bürger*) and the intellectuals (*das Volk der Gelehrsamkeit*) with the former in the majority. This *Bürger* group consist of the farmers, fishermen, craftsman and small traders, the people of folk songs who embody the characteristics of the nation. In Herder’s assessment of the nation the two extremes, the aristocracy and ‘rabble’ have no place. Serfs have no designation and may be a part of the *Bürger* status. Hereditary rule Herder considered as “the very embodiment of human stupidity, as something which conflicts with every principle of Christianity and, of course, with the very concept of human equality.”<sup>56</sup> Herder strongly believed that reform would only occur by movements led from the *volk* through political, intellectual and cultural activity originating in the middle class and diffusing to all classes of society. This would result in the disappearance of an inflexible, autocratic and repressive government and be replaced by a ‘government of the people’. These ideas found fertile ground within the developing middle class in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia.

There are three essential theories of ‘nationalism’, primordialism, ethno-symbolism and modernism. The ideas of the main proponents of these will be outlined briefly together with views concerning Russia.

**Primordialism** is based on the concept that nationality is as natural as the human senses since ‘nations’ have existed in our known history. However, primordialism can be

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<sup>54</sup> See, Snyder Louis L. 1954 *The Meaning of NATIONALISM*, Westport, Greenwood Press Publishers:193.

<sup>55</sup> See, Barnard Frederick 1965. *Herder’s Social and Political Thought*, Oxford, Clarendon Press: 57. Barnard gives a comprehensive description and analysis of Herder’s main concepts.

<sup>56</sup> *Ib.*: 75.



broken down into three approaches, ‘naturalist’, ‘sociobiological’ and ‘cultural’ as defined by, for instance, Özkirimli, Smith and Tilly<sup>57</sup>. For the *naturalist* approach one is born into a nation and becomes a part of that environment. In this respect there is no distinction between nation and ethnic groups. As a member of the group to which one is attached there is a *sociological* relationship linked with existing language and *culture*. It can be argued that if a person’s characteristics were naturally in-born then a society would remain static. However, although with each generation there will be a modernising influence, the foundations of the ethnic society remain fixed although the boundaries and content change. Religious beliefs and rituals also restrict a natural modernising development. It can be argued that migration and movement will change language and affiliations. A person will also have different roles and identities depending on which is significant and dominant at any given time. It has been noted by Zubaida that one problem with the primordial theories concerns the concept of nation and the political units i.e. nation-states<sup>58</sup>. Many nations such as Russia were so large and diverse that there could not be ethnical homogeneity. However, as Smith points out, and one can apply to Russia, many present-day nations existed as regions and education for the populace was class-divided. Myths, legends and religious practises although common had regional divergence.<sup>59</sup> For primordialism the concepts of beliefs, perceptions and emotions are prime considerations when considering an individual’s actions.

Anthony D. Smith is one of the leading proponents of the **ethno-symbolism** approach to ‘nation’. He defines it as ‘a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members’.<sup>60</sup> If one examines the first set of definitions concerning the historic foundation then, in terms of Russia, the late 18<sup>th</sup> century was a time when intellectual elements in society took an interest in resurrecting the old ballads and *bylinas*. The *The Ballad of Igor’s Wars* (Слово о полку Игореве) from the year 1100 was rediscovered which led to a heightened interest in rediscovering songs, music and symbols from the past. This interest was reinforced by the appearance of Karamzin’s *History of the Russian State* (История государства Российского), the first eight volumes of which appeared in 1818 and were sold out in twenty five days.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>57</sup> Özkirimli Umut 2000. *Theories of Nationalism*, Hampshire and New York, Palgrave: 66. Özkirimli gives an excellent summary of the theories referring to the original work of Smith, Gellner, Tilly, Shils and Geertz amongst others. The text is a summary of the main ideas.

<sup>58</sup> Zubaida Sami 1989. Nations: old and new. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 12 (3): 329–339.

<sup>59</sup> Smith Anthony 1991. *National Identity*, London, Penguin Books: 45–46.

<sup>60</sup> *Ib.*:14.

<sup>61</sup> Altshuller Mark 1992. *The transition to the modern age: sentimentalism and preromanticism, 1790–1820* in Charles Moser (ed). *The Cambridge History of Russian Literature*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 103.

Smith postulates that profound changes occur within the culture of ethnic identities through the influx of immigrants as a result of a country's expansionist policies.<sup>62</sup> This, however, was not the case in Russia. The Westernising policies of the Tsarist regime from Peter 1<sup>st</sup> through to the mid-1850's was selective and led to foreign 'specialists' being enticed to work in Russia such as Dutch boat builders and Italian architects. On 5<sup>th</sup> January 1705, for instance, with regard to music an edict was issued by Peter which stipulated "that pieces should be in Russian and German" and at performances "the musicians were to play on diverse instruments".<sup>63</sup> His successor, Empress Anne (1730–40), established a permanent Italian theatrical company engaging the Italian composer Francesco Araja who arrived in St. Petersburg from Venice in 1735 together with singers, an orchestra, ballet dancers and scenic designers. Music to the upper echelons of society was hearing music performed only by foreigners in Italian, French and German or church music in a Western style by composers such as Dmytro Stepanovich Bortniansky who had trained in Italy.<sup>64</sup>

If one examines the concepts behind the latter criteria in Smith's definition it is necessary to ask how does a nation arise and why. The driving forces for these relate to two types of ethnic (*ethnie*) community, which can be 'lateral' (aristocratic) and 'vertical' (demonic).<sup>65</sup> The aristocracy including the upper strata of society, the leading clerical and military representatives, had a culture that bound them to each other and the development of identity and nation depended on their ability to diffuse this to the other levels of society. This will be dealt with in more detail in section 2.3.

**Modernism** as the term suggests relates essentially to developments in national identity with the rise of technology, urbanisation and alterations to the social fabric of a 'nation'. Gellner has suggested that the lack of a nation concept in pre-modern times resulted from the relationship between power and culture. In the former agro-literary society the two main society sects which needed to conjoin to form a 'nation' were the ruling class having a developed 'high' level of culture with the local agrarian communities with a 'low' culture centred on working the land, the seasons and a 'religion' combining elements of paganism and Christianity.<sup>66</sup> Established religion had an interest in

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<sup>62</sup> Smith Anthony. *Op.cit.*: 26.

<sup>63</sup> Newmarch Rosa. *Op.cit.*: 26. See also Findeizen Nikolai 2008. *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800. Volume 1. From Antiquity to the Beginning of the Eighteenth Century*. Eds. Miloš Velimirović and Claudia Jensen. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 409 n. 410.

<sup>64</sup> See, for instance, Findeizen Nikolai 2008. *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800. Volume 2. The Eighteenth Century*. Eds. Miloš Velimirović and Claudia Jensen. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 1–24 and 200–204.

<sup>65</sup> Smith Anthony D. *Op.cit.*: 53.

<sup>66</sup> Özkirimli Umut. *Op.cit.*: 130.

imposing shared cultural norms but was not able to bridge the gap between ‘high’ and ‘low’ since they did not have an intrinsic ‘high’ culture to introduce to the masses. The perpetuation of a class system maintained the loyalties within society and this, for instance, was the state in 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia.

The years 1861–1917, the so-called the *age of capitalism* (эпоха капитализма) introduced a new social group *raznoshinets* or people having a different status i.e. not aristocrats and not serfs. This term was considered a synonym for ‘revolutionaries’ due to their often radical views. In Gellner’s terms nations will only emerge ‘when general social conditions make for standardized, homogeneous, centrally sustained high cultures, pervading whole populations and not just elite minorities.’<sup>67</sup> This was not the aim of the administration of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> in Russia. Gellner’s pre-requisites for nationalism is a mutually shared culture based on the imposition of a high culture. In addition, a developing industrial society needs mass education for this to succeed. His theories fail to take account of the reasons for and rise of ethnic and nationalistic sentiments in many of the emerging nations of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Whilst he contends that a society becomes stressful unless a ‘nationalist congruence between a man’s culture and that of his environment is satisfied’<sup>68</sup> he fails to consider, especially in the Russian context, that this congruence was different for different strata of society and it would need the disintegration of the *chin*, the Table of Ranks established by Peter 1<sup>st</sup> in 1722, the abolition of serfdom and the growth of an equal opportunity society in order for ‘nationhood’ to emerge.

Anderson’s theories of modernism are based on the idea that nations grew out of a decline in the religious and dynastic hold over communities together with the publication and availability, on a wide-scale, of newspapers and books. These in combination lead to a new comprehension of the surrounding world. Aligned to this is often a renewed interest in language.<sup>69</sup> He also quotes the rise of ‘official nationalisms’ as a counter to threatening nationalist movements in Europe in the 1820’s. This he interprets as a result of the response of the ‘dynastic and aristocratic – threatened with exclusion from, or marginalization in, popular imagined communities’.<sup>70</sup> Again these concepts do not strictly apply to Russia. The Decembrist action in 1825 was instigated by the ruling class as a challenge to the increasing inflexibility of Tsarist rule. In addition they challenged the falseness of Russian society at the time with its lack of

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<sup>67</sup> See, *ib.*: 133.

<sup>68</sup> *Ib.*: 141.

<sup>69</sup> Anderson Benedict 2003. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism*, London, Verso: 12- 19.

<sup>70</sup> *Ib.*: 109-10.

purpose. They welcomed the changes to the *ancien régime* in Europe and wanted a reintroduction of a 'Russian' way of life. The political aims of the more moderate Northern faction of the Decembrists were a British style constitutional monarchy with a limited franchise, the abolition of serfdom and equality before the law. The Southern Society had more radical aims and wanted to establish a republic and redistribute land between the State and the peasants. The Tsar believing that these demands stemmed from political liberalisation instigated a series of repressions and a return to a former government of restriction and conservatism.<sup>71</sup>

### 2.3 Identity and Peter 1<sup>st</sup>'s reforms - sources of 'conflict' in society

Lotman in his analysis of Russian society at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries draws attention to the confusion in identity that the reforms of Peter 1<sup>st</sup> introduced.<sup>72</sup> There was a confusion in dressing codes, there was a confusion in language and its meaning since upper-class society was forced into using a language which was not their own. For a national identity language is a dominating force since it is built up on everyday life and customs. In this way common language had to find upper-class expressions from a foreign culture. As Lotman points out, a knowledge and daily use of foreign languages in Russian society gave status and dominated everyday behaviour. Life in public became play-acting and natural life could only continue behind closed doors. A person's manner of walking, dressing and, in particular, the words and expressions used indicated his position in society. To quote Nikolai Gogol, "A run of luck, definitely a run of luck! It's just a low card!" was an army expression that would never be used, for instance, by the civilian bureaucrat or army officer.<sup>73</sup> The word, as an expression of culture at this time, was drawn from the fashions of the romantic heroic novels of the West. Even in Tchaikovsky's opera *Eugene Onegin* Madame Larina remembers: "*Как я любила Ричардсона*"<sup>74</sup> (*How I loved Richardson!*) This romanticism in words and deeds became the by-word for society. As Lotman so rightly states, the Russian became a foreigner in his own country.<sup>75</sup>

The Russian author and historian Nikolai Mikhailovich Karamzin gave a view on identity already in 1802 which also gives credence to Lotman's views:

<sup>71</sup> See, for instance, Billington James. *Op.cit.*: 264–268 and Riasanovsky Nicholas. *Op.cit.*: 298–300.

<sup>72</sup> Lotman Juri. *Op.cit.*: 232–233.

<sup>73</sup> *Ib*: 236.

<sup>74</sup> Tchaikovsky Pyotr. *Eugene Onegin, Vocal Score*, Richard Schauer-London, Elite Edition 190, 1993, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Lotman Juri. *Op.cit.*: 232–233.

С кем мы росли и живем, к тем привыкаем. Душа их *сообразуется* с нашею; делается некоторым ее зеркалом...Сия любовь к согражданам, или к людям, с которыми мы росли, воспитывались и живем, есть...*моральная*, любовь к отечеству.<sup>76</sup>

We get used to those we grow up and with whom we live. Their souls *conforms* to ours, becomes a kind of mirror of it...This love for fellow-citizens, or people with whom we grow up, receive our education, and live is the...*moral*, love of country.”<sup>77</sup>

and commenting on the result of Peter 1<sup>st</sup> Westernizing reform’s on language:

Некоторые извиняются худым знанием русского языка: это извинение хуже самой вины. Оставим нашим любезным светским дамам утверждать, что русский язык груб и неприятен; что *charmant* и *seduisant*, *expansion* и *vapeurs* не могут быть на нем выражены [...] Язык наш выразителен не только для высокого красноречия, для громкой, живописной поэзии, но и для нежной простоты, для звуков сердца и чувствительности. Он богаче гармониею, нежели французский [...]”<sup>78</sup>

Some excuse themselves on the ground of their poor knowledge of the Russian language; this excuse is worse than guilt itself. Let us leave it to our dear society ladies to declare that the Russian language is crude and unpleasant, that *charmant* and *seduisant*, *expansion* and *vapeurs* cannot be expressed in it...Our language not only lends itself to express tender simplicity and the voice of heart and feelings. It is richer in harmony than French [...]”<sup>79</sup>

In Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century there were conflicting interpretations of identity. In Smith’s interpretation Russia was a ‘lateral’ society where the superficial identity was upheld by the Tsar and the surrounding bureaucracy supported by the Orthodox Church.<sup>80</sup>

However, one can question whether this identity was ‘Russian’. Pushkin, Turgenev and later Tolstoy and Chekhov picture a society of bored individuals living in an environment consisting of customs, music and language that is not their own. Onegin was a typical *лишний человек* (superfluous person), who appears in Russian literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, a man with money and intellect, unable to find a sensible life-style but at the same time bored with society. Nikolai Chernyshevsky in his work *Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality* (1855), in discussing beauty, talks of an upper class society

<sup>76</sup> Карамзин Н. 1964. *Избранные сочинения*, Т.2. Москва-Ленинград, Издательство «Художественная литература»: 284.

<sup>77</sup>; Raeff Marc 1966. *Russian Intellectual History*. New York/Chicago/Burlingame, Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc.: 107.

<sup>78</sup> Карамзин Н. *Op.cit.*: 286

<sup>79</sup>; Raeff Marc. *Op.cit.*: 111.

<sup>80</sup> Smith.Anthony D. *Op.cit.*: 53.

which suffers from a lack of doing physical work “Even sickness is interesting, almost enviable, when it is the consequence of the mode of life we like”.<sup>81</sup>

The principle aims of the intellectuals according to Smith in establishing a ‘nation’ has been the concepts of autonomy, unity and identity. Autonomy in these terms means self-determination and collective effort to create a national ‘sameness’. The relating of these ideas to Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century is fraught with contradictions. Following the Decembrist rebellion in 1825, the new Tsar Nicholas I initiated a regime of stability through strict controls with an emphasis on the autocracy of the Tsar. Already in 1826 he created the Third Department of His Majesty’s Own Chancery, the special police, with similar aims to the Ministry of Education. Censorship was the responsibility of both, but the Third Department was more visible. Nicholas’ intention to control everyone through these bodies was his chief weapon against subversion and revolution. “Fish swam in the water, birds sang in the forest, because they were permitted to do so by the authorities”.<sup>82</sup> Liberal and radical ideas encompassing artistic freedom were not tolerated. ‘Identity’ was only acceptable within the bounds of the formulated *Official Nationality* which was proclaimed by the new Russian Minister of Education, Count Sergey Uvarov, in 1833. The three pillars of this document were orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality. ‘Nationality’ in this meaning was simply the Russian people owing allegiance to the Tsar. Nicholas tried through official dogma to answer the everlasting question concerning Russia, east or west, Christian or heathen. The intention was to encourage the rise of national feeling, pride in Russia, the State and language to the detriment of other ethnic groups.

After ten years of the policy Uvarov, in his report submitted for approval, states “it was necessary to find the principles which form the distinctive character of Russia and which belong only to Russia”.<sup>83</sup> However, as Mikhael Pogodin, the noted historian and journalist stated, Russian history depicts the nation as a family with the ruler as father and Gogol underlined this: “Do not forget that in the Russian language [...] a superior is called father”.<sup>84</sup> The Official Nationality was not seen as State terrorism but a paternal and patriarchal relationship.

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<sup>81</sup> Chernyshevsky Nikolai 2002. *Selected Philosophical Essays*, Honolulu, Hawaii, University Press of the Pacific: 288.

<sup>82</sup> Riasanovsky Nicholas. *Op.cit.*: 221, n71.

<sup>83</sup> Quoted in Riasanovsky Nicholas 2005. *Russian Identities. A Historical Survey*, Oxford, Oxford University Press: 133.

<sup>84</sup> *Ib.*: 139.

The revolutions of 1848 in Europe led to Russia becoming further isolated from the rest of Europe. The influence of European liberalism and philosophy and particularly the German school was considered with suspicion. The teaching of philosophy in universities was restricted to logic and psychology; constitutional law was removed from the curriculum. All education was tightly controlled including home education. By limiting individual schooling according to social background meant that people would remain in their consigned place in life.<sup>85</sup> In this respect the ‘lateral’ nationality is seen as maintaining the existing *status quo*.

The ‘vertical’ ethnic community defined by Smith was generally aligned to the church since this united all social strata and relied on a diffusion of ethnic culture through religion. When considering the position of the Church it is again necessary to return to the reforms of Peter 1<sup>st</sup> which are well documented by Bulygin.<sup>86</sup> The changes he instigated mirrored those in government administration. The Spiritual Regalement of 1721 established a new organisation with a Holy Synod replacing the patriarch. A lay official, the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, was appointed to ensure this body carried out its duties correctly and legally. Although approved by the Eastern patriarchs, the aim of Peter was to establish a Western-style relationship between the Church and the State. Although not involving itself with religious matters it gave the State control over the Church organisations, property and possessions and made Peter the supreme leader. Again the leaning towards the West resulted in the 1721 Synod allowing marriages between Orthodox and Western Christians. Although initially tolerating the so-called Old Believers, their consistent opposition to reform led eventually to restrictions, penalties and taxes being placed on them. Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> (1762–96) in her survey of land finally secularized the Church estates and peasants forming a so-called College of Economy with which she sought to attract and establish foreign colonies in Russian. As a result of these changes the position of the Church as representative of all strata of society was undermined, and it became a tool of State policy. The moral, spiritual and impartiality of the Church was reduced to being a follower of society.

The falseness of the society that existed at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also became the sharp criticism of Gogol. *The Inspector General* (Ревизор) published in 1836 and revised in 1842 followed on the creation in 1826 of the Third Department of His Majesty’s Own Chancery and the “Official Nationality” policy document of 1833. It

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<sup>85</sup> See, for instance, Riasanovsky Nicolas 2005. *Op.cit.*: 324–326; Riasanovsky Nicolas 1959. *Nicholas I and Official Nationality in Russia 1825–1855*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 216–219.

<sup>86</sup> Bulygin I.A. *The Russian Church in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century* in Preobrazhensky Alexander. *Op.cit.*: 104–123. A summary is also given in Riasanovsky Nicolas 2005. *Ib.*: 215.



was the ‘little’ minds in the censors departments that questioned, amongst others, Gogol’s valuation of a human soul at two and a half roubles in *Мёртвые души* (Dead Souls) and feared that musical notation might include secret codes. It was these that led to an air of uncertainty, suspicion and an unstable society and enabled people represented by the Chlestakov-type to succeed.<sup>87</sup> At the same time it is not surprising that already in 1830 Pyotr Chaadaev in *Letters on the History of Philosophy* (Письма из истории философии) questioned whether there was anything genuine in Russia, no original thought, and all that had been adopted from abroad was the useless and trivial. Consequently Russia had “no past, no present, and no future” and was “a gap in the intellectual order of things”.<sup>88</sup>

However, whilst the ‘Official Nationality’ policy of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> enforced the notion of the inviolability of the State and aimed at underlining the authority of the Tsar supported by the Church it fanned the more extreme nationalist ideas of Chernishevsky, Herzen and Belinsky, who would subsequently elaborate on them in their newspapers *The Bell* and *The Contemporary* (Современник).

With the accession of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> a certain liberalisation policy was introduced and serfdom abolished in 1861. However, this was a weak measure not fully endorsed or enforced. It also introduced a peasant class with little, if any, improvements in their rights to own land and with a feeling of uncertainty and a need to find an identity.

When considering Russia in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, current concepts concerning the development of national identity are not easily applicable as such. In comparison to Western Europe, Russia lacked a cultural heritage. Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> was motivated by the Enlightenment and realised that the establishment of a cultural legacy was necessary for a national identity to develop. Through her instigation the *Russian Academy* or *Imperial Russian Academy* (Императорская Российская академия) was established and Nikolai Lvov and Gavril Derzhavin given the task of ensuring the availability of publications and literature in the Russian language. This was a part of Catherine’s policy of ‘official nationalism’ and she took great interest in developing “cultural symbols of nationalism”.<sup>89</sup> Through her interest in native music and folk songs she felt the need to draw the attention of the aristocracy to the significance of the peasant in Russian

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<sup>87</sup> Khlestov is the hero of the comedy *The Inspector General*

<sup>88</sup> Riasanovsky Nicholas 2005. *Op.cit.*: 151. See Chaadaev Peter 1969. *Philosophical Letters & Apology of a Madman*. Transl. Mary-Barbara Zeldin. Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press: 35–37.

<sup>89</sup> Ritzarev. Marina. “*A Singing Peasant*”: *An Historical Look at National Identity in Russian Music*. [www.biu.ac.il/HU/mu/min-ad/07-08/Ritzarev - A\\_Singing.pdf](http://www.biu.ac.il/HU/mu/min-ad/07-08/Ritzarev - A_Singing.pdf). 6.



society. This led to an interest in the collecting of folk music and their transcriptions. The first of these appeared in 1776 when Vasily Trutovsky published his *Collection of Russian Rustic Songs with Music* (Собрание русских простых песен с нотами). Together with Lvov, who published a collection of Russian folk songs in 1790, they set a precedent for the use of folk songs to establish a musical national identity.<sup>90</sup> Their collections were later used by many 19<sup>th</sup> century composers including Glinka.

As mentioned, due to the Westernising reforms of the 18<sup>th</sup> century Russian society was lost. It was trying to play-act at being Western in all elements of life. As Lotman has pointed out the 'true' Russian could only exist behind closed doors.<sup>91</sup> The serf population remained locked to the land, to their traditions, and to the concept of the infallibility of the Tsar and Church. The modernist national identity theory of Miroslav Hroch with three stages of development<sup>92</sup> fits the essential unfolding of an identity consciousness in Russia. However, to fully understand the direction of the arts, encompassing literary, pictorial and musical, one must return to the notion that for a nation to form there must be a diffusion of ideas to all social classes. In this respect the ethno-symbolic concepts play a significant role. It was essential for the aristocratic classes to appreciate and focus on the language and traditions of their own country and for a middle class to grow to become the essential link between the upper classes and the liberated serfs. Through a realist awareness and appreciation of the lives of these different strata of society, and through the increasing accessibility of published newspapers and literature, pictorial arts and music were seen as the possibility for a multi-various and collective 'nation' to become a reality. Inherited traditions, dances, songs, language are not static and do change as society changes. The 19<sup>th</sup> century became a time not only to re-find a lost ethnic culture, a way of life, on which to build but also to become aware of a changing society (Hroch stage 1). This eventually leads to a national agitation in which the enlightened group try to persuade people from the non-dominant, peasant group of their true inheritance, rights and identity. Often this does not initially achieve results due to opposition from an autocratic state interested in maintaining the status quo together with an uncertainty and lack of understanding in the peasants (Hroch stage 2). The Tsar and upper echelons of the State, fearing that the changes that had occurred throughout Europe as a result of liberalism and revolution would encompass Russia, could only counter that threat with repressions and

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<sup>90</sup> This development is outlined, for instance, in Findeizen Nikolai. *Op.cit*: 237–254; Ritzarev Marina 2006. *Eighteenth-Century Russian Music*. Aldershot, Ashgate Publishing Limited: 151–153, 201–206.

<sup>91</sup> Lotman Juri. *Op.cit*: 235.

<sup>92</sup> Hroch Miroslav 1996. *In the National Interest. Demands and Goals of European Nationalist Movements of the Nineteenth Century: A Comparative Perspective*. Transl. Robin Cassling. Prague, Faculty of Arts, Charles University: 13–14.

restrictions. Being estranged from the general populace, in a country too large to effectively control, they over-reacted to insurrection. Instead of hearing the calls for freedom of speech, equal rights and opportunities and a release from government oppression they flamed discontent with censorship and hard-hand tactics. This resulted in increasingly more radical and violent demands for the reform of government and the social structure of the country and eventually leading to the Revolution in 1917 (Hroch stage 3). This analysis can be seen as the radical attainment of ‘nationality’ as outlined by Hroch.

#### 2.4 The meaning of national identity in music

The advent of Glinka’s works and particularly the opera *A Life for the Tsar* which was premièred in 1836 stirred a discussion within society of the meaning of national identity (*narodnost*). This was taken up by Dmitry Struyski, who was a composer as well as a music critic. He asked “Of what does national identity consist?”<sup>93</sup> He questioned whether true musical national identity lay in the use and adaptation of folk-song and suggested that the reason for the success of many Russian operas was not in the quality of the music but that the composers were imitating the *zapevala*, the initial melody of a folk-song. This was not giving the music genuine national identity but the national identity of the common people (*простонародность/prostonarodnost*).

In the literary world there existed a tradition extending from Derzhavin through to Pushkin. The writers wrote from an inner feeling, they did not need to unnaturally seek a national identity. “Music has least need of national identity among all the arts since... it is the common language of mankind and...has *its own form*”.<sup>94</sup> However, others such as Prince Vladimir Odoevsky felt that Glinka’s *Kamarinskaya* (Камаринская) fully reflected a Russian character in a way that no foreign composer could since the orchestral work was entirely based on folk music. The music critic known as Rostislav, Feofil Tolstoi compared composers to painters who “are not subject to the demands of exclusive nationality”.<sup>95</sup> However, Tolstoi felt that in music the nationality invariably appears through the use of folksongs. However, he doubted whether the foundations for Russian dramatic music had been established since, for instance, recitatives were out of place and folk music tended to be monotonous since it generally revolved around minor keys.

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<sup>93</sup> Campbell Stuart (Ed. and transl.) 1994. *Russians on Russian Music, 1830 – 1880*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 44-46.

<sup>94</sup> *Ib.*: 47.

<sup>95</sup> *Ib.*: 54.

As can be seen the views concerning the importance of folk music in establishing a national music identity differed considerably but were nevertheless prominent. Did music require an impetus or should it develop naturally like literature or was the established folk music the essence of nationality since it had developed naturally? As one can deduce from his memoirs the first twenty years of Rimsky-Korsakov's life was full of experiences, relationships and questions. Musicians not only did not have a prominent place in society, neither were they officially recognised as a profession.

## **2.5 Rimsky-Korsakov – the formative years**

Rimsky-Korsakov was born in 1844 in Tikhvin about 200 kilometres from St. Petersburg. According to his own memoirs, although he had a certain proficiency in music he writes:

I do not recall that music made a strong impression on me at that time [...] I was not particularly fond of music, or even if I was, it scarcely ever made an impression on me [...] But for the sake of play, for the sake of aping in the same way as I used to take apart and assemble a watch, I tried at times to compose music and write some notes.<sup>96</sup>

As with other members of the family, Rimsky-Korsakov started his career in the navy. In 1856, he was sent to St. Petersburg to commence his training in the Marine Corps. During his naval studies he also continued with piano lessons initially with Ulikh who played the cello in the Alexander Theatre. In 1860 F.A. Kanille became his piano teacher and it was he who initiated his interest in composition. It was Kanille who introduced Rimsky-Korsakov to Balakirev in November 1861 where he also met Mussorgsky, Cui and Stasov. During this period he was under the influence of this group and on Balakirev's advice began composing his Symphony in E-flat minor. It is interesting to note that he writes:

Balakirev, who had never had any systematic course in harmony and counterpoint and had not superficially applied himself to them, evidently thought such studies quite unnecessary [...] [he was] endowed by nature with the sense of correct harmony and part-writing.<sup>97</sup>

It is also at this time that Rimsky-Korsakov began to question Balakirev's method of teaching and noting how simple instruction in basic music theory would have corrected both his own as well as his fellow gifted amateur's simple mistakes. He also notes that:

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<sup>96</sup> MML: 5, 8.

<sup>97</sup> MML: 27.

I had no idea of trumpets and French horns and would get confused between writing for natural scale and chromatic-scale instruments. But Balakirev himself had not known these instruments...The bow instruments, too, were an absolute muddle to me.<sup>98</sup>

Since this was written in 1893, these views can be considered as those of a mature professional.

On April 8 (20) 1862 Rimsky-Korsakov graduated as a midshipman knowing that his promotion to officer would usually only occur after a two-year cruise. In 1862 he was assigned to the clipper *Almaz* and for the next three years travelled the world. All this was decisive for Rimsky-Korsakov. During his cruise he became acquainted with a variety of Western and Latin-American music and his knowledge and appreciation of folk music and its importance in a country's national heritage became broader. In addition, in London and New York he also visited the opera. However, on his return in 1865 his "dreams of artistic activity had entirely faded, and I felt no sorrow over the dreams that were gone".<sup>99</sup>

In his early twenties through re-acquaintance with Balakirev's circle, which now included Borodin, Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions continued under the guidance of Balakirev. In the next five years he completed his *Symphony in E-flat minor, Op.1* (1865), an *Overture on Russian Themes* (1866), the *Fantasia on Serbian Themes, Op.6* (1867), a number of romances, *Op.2 – 4, 7 and 8*, *Sadko, Op.5* (1867), the *Symphony No.2. "Antar"* (1868) and had started work on *The Maid of Pskov* (1868). Although Borodin, Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov were 'led' by Balakirev it was towards the end of the 1860's that they also resented both his and Cui's interference and went on separate paths particularly with respect to their operas.<sup>100</sup>

In 1871, Rimsky-Korsakov was offered the post of Professor of Practical Composition and Instrumentation at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire. Although Balakirev had encouraged him to take the post, perhaps to install one of his *Kuchka* group in Rubinstein's sphere of influence, this, however, brought Rimsky-Korsakov into conflict with the *Kuchka*, since it was felt he was moving to the enemy camp and especially when, he admitted that he "was a dilettante and knew nothing."<sup>101</sup> By this time he had become convinced of the necessity for acquiring the basic tools for composition which

<sup>98</sup> MML: 34.

<sup>99</sup> MML: 55.

<sup>100</sup> See, for instance, Garden Edward 1967. *Balakirev*. London, Faber and Faber: 67-68; MML: 74; von Riesemann Oskar 1935. *Moussorgsky*. Transl. Paul England. New York, Tudor Publishing Co.: 160-162.

<sup>101</sup> MML: 117.

went against Balakirev's dictum. It was felt that he had deserted the *Kuchka*'s artistic freedom to become a conservative pedagogue. Rimsky-Korsakov had already discerned that his lack of knowledge stifled his own development and consequently, to remain ahead of his pupils he "soon became one of its [the Conservatoire's] best and possibly its very best *pupil*."<sup>102</sup> Shortly afterwards Rimsky-Korsakov commented "soon after composing *Pskovityanka* the lack of contrapuntal and harmonic technique displayed itself."<sup>103</sup>

When he accepted the professorship he started by teaching composition, instrumentation and leading the orchestral class. To prepare himself for this teaching role, he took a three-year sabbatical from composition and studied at home, carrying out extensive exercises in the basics of counterpoint, fugue and chorales. In this respect he also received help from Tchaikovsky. Quoting from a letter from Tchaikovsky to Rimsky-Korsakov dated September 10<sup>th</sup> (22<sup>nd</sup>), 1875 from Moscow:

You must know how I admire and bow down before your artistic modesty and your great strength of character! These innumerable counterpoints, these sixty fugues, and all the other musical intricacies which you have accomplished – all these things from a man who had already produced a *Sadko* eight years previously – are the exploits of a hero...I am a mere artisan in composition, but you will be an artist, in the fullest sense of the word... I await your ten fugues with keen impatience.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> *Ib.*: 119.

<sup>103</sup> *Ib.*: 117–118.

<sup>104</sup> Tchaikovsky Modest. *Op.cit.*: 172–173.

**FUGA I.**  
а 3 voci

3

Н. Римский-Корсаков.  
Оп. 17. 1873 г.

*Moderato e risoluto.*

PIANO

Propriété des éditeurs pour tous pays

W. Bessel et C<sup>ie</sup> St Pétersbourg et Moscou.

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In 1874 Rimsky-Korsakov was also teaching harmony and counterpoint. The demand for knowledge and perfection was a feature of the composer throughout his life; he continually returned to compositions and revised them.

Although he had already accepted the position of Professor at the Conservatoire, Rimsky-Korsakov continued in active service in the navy. On a suggestion by the Secretary of the Navy N.K.Krabbe, in the spring of 1873, Rimsky-Korsakov was summoned to the Chancellery of the Navy by the Director K.A.Mann. The navy realising the complexity of his situation allowed him to resign his commission, however, a new post had been created for him of Inspector of Music Bands of the Navy Department.

<sup>105</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/6\\_Fugues,\\_Op.17\\_\(Rimsky-Korsakov,\\_Nikolay\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/6_Fugues,_Op.17_(Rimsky-Korsakov,_Nikolay)). 14–11–2012.

I had been chosen for the post; that a compliment of musician pupils was being organised, as holders of Navy Department fellowships at the St.Petersburg Conservatory; and that their immediate supervision was entrusted to me. My duties included the inspecting of all Navy Department Music Bands throughout Russia; thus I was to supervise the bandmasters and their appointments, the repertor, the quality of instruments, etc.; I was also to write a program of studies for the newly appointed fellows, and to act as an intermediary between the Navy Department and the Conservatory.<sup>106</sup>

The order for this promotion to Collegiate Assessor, a civilian rank, was given on May 8th (20<sup>th</sup>) 1873. Rimsky-Korsakov was kept on the navy payroll and listed on the roster of the Chancellery of the Navy Department. This work gave him the opportunity to become acquainted with the construction and playing techniques of a number of instruments which he also learnt to play himself and provided him with better professional skills for orchestrating for military bands. This led on to the concept of writing a “textbook of instrumentation”. Borodin already notes this in a letter to L.I.Karmalina on April 15<sup>th</sup> (27<sup>th</sup>) 1875: “Korsinka...is writing a course of instrumentation – phenomenal, the like of which does not and never did exist.”<sup>107</sup> This work, *Principles of Orchestration*, was completed posthumously by Maximilian Steinberg, Rimsky-Korsakov’s son-in-law, in 1912.

On March 19<sup>th</sup> (31<sup>st</sup>) 1884, by Order of His Imperial Majesty the Office of Inspector of Bands was abolished. As a result Rimsky-Korsakov notes in his memoirs that “my government service was confined exclusively to the Chapel—that is, the court Department.”<sup>108</sup> Here he worked under Balakirev in the Court Chapel as a deputy. During this time he wrote a textbook on harmony (*Practical Manual of Harmony*) which was first published in 1885, for the classes he took at the Chapel. In addition this position gave him an opportunity to study Russian Orthodox Church music. After ten years at the Chapel, and because of increasing difficulties with Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov ‘retired’ in 1894. He was entitled to a pension under the regulations of the Ministry of the Court as he had already been in government service for more than thirty years.

However, it was his time on the Almaz that was important in developing his politically critical nature. In addition to his experiences of life and nature, which he later returned to in his music, he had the possibility to discuss the current political ideas. He and his colleagues read Belinsky and Nikolai Dobroliubov. “There was enough to argue about.

<sup>106</sup> MML: 135.

<sup>107</sup> MML: 136n.

<sup>108</sup> MML: 269.



That was the time of Herzen and Ogarev with their *Kolokol* (The Bell)".<sup>109</sup> This questioning and criticism of the Tsarist regime and its bureaucracy later found its way into many of his operas. It is not surprising that following witnessing a demonstration in 1905 he made arrangements of the folk song *Dubinushka* (Дубинушка), emphasising these sympathies. Through his work, Rimsky-Korsakov aimed at providing society with an alternative identity which already existed within them and with which they could associate without the rule of law.

## 2.6 The Conservatoire controversy

On Rimsky-Korsakov's return to Kronstadt in April 1865 after his three year commission in the navy, making a career in music was not high on his agenda. The young officer returned to a music society reeling from arguments concerning musical education, its necessity and availability, and to discussions concerning 'Russian' indigenous music. In 1855 an article had appeared in *Blätter für Theater, Musik und Kunst* in Vienna and subsequently in *Century* (Век) in 1861 "Music in Russia"<sup>110</sup> decrying the music establishment and standard in Russia. This was written by Anton Rubinstein who had studied outside Russia and become an established pianist in Western Europe. He returned to Russia from 1848 to 1854 and worked under the patronage of the Tsar's aunt Yelena Pavlovna. However, it was not until Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> ascended the throne in 1855 with his determination to support national musical talent that Rubinstein felt his ambition to establish musical education in St. Petersburg could be achieved. This he did initially through the founding of the Russian Musical Society in 1859 and, in 1862, the St. Petersburg Conservatoire. This was followed in 1866 by the Moscow Conservatoire under the tutelage of his brother Nikolai Rubinstein.

Irrespective of his good intentions, Rubinstein found himself at the centre of an ideological dispute, which would colour Russian musical development for the next half century. In his 1861 article Rubinstein wrote on the state of music in Russia "the only people who are engaged in music are amateurs" and placed the blame on the government who did not give musicians the same civic "free artist" status as other artists. Although he attacked the profound interest shown by amateurs in the composing of opera, for which one needed a thorough knowledge of vocal register, there was a much more profound deficiency, that of music theory and application. Prior to Glinka not only was there a profusion of foreign musicians dominating the Russian musical scene, but previous Russian composers had essentially been trained according to the

<sup>109</sup> *Ib.*: 42.

<sup>110</sup> Stasov Vladimir 1968. *Selected Essays on Music*. Transl. Florence Jones, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers: 81.



Italian style. Together with this, without music being accepted as a profession of merit, the numerous aristocratic-maintained orchestras were made up of serfs.<sup>111</sup> As proof of the musical limitations Rubinstein quotes the romances composed by the amateur school as being suitable to "...be sung by everyone that is by those with untrained voices."<sup>112</sup> He writes of compositions sent to the Musical Society many of which showed extensive talent but a clear lack of knowledge of musical theory. Not only was the cost of private lessons high but the teachers were foreigners and knowledge of French or German was essential. The demand for formal teaching was apparent as shown by the over-subscription to free singing classes given by the Musical Society in 1860. This also indicated the need to establish a school to train Russian teachers where tuition could be given in the native language. The influence of the amateurs on musical development Rubinstein saw as fatal.<sup>113</sup>

Following the establishment of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire a nationalism-related controversy arose as to what represented Russian national music. Rubinstein argued that music could only be composed following a sound musical training; arguments which echoed those of the Academy of Arts. He was opposed by a group of young Russian amateurs, the *Kuchka* led by Balakirev and including Rimsky-Korsakov. This group can be compared to the *peredvizhniki* with their aims of using nationalistic themes, folk music and a 'Russian' visual impact.

A concert of Slavic music was held by the Free School of Music on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1867 for the Slavic delegates to a congress highlighting the wider pan-Slavic community. This concert featured the works of Glinka, Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov, Aleksandr Dargomyzhsky and Alexei Lvov. It was in his review of this concert, published in the *St Petersburg Bulletin* (Санкт-Петербургские Ведомости) the following day that the critic Vladimir Stasov first used the '*Kuchka*' term. The article ended as follows:

[...] may God grant that our Slav guests may never forget today's concert; may God grant that they retain for ever a recollection of how much poetry, feeling, talent, and ability is possessed by the small but already mighty handful (*moguchaya Kuchka*) of Russian musicians.<sup>114</sup>

Following the uproar that resulted in the so-called 'academic' circles including the composer and critic Aleksandr Serov, the group responded by adopting the name.

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<sup>111</sup> See Ritzarev Marina. *Op. cit.* The chapter entitled "Master and Serf" describes the significant position of serfs in music-making.

<sup>112</sup> Cambell Stuart. *Op.cit.*: 69

<sup>113</sup> *Ib.*: 73.

<sup>114</sup> *Ib.*: 183–6.

There have been a number of researchers pertaining to look at the question of music and national identity. Richard Taruskin has written extensively on many aspects of Russian music. In his article “Some Thoughts on the History and Historiography of Russian Music”<sup>115</sup> he outlines many of the problems concerning Russia, music and identity. Stravinsky in his *Poétique musicale* has a chapter on the changes in Russian music. Here he starts with the statement “Why do we always hear Russian music spoken of in terms of its Russianness rather than simply in terms of music?”<sup>116</sup> There appears to be a focus on folk song. Swan in his preface to *Russian Music* asks “‘Wherein lies the source of the *Kamarinskaya* and where are its riches hidden?’ There is only one answer: in the Russian folk-song and the old liturgical chant.”<sup>117</sup>

Taruskin argues that it is with his use of folk song that Glinka’s reputation as the ‘founding father of Russian music’ lies irrespective of the fact that previous Russian composers such as Verstovsky, Mikhail Sokolovsky and Vasilii Pashkevich, also quoted folk songs in their operas.<sup>118</sup> However, what raised Glinka’s status is that his opera appeared at the time Tsar Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> introduced his doctrine of Official Nationality, ‘Orthodoxy, autocracy, nationality’. Rousseau and Herder maintained that folklore represented “the nation” and not just “the peasantry”. The singing of coach drivers was often highlighted by 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century European travellers to Russia. Quoting from the Englishman William Coxe travelling in eighteenth-century Russia noted in his *Travels into Poland, Russia, Sweden and Denmark* (1784)

The poftilions *fing* , as I have juft observed, from the beginning to the end of a ftage, the soldiers *fing* continually during their march; the countrymen *fing* during the moft laborious occupations: the public houfes re-echo with their carols; and in a full evening I have frequently heard the air vibrate with the notes from the furrounding villages.<sup>119</sup>

And it is this Westernized view of Russia that Glinka uses in *A Life for the Tsar* “de la musique des cochers.” Although an expression of social snobbery it hit the mark since, the tune Susanin sings at his first entrance in Act I, Glinka had taken down from a coach driver in the town of Luga. Similarly the music of Tatiana and Onegin is justified as “Russian” since it was modelled on the domestic music of the 19<sup>th</sup> century landowning classes, the *pomeshchiki*, which would have been that encountered by travellers.

<sup>115</sup> Taruskin Richard 2009. *On Russian Music*, Berkely and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 27–52.

<sup>116</sup> Stravinsky Igor 1959. *Poetics of Music in the Form of Six Lessons*. Transl. Arthur Knodel and Ingolf Dahl, New York, Vintage Books: 95.

<sup>117</sup> Swan. Alfred J. 1973 *Russian Music and its Sources in Chant and Folk Song*. New York, W.W.Norton & Company, Inc.: 15.

<sup>118</sup> Taruskin Richard 2009. *Op.cit.*: 29.

<sup>119</sup> Coxe William 1784. *Op.cit.*: 441–442.

Dalhaus, although highlighting the point failed to appreciate its significance in Russia:

[...] serious consideration should be given to the possibility that the different manifestations of musical nationalism were affected by political nationalism and the different stages in political evolution reached in each country... transition from monarchism to democracy was successful (Great Britain, France) and unsuccessful (Russia).<sup>120</sup>

Whereas the music of composers such as Chopin in Poland, Smetana in Czechoslovakia and Sibelius in Finland embodied a 'national' music in opposition, in Russia the struggle was against a 'foreign' culture that in its own way affected all levels of society. Glinka's opera supported a state ideology, maintenance of the status quo.<sup>121</sup>

It was a defence of a true search for identity that caused the Russian musical controversy in the second half of the 19th century. Stasov summed-up the feeling in his article in *Northern Bee* (Северная пчела) in answer to Rubinstein's criticism of Russian music life in *Бек* and his arguments to support the founding of Russia's first Conservatoire in 1862. Stasov wrote:

All the music teachers in our country are foreigners; they were trained in conservatories and schools. Why then, are people complaining about the poor musical instruction here? Is it likely that the teachers coming out of our future conservatory will be better than those sent to us from abroad? [...] The time has come to stop transplanting foreign institutions to our country and to give some thought to what would really be beneficial and suitable to *our* soil and *our* national character...<sup>122</sup>

When one aligns the views of Burkholder, Grout and Palisca with those of Karamzin and Lotman it is possible to deduce the essential essence of the problem concerning identity "The search for an independent native voice was especially keen in Russia and Eastern Europe, where the dominance of Austro-German instrumental music and Italian opera was felt as a threat to home grown musical creation."<sup>123</sup>

## 2.7 The influence of religion on identity

In her studies on traditional music and beliefs in Russian rural life Margarita Mazo correctly notes that many of them, although using the signs and rituals of the Orthodox

<sup>120</sup> Dahlhaus Carl 1989. *Between Romanticism and Modernism. Four Studies in the Music of the Later Nineteenth Century*. Transl. Mary Whittall. Berkeley, University of California Press: 89-90.

<sup>121</sup> Taruskin Richard 2009. *Op.cit.*: 33-34.

<sup>122</sup> Stasov Vladimir. *Op.cit.*: 83.

<sup>123</sup> Burkholder Peter J., Grout Donald J. and Palisca Claude V. 2005. *A History of Western Music 7<sup>th</sup> Edition*. New York, W.W. Norton & Co: 682.

Church, are mixed with other elements which have no bearing on Christian traditions. A wedding is a typical example. This ‘dual faith’ has a long history in Russia. Mazo quotes from *Pieces Collected by P.N. Rybnikov* (Песни, собранные П.Н. Рыбниковым):

During the second half of the nineteenth century...[there was a] growing nationalism and romantic idealization of the Russian peasant by Russophiles. The term *dvoeverie* was used there to designate the coexistence of Christian and “pagan” elements in the religious practice of “uneducated” Russian peasants.<sup>124</sup>

However, Rimsky-Korsakov through both his own pantheistic beliefs and his operas recognised the significance of the dual faith in Russian society.

Marina Ritsarev discusses the significance of folklore as a requirement by both the aristocracy and the dissidents for political purposes, which was not needed after emancipation. At the same time she refers to a split between rural and urban elements. However the old 18<sup>th</sup> century notion of the ‘singing peasant’ was the concept of national identity. Although Glinka, Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky were attracted to this genre she maintains that no-one justifies the Russianness of these. She questions what is the ‘vernacular’ in music and separates this into *phylo-vernacular* as musical folklore “maintained by a certain rural community and associated with its language, rituals, way of life and landscape. The tradition is oral, and there is no separation between performer and audience”. The other division is *onto-vernacular* referring to that folklore which develops within an urban environment. This is changeable and is open to outside influences and consequently it is not linked to the ritual and consequently the performer and audience become separated.<sup>125</sup> Although paying attention to the vocal expression as a characteristic of Russian folklore, as she rightly points out, Rimsky-Korsakov also drew attention to instrumental folklore in, for instance, *Sadko*.

In church music the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century followed the trend of Western Europe with Bortniansky’s choral concerti which formed an art music separate from church ritual. After the composer’s death church music became marginalized and the vogue out of favour, apart from composers such as Rubinstein who wrote sacred oratorios and sacred operas which was not in itself surprising with his Germanic leanings. Ritzarev maintains that “*Nationality*, with a singing peasant as its primary symbol, became the highest value, leaving *Orthodoxy* like *autocracy* only as a formal

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<sup>124</sup> Mazo Margarita 1991. *Op.cit.*: 77.

<sup>125</sup> Ritzarev Marina. *Op.cit.*: 11.

attribute. A peasant was [...] the worshipped icon of national identity”.<sup>126</sup> However, Ritzarev not only misses the point concerning the role of the church in Russian society but also its significance in maintaining links to the rich pagan culture adopted into it. The church had become secularised and corrupt as can be seen in the following painting by Vasily Perov, a founder member of the *peredvizhniki* group of Russian realist painters.



*Easter Procession in a Village.* Vasily Perov. 1861. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

However, the Tsarist regime, which controlled the church, needed religion as a support for the existing order. The meanings of ‘nationality, orthodoxy, autocracy’ were changing but it was Rimsky-Korsakov who sought to redefine them through an understanding of the Russian culture before the Petrine reforms.

## 2.8 The controversy concerning identity

There is always confusion when discussing the question of ‘nationalism’ and ‘identity’. Nationalism relates to an allegiance towards a nation, its borders and ruler. In general it can be stated that within a national ‘identity’ there exists both a conscious and sub-conscious awareness. This generally encompasses a common origin and an appreciation of an inherited homeland and linked to this is a collective memory of habits and culture which is passed on through action and communication, a common language. In the

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<sup>126</sup> *Ib.*: 16.

introductory chapter of *Russian Music and Nationalism* Marina Frolova-Walker is over-restrictive in many of her statements, referring, for instance, to the late 18<sup>th</sup> century interest in folklore and music as “mere ethnographical and literary amusement”. She also misinterprets the public discussions in the 1830’s as concerning the Russian “soul” whereas the arguments concerned how national identity should be interpreted vis-à-vis the Official Nationality policy and Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar*.<sup>127</sup>

As Karamzin noted and later supported by Lotman’s analysis, Peter 1st’s leaning towards the West created an awareness of Western culture but at the same time confusion since there was a mental conflict with this inherited identity. Karamzin together with others of an enquiring mind developed an interest in national culture to underline the fundamental differences. Chaadaev in 1830 in his ‘Letters’ underlined this questioning of identity asking whether there was anything genuine in Russia. However, he had optimism “The past is no longer in our power, but the future is ours”.<sup>128</sup> One must question Frolova-Walker’s statement that the “construction of the Russian national character only took off in earnest around 1840”<sup>129</sup> since as is discussed above, it was certainly in a gestation phase already towards the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century and gathering pace. In music Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar*, for instance, was just a culmination of this development.

The late 18<sup>th</sup> century stimulus for an interest in Russianness through music also accorded with Herder’s theory that folksong embodied a nation’s character and soul. Frolova-Walker, however, over-simplifies a rich folk-song heritage by focussing on the *protyazhanaya* (протяжная), the drawn-out song, one of many types all of which had specific roles in Russian everyday life with a particular focus on the village environment, ceremonies and seasons as is shown in Chapter 5. The *protyazhanaya* songs express personal emotions; the sorrowful songs such as a young woman would sing at home in the light of a *luchina* (лучина), a piece of wood burning instead of a candle, waiting for her husband to return. These songs particularly lent themselves to the sentimentality of the urban salons and, as others, were incorporated into the art songs performed there, whilst, at the same time, losing the performance characteristics of the original. The opening bars of *A Life for the Tsar* an imitation of this genre which encapsulated the notion of Russianness as interpreted in these society salons.<sup>130</sup>

<sup>127</sup> See Frolova-Walker Marina 2007. *Russian Music and Nationalism from Glinka to Stalin*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press: 11 and ix.

<sup>128</sup> Chaadayev Peter Yakovlevich 1969. *Philosophical Letters & Apology of a Madman*. Transl. Mary-Barbara Zeldin. Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press: 175.

<sup>129</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 11.

<sup>130</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 41.

Glinka can be said to have established a number of fundamental criteria for the future 19<sup>th</sup> century operas in Russia which can be seen to encompass an identity. *A Life for the Tsar* introduced two new concepts, the opera should be from a recognisable historical period and the heroes could be simple, everyday people lending weight to the use of the peasant as the embodiment of Russian identity supported by folk idioms. His second opera, *Ruslan and Lyudmila* (Руслан и Людмила) (1842), introduced the idea of the fairy-tale operas. Glinka also established a tradition in the use of recognised Russian literature for libretti; the concept of Russian nationality lay firmly in the works of Pushkin, for instance. It was Gogol who wrote that Pushkin's verses reflected "the Russian landscape, the Russian soul, the Russian language, the Russian character"<sup>131</sup> By the time Glinka turned his attention to *Ruslan*, this was already considered a Russian epic in the version by Pushkin, who had extensively studied Russian folk tales in 1828.

All these specific aspects became utilised and central to the operas of the *Kuchka* but it was Rimsky-Korsakov who more fully exploited every possible aspect which is discussed in detail later. Glinka's *Kamarinskaya* also showed how folk music could be incorporated into orchestral music. This was taken up by many of the *Kuchka* composers in their "Overtures" and "Fantasies" based on Russian themes. Through his interest in collecting folk-songs, Rimsky-Korsakov increasingly incorporated various folksong genres both from his own collection as well as those of Balakirev and others in his operas. These included settings of wedding songs and the calendar songs which are connected to the seasonal rituals, the *kolyada* or *kolyadka* (коляда) and *vesnianka* (веснянка), for instance. These were the songs sung accompanying dances and work and could not be absorbed into the salon ambience. Consequently these songs not only more or less retained traits of their origins but would be recognised by the newly urbanised peasant population as well as the land-owners exemplified, for instance, by the harvesters chorus in Act I of *Eugene Onegin*.

In May 1907 Rimsky-Korsakov was in Paris for Sergei Diaghilev's five Russian concerts which covered works of the major 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian composers. According to Yastrebtsev's notes<sup>132</sup> it was Rimsky-Korsakov and Fyodor Chaliapin that received the most attention because of the Russian sound of his opera excerpts, many of which were

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<sup>131</sup> *Ib.*: 53.

<sup>132</sup> Ястребцев В.В. 1959. Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков – Воспоминания. (Yastrebtsev V.V. Reminiscences of Nikolai Andreyevich Rimsky-Korsakov) Ленинград, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: Том второй: 423.



based on folk-music whilst, for a Parisian audience, Tchaikovsky was considered too European.

## 2.9 The “Russian Style”

Prior to Glinka’s opera, there had been discussion concerning the ‘Russianness’ of previous operas by, for instance, Caterino Cavos and Verstovsky. A critic writing in the *Moscow Messenger* (Московский Вестник) wrote of Verstovsky’s *Pan Twardowski* (Пан Твардовский) produced in 1828, just eight years before Glinka’s opera, “This is ours, this is *the first Russian opera*”<sup>133</sup>. Yanuari Neverov’s comment on Verstovsky’s operas was that they “consist of nothing more than a collection of mainly charming Russian motives joined together by German choruses and quartets and Italian recitatives” whereas Glinka had “delved deep into the character of our nation’s folk music... [and] created images which are purely Russian and symbolise our homeland”.<sup>134</sup> Odoevsky made comparisons with Western music and particularly Susanin’s likeness to Pizarro in Beethoven’s *Fidelio*.<sup>135</sup> The opera was a mixture of accepted Western modes such as, for instance, the cadence treatment of folk melodies. However, this mixing lent itself to an audience familiar with European operas, which they fully accepted, whilst recognising the influences of Russian folklore and melodies in the refined style of the salon. Its success was assured at the time of the Official Nationality ukase especially when pitting Russians against Poles.

For his next opera *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, as mentioned, Glinka reverted to Pushkin. The opera again was a musical mixture. It is possible to discern Italian opera styles, European and Eastern dance idioms, folksongs essentially of non-Russian origin and music acceptable in the salons. The opera divided the Russian musical world. Stasov refers to Glinka having found the ancient Russian spirit whereas Serov considered everything to do with it as poor. The anonymous critic O\*\*\*, which Gosenpud considered to have possibly been Odoevsky, also adds an interesting view concerning placing the Slavs of *Ruslan* in the centre surrounded by ‘competing’ regions, giving a political connotation to the opera. The conflicts in the opera are resolved at the end of the opera in bonds of friendship and love, as Russia saw its outlying regions owing allegiance to the Tsar. In Serov’s memoirs he recalls Glinka as saying that the end of the opera “should be presented, characterising the different regions of Russia”.<sup>136</sup>

<sup>133</sup> Abraham Gerald 1984. The Operas of Alexei Verstovsky. Essays for Joseph Kerman. *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music* 7 (3): 326.

<sup>134</sup> Cambell Stuart. *Op.cit.*: 6.

<sup>135</sup> *Ib.*: 13.

<sup>136</sup> See Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 122.



There have been many arguments presented surrounding the advent of *Ruslan* in an attempt to prove or disprove a ‘Russian’ style based on, for instance, the diatonic, plagal and ecclesiastical modes in Russian folksong, amongst others. This also tends to form central arguments in presentations by Frolova-Walker, Taruskin and others. However ‘Russianness’ cannot solely be explained in these terms.

There were two musical aspects of Glinka’s practice that the *Kuchka* subsequently took up and Rimsky-Korsakov developed further. The use of folk-like melodies either invented or altered became a standard musical tool. In addition to this, the use of the whole-tone scale to represent the fantastic or evil, such as the leitmotif of Chernomor, was extensively used and later expanded by Rimsky-Korsakov into the octatonic scale. Already at the time of and immediately following Glinka, the Russian music world had expressed hopes that a distinct Russian style would emerge. Rubinstein believed this could only develop through an ‘academy’-based training. A different viewpoint was taken by Balakirev together with Stasov that directed the *Kuchka* towards the significance of folk music as a source for a Russian style. It was Balakirev, through his own folksong harmonisations, who showed how folk music could be used. In this he partially followed Odoevsky. In his article *Old Song* (Старинная песня) in 1863, Odoevsky drew attention to the deficiencies in the transcriptions of folk songs for essentially domestic use and in an Italianate style, and presented an example of how the true folk sound should be retained in harmony and metrical irregularities.<sup>137</sup> However, it was in the 1860’s that the terms “Russian School” and “Russian Style” became recognised through the compositions of the *Kuchka*.

Already in his first opera *The Maid of Pskov* composed between 1868 and 1872, Rimsky-Korsakov followed Balakirev’s lead in the use of folk-song. However, in his discussions with Yastrebtsev in 1895 he shows how his use was not restricted to a pure unadulterated use but also often imitated a folk style. The opera contained only three folk motives: “(1) the melody which accompanies the dialogue of the nurses in the opening scene [orchestral score mark 25 – Rimsky-Korsakov collection no.23], (2) the theme of the love duet from act 1 [14 after mark 47 – Balakirev collection no.27], and (3) Tucha’s song of farewell to Pskov [mark 88 – Balakirev no.30 – Bachinskaya designation – *khorovod* ‘round dance’]. All the remaining themes are Nikolai Andreyevich’s own.” Rimsky-Korsakov himself mentions two examples Tucha’s song *Let me hear your call, my sweet cuckoo* (Разкукуйся ты, кукушечка) (Act 1, mark 39)

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<sup>137</sup> Одоевский.В.Ф. 1956. *Музыкально-литературное наследие*. (Odoevsky V. Musical-literary legacy) Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 252 – 254.

which is reminiscent of a melody from the Ryazan province *Blow, blow bad weather* (Подуй, подуй непогодушка) and to which he refers to Balakirev's collection no.21. In the scene between Tsar Ivan and Olga, Act 2 Scene ii, the Chorus, in the background, sing *From beneath the little hillock so green* (Из-под холмика, под зелёного) which has its origin in a folksong Mussorgsky heard in Pskov province although much altered for the opera.<sup>138</sup> Another facet of folksong modes is at the end of Act 1 Scene ii, Tuchka's 'Farewell to Pskov' which follows a leading voice choral response pattern. It is interesting to note differences between Frolov-Walker and Abrahams concerning 'Russianness'. Frolova-Walker emphasises that although the *Kuchka* composers made an attempt to create non-Western harmony patterns on a small scale they failed in creating something different to the foundations of Western musical practise.<sup>139</sup> It is essential to note that this was Rimsky-Korsakov's first opera and in 1891 for the revision he said he was "...substituting more decent music for the barbarous dissonances of the first version".<sup>140</sup> However, as Abraham's notes, the opera was revised as his own abilities developed, in 1876 – 77 and later in 1891 – 92. The original end to Act II (Act I in the 1892 version) was in was in the 'Balakirev'-favoured keys of B minor and B flat minor.<sup>141</sup> In the final version the composer introduced marked key changes earlier, continuing in keys a semitone lower and ending in B flat minor. Abraham notes "The new version has more energy but the passage has lost its quasi-modal flavour; the bloom of 'Russianness' has been brushed off."<sup>142</sup>

Frolova-Walker claims that Borodin was in advance of his fellow *Kuchka* members in his use of folk music in his opera *Prince Igor* (1890) citing the Chorus of Peasants, composed in the summer 1879, in Act IV which is a typical *protyazhanaya* and reflects a folk hetero/polyphony.<sup>143</sup> However, at this time there was also discussion about who laid claim to outlining the so-called *podgolski*, independent contrapuntal voice parts. Yuli Melgunov had published the first part of his *Russian songs, recorded directly as sung by the people* (Русские народные песни, непосредственно с голосов народа записанные) in 1879 and, in the introduction, refers to the polyphonic nature of Russian folk songs.<sup>144</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov questioned Melgunov's claim and pointed out that:

<sup>138</sup> Yastrebtsev, V. *Op.cit.*: 115.

<sup>139</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 169.

<sup>140</sup> MML: 313.

<sup>141</sup> Abraham Gerald 1968. Pskovityanka: The Original Version of Rimsky-Korsakov's First Opera. *The Musical Quarterly*, 54 (1): 71.

<sup>142</sup> *Ib.*: 71.

<sup>143</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 170.

<sup>144</sup> Yastrebtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 491 n.29.

not one of those who cried out against or in support of Melgunov ever took the trouble to look at the score of *May Night*, where, even before the publication of his collection, I used—quite artistically—in the *troitskaia* song (act 1) the notorious *podgolski* allegedly discovered by him.<sup>145</sup>

The gestation period for *May Night* was 1878–79. Rimsky-Korsakov developed his use of folk music, not only from Russia but extensively from the Ukraine, throughout his life, the calendar songs, wedding songs, *bylina*, *kolyadkas*, carols and at the end of his life the popular town songs. As will be shown Rimsky-Korsakov used folksongs in a more diverse and complete fashion than any of the other *Kuchka* composers.

It is also important to question recent views concerning Rimsky-Korsakov's revisions and completions of many of the *Kuchka* compositions such as *Boris Godunov*, *Khovanshchina* and *Prince Igor*. Without this extensive and dedicated work it is possible that many of these operas would never have attained the worldwide recognition that they now enjoy. In addition to the revisions, he regularly introduced these works to the public both at home and later abroad conducting these as well as his own works. It is only following the work of the Soviet musicologist Pavel Lamm in 1928 that revised versions based on Mussorgsky's and Borodin's originals and, in many cases, incomplete scores have been introduced and Rimsky-Korsakov's work questioned. However, it was Rimsky-Korsakov's recognition of the genius of these composers and his belief that their works should be introduced to a wider audience that ensured their lasting success and example as a facet of the 'Russian' style. As a teacher Rimsky-Korsakov also influenced the continuation of the development of the Russian 'style' long after his death in 1908.

## 2.10 Developments in harmony

As with many of the *Kuchka* composers, Rimsky-Korsakov was initially influenced by both Balakirev and Stasov and it was at this time that the first version of *The Maid of Pskov* was composed. To avoid Western style harmonic patterns the *Kuchka* made use of the whole tone scale, as introduced by Glinka, to conjure up fantastic or sinister moods, major-third key relationships and minor seventh or half-diminished seventh chords. Examples of these can already be found in *The Maid of Pskov*. Other notable features of the opera are the use of folksong and folk-like melodies. The standard structure of Western operas such as solo arias, trios, quartets and grand finales were avoided. It is important to note that following his appointment to the St. Petersburg Conservatoire and his own extensive studies subsequently that Rimsky-Korsakov later

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<sup>145</sup> *Ib.*: 69.

severely criticised his own lack of abilities saying, for instance, of *The Maid of Pskov* that it was limited by “the shackles of counterpoint.”<sup>146</sup> At the beginning of the 1890’s he re-orchestrated the whole score and added new scenes giving the work greater symmetry and harmonic direction.

It is interesting to read in many previous studies of the influence of Franz Liszt on the *Kuchka*.<sup>147</sup> In *My Musical Life* Rimsky-Korsakov writes of Liszt in 1861 – 62 that “Liszt was comparatively unknown and was adjudged crippled and perverted from a musical point of view and often even a caricature.”<sup>148</sup> However, in 1867 he alludes to a contribution towards the Introduction to *Sadko* which “contains the harmonic and modulatory basis of the beginning of Liszt’s *Ce qu’on entend sur la montagne* (modulation by a minor third downward).” However he later goes on to say that Glinka’s whole tone scale had been replaced by a semitone, whole tone, semitone scale (the octatonic scale) “which subsequently played an important part in many of my compositions.”<sup>149</sup> He also paid tribute to Liszt’s influence on the characterisation of Olga in *The Maid of Pskov* and Pimen’s tale about the Tsarevich Dmitri in Mussorgsky’s *Boris* which bear similarities to the introduction to the oratorio *St. Elizabeth*.<sup>150</sup>

It is difficult to define a ‘Russian’-style purely in terms of music. Many of the articles and books written around the subject attempt to analyze harmonic relationships in detail. The Russian-style that became established through the work of Rimsky-Korsakov was a combination of music and opera plots and themes which, in most instances, were different in style from the accepted Italian repertoire and had intrinsic built-in messages which a Russian audience would have recognised. It was an attempt to show on stage and through music the true sub-conscious and inherited identity of the people. Whilst accepting the ideology of the *Kuchka*, Rimsky-Korsakov knew that if it were to be accepted and attain recognition in its own right, he would have to bow to the ideals and aims of Rubinstein and the Conservatoire and engage the ‘enemy’ on their own terms. This meant developing himself from a ‘dilettante’ into a fully qualified and acceptable composer.

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<sup>146</sup> MML: 208.

<sup>147</sup> See, for instance Stasov Vladimir. *Op.cit.*: chapters ‘A Letter from Liszt’ and ‘Twenty-five years of Russian Art: Our Music’; Maes Francis 2002. *A History of Russian Music From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar*. Transl. Arnold Pomerans and Erica Pomerans. USA, University of California Press Ltd: 71, 84, 180.

<sup>148</sup> MML: 21.

<sup>149</sup> *Ib.*: 78.

<sup>150</sup> Yastrebtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 292.

There is a long period from 1882 to 1894 during which, as a result of his prominence, the composer undertook a number of additional demanding duties and tasks which left him little time for his own compositions. As a teacher, and with his appointment to the Court Kapella, he realised the lack and need for teaching material. Rimsky-Korsakov with Mitrofan Beliaev's support initiated the Russian Symphony Concerts of which he, together with Anatoly Liadov, was the principle conductor. In addition to this Beliaev initiated his publishing business with Rimsky-Korsakov on the advisory board. In this decade both Mussorgsky, in 1881, and Borodin, in 1887, died and Rimsky-Korsakov undertook to complete their unfinished works. This also gave him a diversion following the poor reception for *The Snow Maiden* (Снегурочка). Much weight has been given by Frolova-Walker amongst others, to the composer's letters to his wife, Nadezhda Rimskaya-Korsakova née Purgold, and Semen Kruglikov in 1891 indicating his disillusioned with both himself and Russian music. It should, however, be taken into account that Rimsky-Korsakov at this time not only had demanding emotional setbacks in his family life including the onset of his own illness which was finally diagnosed in 1893 as 'general neurasthenia', but also he had been working almost exclusively on other composer's compositions rather than his own.

It is also misleading to assume that he gave up a Russian style until *The Golden Cockerel*, which he only wrote as a protest to the events of 1905. The majority of the operas composed between 1894 to 1908 were written with particular Russian messages in mind encompassing Russian folk tales, history, religion and political comment. Although Rimsky-Korsakov is often considered musically conservative it is in these later operas one finds his greatest experimentation. *The Tsar's Bride* (Царская невеста) became a number opera with a mixture of styles. However, although the opera has been seen as going against the principles of the *Kuchka*, it is pertinent to quote Stanislavski here:

The music of *The Tsar's Bride* is one of the most sincere and exciting of Rimsky-Korsakov's compositions. He delves more deeply here than in his other works down to the elemental sources of Russian songs and paints more profoundly true images, in terms of music and drama, of the Russian people.<sup>151</sup>

It was also with this opera that he started to pay more attention to the role of the singer.<sup>152</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Stanislavski Constantin and Pavel Romyantsev 1998. *Stanislavski on Opera*. Transl. Elizabeth Hapgood. New York and London, Routledge: 156.

<sup>152</sup> Yastrebtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 299.

Although he had an abhorrence of ‘chaos’ and a reliance on tonal axes, he perhaps found solace through his interest in Richard Wagner, following hearing *The Ring* in St.Petersburg in 1889, who influenced his greater experimentation when writing *Kashchei the Deathless* (Кашей бессмертный). In his chronicles he writes that Wagner is a master of instrumentation (*Что у Вагнера бесподобно – его инструментовка*)<sup>153</sup> and with Yastrebtsev discusses how Wagner “seldom remains long in the same tonality...(there are) bizarre digressions and modulations...And what a fascinating result he achieves by constantly returning to the same tonality.”<sup>154</sup> His interest in the harmonization of the tritone and looking past major-minor forms allowed him to take “harmony to the furthest limits without crossing over into hyper-harmony” (*...но гармония доведена до крайних пределов, хотя в сверхгармонию не переходит*).<sup>155</sup> Although critical of his student’s compositions he was not adverse to development, as a sound teacher should be, and encouraged it through his exercises which his students needed to master. He is quoted as saying “Well, if we’re going, we’re going, said the parrot when the cat pulled it out of the cage.”<sup>156</sup>

## 2.11 Factors influencing Rimsky-Korsakov’s views on identity

“Don Luigi Sturzo believes that as long as a people remains unconscious of its personality, there is no nation...”<sup>157</sup> The failure of the Russian State to understand and appreciate the character and identity of the people led to a radical politicisation where ‘identity’ became confused with social and political reforms. However, within the development of this identity in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, music, and particularly the composer Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov, played a significant role.

In Rimsky-Korsakov’s early life he was exposed both artistically and politically to the question of national identity, Russianness, in a changing society. Throughout his life he was drawn to using folklore and folk-music in his operas which he considered an important part of a national identity. As a talented amateur he orientated towards the *Kuchka* since they espoused the same ideals, however, he realized that *The Maid of Pskov* was not able to achieve his own *Gesamtkunstwerk* since he lacked the musical

<sup>153</sup> Орлова А. А., Римский-Корсаков В.Н. 1972. *Страницы жизни Н.А.Римского-Корсакова. Выпуск 3. 1894 – 1904.* (Orlova A.A. Rimsky-Korsakov V.N. 1972. Chapters in the Life of N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov. Vol.3. 1894 – 1904.) Ленинград, Издательство «Музыка»: 252.

<sup>154</sup> Yastrebtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 263.

<sup>155</sup> Орлова А. *Op.cit.*: 275.

<sup>156</sup> Quoted in Volkov Solomon 1997. *St.Petersburg. A Cultural History.* New York, Free Press Paperbacks: 350.

<sup>157</sup> Snyder Louis. *Op.cit.*: 195.

tools. It was his appointment to the St. Petersburg Conservatory that underlined this. Although this effectively split the *Kuchka* he did not lose his love of Russian culture. As he improved his knowledge of harmonization and general musicality, he adapted this to form a sound base from which to develop his historical and fairy-tale operas on Russian themes. The linking of pagan rituals to Christian beliefs and traditions he saw as an essential part of the rich cultural heritage of the country.

As a teacher, in addition to ensuring his students understood the concepts of classical music theory he expanded tonal harmonization for which, in addition to using in his own operas, he encouraged them to use. It is important to acknowledge that he recognised and admired the talent of his contemporaries and ensured that their compositions, which also formed essential cornerstones in the development of a 'Russian' sound, would find acceptance on the international stage.

As a political figure Rimsky-Korsakov fought against discrepancies within the arts. If historical themes were to be used then the portrayal of historical figures was necessary for credibility. There was no logic in being able to include these in the theatre but not in opera. There was also a precedence for poems and plays to be accepted by the censors but not for opera. From *The Tsar's Bride* onwards, apart from *Kitezh*, Rimsky-Korsakov projected his critical attitude to the deterioration of the State through the use of pointed texts, folk-songs and urban popular music in his operas where the message would not have been lost on the audience. Rimsky-Korsakov gave a new interpretation to 'orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality' and this is examined in the subsequent chapters in more detail.

### 3. Rimsky-Korsakov in a changing political climate

#### 3.1 Life as play-acting and discontent – the socio-political climate in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century

As a result of the Petrine reforms the Russian nobility underwent a considerable readjustment of their cultural and everyday norms which resulted in uncharacteristic features. Over time these caused such a fraction in society that it laid the foundations for the Decembrist uprising<sup>158</sup>, the outrageous attitudes of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> and his Third Department and the ridicule towards attitudes and bureaucracy as shown, for instance, in Nicolai Gogol's *The Inspector General*.

The 18<sup>th</sup> century romanticism dominated by a background of unreal sociological behavioural play-acting led to the establishment of groups such as the Decembrists. They differed from other reactionaries and the liberal and educated nobleman. The Decembrists were men of action who had grown up during the Napoleonic wars. Whilst rejecting class distinctions, their everyday life was linked to the nobility and in the post-1812 period this group exercised a strong influence on society. Pushkin describes them in *Eugene Onegin*: "Famous for their cutting eloquence, the members of that family gather [...] (Eugene Onegin, X, 14).<sup>159</sup> For the Decembrists with their moral and political criticism of society, neutral and non-signifying acts did not exist. Acts signified words and words had to have content. However, the Decembrist uprising at the beginning of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> reign set in train his attitudes towards society and how they should be controlled.

It was the idleness of the landed gentry with money and intelligence that led to a complex, heterogeneous and at times extreme activities. In the provinces it was closely linked to peasant calendar rituals. For the military, everyday life involved drills and parade. Leisure was the complete opposite to regulation, sprees and orgies became an obligatory part of an officer's good behaviour. In many ways the carousing that appeared at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, although an antithesis of everyday routine where all restrictions in behaviour were removed, can be considered a form of free thinking. It is pictured again in Tolstoy's *War and Peace*. It became associated with

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<sup>158</sup> The uprising of a number of Russian officers on 14<sup>th</sup> December (26<sup>th</sup> December) 1825 in protest at the accession of Tsar Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> instead of his elder brother Constantine became known as 'The Decembrist uprising'.

<sup>159</sup> Lotman Juri 1984. *The Decembrist in Everyday Life: Everyday Behaviour as a Historical–Psychological Category*. In Lotman Juri Uspenskij Boris *Op.cit.*: 76. The views presented on the Decembrist attitudes are analysed extensively in this article. Alexander Pushkin 1977. *Eugene Onegin*. Transl. Charles Johnstone. London, Penguin Books. The quotation given does not appear in the standard text used and may be one eventually excluded by Pushkin. Chapter 1 Stanza XVI describes a similar lifestyle.



private life and poetry, theoretical and ideological concepts and progressive thought became a socially significant behavioural pattern and this had a direct bearing on the activities of societies such as ‘The Green Lamp’, ‘Arzamis’ and ‘The Society of Loud Laughter’. Although initially considered in the light of orgiastic behaviour The Green Lamp, which existed in St.Petersburg from 1819–20, was made up of middle-class intellectuals and had deep and real political interests, a literary society dedicated to the cause of freedom but in a solemn and serious framework working towards a freedom of restrictions. The speeches of Nikolai Turgenev and Michael Orlov were considered passionate and intelligent. Pushkin was a member and wrote some political poems for which he was sent in exile in Southern Russia.<sup>160</sup>

Gogol became very concerned with the false world of the Russian society as did many other Russian authors of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. Every work of literature can be seen from two points of view – as a separate individual artistic work and/or a fragment of a certain cultural identity. The artistic world is, in many ways, a reflection on the real world beyond the text. And it was the Russian society of rules and norms where people were cast in certain roles that Gogol highlighted in *The Government Inspector*; Chlestakov was a fact of life in Russia.<sup>161</sup> A central theme of the post-Petrine period was the duality of life. Society rules accepted that the desired world existed while the real world did not. To draw attention to reality was unforgivable. Consequently the word began to occupy an elevated place in culture. As a result there was a growth of imagination with gifted people and a developed talent for lying with the mediocre. A dissatisfaction with reality coincides with the development of an alternate world. And it can be considered that with the old Table of Ranks being replaced it was possible to get advancement through ambition and merit and also through fortune. Consequently this led to two mechanisms for advancement that were united but also contradictory. The civil service came to resemble a game of cards.<sup>162</sup>

Gogol’s role model can be seen as a manifestation of a more general historical configuration, a cultural mask or pattern of behaviour which had taken place within a specific culture.<sup>163</sup> Since the dynamism of the Petrine time was frozen after 1825, Chlestakov was able to utilise a society that had become stagnant. With the increasing regulation of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> and his Third Department there was an arbitrariness, an

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<sup>160</sup> *Ib.*: 102–107.

<sup>161</sup> Lotman Juri 1984. *Gogol’s Chlestakov: The Pragmatics of a Literary Character*. In Lotman Juri Uspenskij Boris *Op.cit.*: 178.

<sup>162</sup> *Ib.*: 185.

<sup>163</sup> *Ib.*: 193

instability that Chlestakov and other adventurers were able to utilise to their advantage. In *Бритвы* (The Razors), 1829, Krylov wrote:

Ох, братец, признаюсь, Что Бритвы очень тупы! Как этого не знать? Ведь мы не так уж глупы; Да острыми-то я порезаться боюсь».—	"I must allow, brother," he replies, "that the razors are excessively blunt ; how can I help knowing that ? I 'm not such a fool as all that. But I never use sharp ones, for fear of cutting myself"
«А я, мой друг, тебя уверить смею, Что Бритвою тупой изрежешься скорей, А острою обреешься верней: Умей владеть лишь ею».	"But I venture to assure you, my friend, that you will cut yourself much sooner with a blunt razor. With a sharp one you will shave yourself twice as safely only you must know how to use it properly."
Вам пояснить рассказ мой я готов: Не так ли многие, хоть стыдно им признаться, С умом людей — боятся, И терпят при себе охотней дураков? <sup>164</sup>	Are there not many, though they would be ashamed to own it, who are afraid of clever people, and are more ready to have fools about them ? <sup>165</sup>

Gogol read this as keeping people of the Decembrist circle away from Government posts. It showed that Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>'s state system gave significant opportunity to men without substance the 'Chlestakov's' of society who could make rapid advancement within the norms of the existing society. In this respect the case of Chlestakov was a significant change in a literal view. Whilst romantic texts refashion the actual behaviour of the individuals, the realistic refashions society's attitudes towards the behaviour of individuals.<sup>166</sup>

### 3.2 Fear of the spread of European liberalism

The enabling law for setting up the Bureau of Censorship (*Цензурный комитет*) was passed on July 9<sup>th</sup> 1804.<sup>167</sup> Prior to this there had been no defined law and censorship had been a whim of unqualified administrators. The responsibility was given to the Ministry of Education. The first section concerns censorship in general starting with the statement that the Censor has responsibility to consider all books and works in the public domain ("*Цензура имеет обязанностию рассматривать всякого рода книги и сочинения, назначаемые к общественному употреблению*"). It goes on to say that

<sup>164</sup> [http://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/Бритвы\\_\(Крылов\)](http://ru.wikisource.org/wiki/Бритвы_(Крылов)). 23-03-2013.

<sup>165</sup> <http://www.ebooksread.com/authors-eng/ivan-andreevich-krylov...> 29.07.2012.

<sup>166</sup> Lotman Juri 1984. *Gogol's Chlestakov: The Pragmatics of a Literary Character*. Op.cit.: 207-208

<sup>167</sup> Ruud Charles 2009. *Fighting Words: Imperial Censorship and the Russian Press, 1804-1906*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press Incorporated: 26.

no book or work may be printed in the Russian Empire without the approval of the Censor. Article 6 concerns the approval of books for teaching in the various academies. Whilst Article 10 concerns plays submitted for presentation in the capital and other cities but exclusive of the Court Theatre.<sup>168</sup> This law was known as the preliminary censorship which remained in force until 1865.<sup>169</sup>

It was the Decembrist uprising that led Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> to eliminate an element of society that had a romanticised view of freedom and he wanted through legislation to establish a society with clear individual roles which extended to the nobility. However, the 1830's and 40's was also a time when the circle of Mikhail Bakunin, Nikolai Stankevich and Belinsky were active. Already in January 1834 in a letter to his sister Bakunin writes of having experienced an "intellectual revolution" and how he was disenchanted with society,<sup>170</sup> and in a later letter, 1836, how "It is necessary to smash everything false".<sup>171</sup> By the 1840's all concepts of romanticism had disappeared and it was Herzen and Belinsky who took the extra step in defining the movement as *realism*, based on Hegelian thought with its demand for a new order of consciousness, that took hold of intellectual circles.

As discussed by Gasparov in his introduction to the *The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History* it was the literary circles in 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia that played such a central role since they "served as a replacement for those political, social, legal, and even economic phenomena that could not fully develop in Russian society."<sup>172</sup> Based on the active discussions within the literary circles Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>'s reaction to the Petrashevsky circle<sup>173</sup> is not surprising with his paranoia concerning secret organisations. Towards the end of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>'s reign censorship became even more severe as a result of the Tsar's fears of Russian educated society reacting within Russia in a similar way to the outbreaks of violence within Europe in 1848. Following on alarmist reports from the Second and Third Departments Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> set up a committee under the Minister for the Navy Count Alexandr Menshikov to look into how to restrict the European news on the revolutions being distributed internally. Menshikov's committee reported unfavourably on two of the popular journals of the time *The Contemporary* and *Notes of the Fatherland* and recommended that a new body be instigated to overlook the work of

<sup>168</sup> See, for instance, <http://www.opentextnn.ru/censorship/russia/dorev/law/1804>. 01.12.2011.

<sup>169</sup> Ruud Charles. *Op.cit.*: 147–148.

<sup>170</sup> Ginsburg Lidia 1985. *The "Human Document" and the Formation of Character in The Semiotics of Russian Cultural History. Essays by Iurii M. Lotman, Lidiia Ia. Ginsburg, Boris A. Uspenskii*. Ed. Nakhimovsky Alexander and Nakhimovsky Alice. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press: 200.

<sup>171</sup> *Ib.*: 204.

<sup>172</sup> *Ib.*: 13.

<sup>173</sup> The Petrashevsky Circle was a Russian literary discussion group consisting of writers, academics, students, army officers and Government officials who opposed Tsarist autocracy and serfdom.

the censors. As a result, following 1848 the system of control and censorship became severely overworked since a supreme censorship committee, the Committee of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, or the secret committee, otherwise known as the Buturlin Committee, was established, the so-called “censorship over the censors”.<sup>174</sup> As the censor Aleksandr Nikitenko writes:

It gradually became clear that the committee was created to investigate current trends in Russian literature, particularly in journals, and to develop means to control it in the future [...] Rumours spread that the committee was particularly ferreting out and interpreting the pernicious ideas of communism, socialism, and all kinds of liberalism [...].<sup>175</sup>

In his entry for the 9<sup>th</sup> March (22<sup>nd</sup> March) Nikitenko mentions twelve different censorship departments allocated to different ministries. The arts were controlled by the Ministry of the Imperial Court, the Post Office Department and His Majesty’s Own Chancery, amongst others.<sup>176</sup>

The logic behind a ban was often preposterous. Certain “Stanzas to Elisa” were banned on the basis that “one tender look” could not be more worth to a poet than the “attention of the entire universe” since this would include, for instance, the Tsar. The falseness of the society that existed at the start of the 19<sup>th</sup> century also became the sharp criticism of Gogol. As mentioned previously it was a pedantic censors departments that questioned, amongst others, Gogol’s valuation of a human soul in *Dead Souls* since this would offend the readers’ feelings, and were suspicious of musical notation. A society based on suspicion and uncertainty gave opportunity for the Chlestakov-type of individual. Even the loyal newspaper the *Northern Bee* was told to restrict reports to theatres, exhibitions and the like.<sup>177</sup>

The result of the revolutions of 1848 in Europe led to Russia cutting itself off from the rest of Europe. It was considered that the liberalism within Central Europe, and particularly Germany, had led to the attacks on the establishment. Consequently the teaching of logic and psychology had to be carefully controlled whilst constitutional law was removed from the curriculum. This control extended to the home and private education. The dominant theme was that people remained within their own social strata

<sup>174</sup> See, for instance, Ruud Charles 2009. *Op.cit.*: 83–90.

<sup>175</sup> Nikitenko Alexandr 1975. *The Diary of a Russian Censor*. Ed. and transl. Helen Salz Jacobson. Amherst, The University of Massachusetts Press: 116.

<sup>176</sup> *Ib.*: 126.

<sup>177</sup> See, for instance, Riasanovsky Nicolas 1959. *Op.cit.*: 223 and Riasanovsky Nicholas and Steinberg Mark 2005. *Op.cit.*: 307.

in society. All were considered suspect and inspectors were introduced into universities to observe students in their free time.<sup>178</sup>

Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>'s administration set up the Obolensky Commission to look into a revision of the censorship laws to give greater freedom to the press. Their recommendations were completed in November 1862 and recommended, amongst others, that responsibility for censorship should be given to the Ministry of the Interior. The Council of State issued the ukase of the 6<sup>th</sup> April 1865 which freed all publications eligible from the preliminary censorship. The first section assigned all matters concerning censorship to the Chief Administration of Press Affairs in the Ministry of the Interior with the exception of ecclesiastical matters. The fifth section dealt with the censorship of plays for performance and publication. Various injurious words which were defined became articles of the criminal code. This law was effective until November 1905. In December 1866 supplementary rules were requested by the Minister of the Interior, Count Valuev, and the Minister of Justice, Count Pahlen appointed the following year, who had previously worked closely with Valuev. This addition was that works could be confiscated prior to a case against them and that the procuracy could institute cases in defence of attacks on the government, institutions and their officials. All these measures were considered 'temporary' but contained a proviso that whilst the intention was to expand press freedom this should go hand in hand with responsibility. Following the assassination of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> there was a tightening of the regulations leading to the 'temporary' measures of August 27<sup>th</sup> 1882 giving wide-ranging powers to close papers and ban topics.<sup>179</sup>

### 3.3 Control of music

Around the middle of the century St.Petersburg was noted for having two opera houses and several music societies, however, as with all public entertainment, this was strictly controlled by the Tsarist bureaucracy. It was the Imperial Theatre Directorate, a department of the Ministry of the Imperial Court, which had control over drama, ballet, concerts and the opera companies, one performing in Italian and the other in Russian. In addition the Imperial Theatre in Moscow was controlled from St.Petersburg. A decree by Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> of 1846 restricted privately sponsored concerts to the period of Lent when the theatres were closed. This was later altered in 1854 giving powers of approval to the Directorate for all public concerts. Except for a thirty year period following 1812

<sup>178</sup> Riasanovsky Nicolas 1959. *Op.cit.*: 213–219.

<sup>179</sup> See: Жирков Г.В. 2001. *История цензуры в России XIX–XX вв.* (History of Russian Censorship in 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries). Москва, Аспект Пресс: 143-176; Green Jonathon, Karolides Nicholas 2005. *Encyclopedia of Censorship*, New York, Facts On File, Inc: 484-85.

when Napoleon invaded Russia, the Italian Opera in St.Petersburg dominated musical performance due to the sponsorship provided by the Tsar. This allowed them to hire the best orchestras, performers and set designers from Europe. Eduard Nápravník was assistant conductor at the Russian company in the early 1860's and noted that:

the singers had good voices and were talented but lacked serious training, like the birds of the air. The orchestra, consisting almost entirely of foreigners and numbering around seventy men, was of adequate quality but neglected and without discipline. The chorus of eighty (who were paid meagrely – 240 rubles or, for a few, 300 or 360 roubles a year) was also undisciplined and neglected.<sup>180</sup>

According to Theatrical Regulations of 1827 the pay for Russian singers was limited to a maximum of 1143 roubles a year compared to fees of between 10 000–20 000 roubles per season for foreign singers. It was not until the Russian Opera moved to the new Mariinsky Theatre in the autumn 1860 that some financial concessions were obtained.<sup>181</sup>

In terms of Russian repertoire, the only operas performed were Glinka's two operas *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila*, Verstovsky's *Askold's Tomb* and Dargomyzhsky's *Rusalka*.<sup>182</sup>

Concerts were given during the Lent period by The Philharmonic Society, The Concert Society and after 1859 the Theatre Directorate organised their own concerts. Again, the repertoire, mainly of symphonic works and opera excerpts, centred on European composers with Russia being represented by Glinka. The musicians were drawn from the theatre orchestras and choirs assisting, when required, leading soloists. The University managed to present concerts during the opera season by calling them "Musical Exercises of the Students of St.Petersburg University" and using student amateurs.<sup>183</sup> Anton Rubinstein sometimes appeared either as conductor or solo pianist. However, the concerts of the main societies were few and far between with little rehearsal time. Irrespective of the visits to the capital by Europe's leading musicians, Schumann, Liszt, Verdi, the capital lacked organised musical education. The only institutions of note were the Theatre School which essentially trained singers for the Imperial theatres and the Imperial Chapel training singers for the choir and, after 1839, orchestral musicians. Those who succeeded had to go abroad for training, however, the

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<sup>180</sup> Ridenour Robert. *Op.cit.*: 9.

<sup>181</sup> *Ib.*: 7–8.

<sup>182</sup> See, for instance, *ib.*: 14–16.

<sup>183</sup> *Ib.*: 11.

occupational prospects and remuneration were not an encouragement. Consequently the musicians of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century were all amateurs of wealthy means able to draw salaries elsewhere. In addition, the legal system did not recognise professional musicians. Although, already in the 18<sup>th</sup> century trained painters and actors were given the title of “free artist” this did not extend to musicians. Consequently they had no rights through a recognised *chin* or rank.<sup>184</sup>

### 3.4 Politics and censors

Following completion of his navel studies Rimsky-Korsakov embarked on an almost three year cruise on the clipper *Almaz*. During this time his experiences of life and nature became more diverse and he experienced and discussed the current political ideas. He and his colleagues read Belinsky, Dobrolyubov and Herzen’s *Kolokol* (The Bell).<sup>185</sup> This was possible since following the death of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> there was a freedom from the censorial constraints. Herzen as the first political journalist began publishing his *The Bell* in London in 1857. Already in 1853 he had published essays concerning serfdom and drew attention to the possibility for the emancipation of the serfs prior to 1861. Perhaps not only as an educated future naval officer but as an intellectual it is not surprising to learn of Rimsky-Korsakov’s mother’s concern over his visit to the London with the possibility of a meeting with Herzen.<sup>186</sup> In addition, his almost three year cruise on the *Almaz*, which included the New York, would have opened his eyes to societies enjoying a democracy unknown in Russia.

Before 1855 the number of political, social and literary journals available varied; official figures quote 54 for 1833. Following the accession of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> their number grew considerably reaching around 230 by 1860.<sup>187</sup> *The Bell* although smuggled illegally into the country had a wide readership including the Tsar himself.<sup>188</sup>

However it was at this crucial point in Russian history that the earlier Russian ‘idealism’ which had developed amongst the rich gentry, *dvoriane*, and limited by the restrictions on education introduced by the Tsar’s Minister for Education Count Uvarov, gradually changed to materialism and realism. This came in the 1860’s through a new intellectual force, the *raznochintsy*, people not attached to any legal categories; Chernishevsky was a prime example. With this freedom from parental control students

<sup>184</sup> See, for instance, Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 33.

<sup>185</sup> MML: 42.

<sup>186</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н.А. 2008. *Из семейной переписки*. Издательство «Композитор · Санкт-Петербург»: 63–64.

<sup>187</sup> Ruud Charles 2009. *Op.cit.*: 95 and Table.2, 254.

<sup>188</sup> Radzinski Edvard 2006. *Alexander II The Last Great Tsar*. Transl. Antonina W. Bouis Free Press New York: 83.

found themselves able to air their opinions freely. The character of Yevgeny Bazarov in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons* (Отцы и дети) is typical. This student unrest in the form of protests, strikes and vociferous and often violent actions against the administration within the universities became central to Russian life and was countered with mass arrests and/or expulsion of students and the closing down of the teaching establishments concerned. It was also Chernishevsky who particularly drew attention to the over-emphasized role of literature in Russian society. This was the only recognized art form that was not totally subservient to the State which, consequently, could offer some political resistance to the constraints of the Tsarist bureaucracy.

### 3.5 Political climate prior to and following the emancipation of the serfs

Following the draconian measures of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> to suppress information and control society, and with the final humiliation of the Crimean War, Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> realised that to stabilise the economy and counter mass dissatisfaction with the administration, amongst other measures, it was necessary to liberate the serfs. All of the movements in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century from the Decembrists through to the Slavophiles and Westerners agreed on the emancipation on moral grounds. The emancipation manifesto was signed by the Tsar on February 19<sup>th</sup> (March 3<sup>rd</sup>) 1861. In addition to emancipation, the other main contention of society was the law and, in particular, the Criminal Code of 1845 which had given the bureaucracy and police virtually unlimited powers.<sup>189</sup> The liberal views of the new Tsar now called for a state based on open court proceedings, trial by juries and unprejudiced judges. This second "Great Reform", the reform of the legal system, was enacted at the end of 1864. However, these reforms were also used to further the cause of radicalism since, for instance, now all criminal cases including political offences would be tried in open court and reported in the press. This gave the radicals a platform to present their views. Due to uncertain knowledge of the law within the juries it also led to scandalous acquittals such as that of Vera Zasulich who, in 1878 shot and seriously wounded the Governor of St.Petersburg.<sup>190</sup> However, it was the over-reaction of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> followed by the confusion and indecision of the succeeding regime that drove many of the conservative and liberal intelligentsia to support the realism of the radicals advocated by Chernishevsky, Dobroliubov and Dmitry Pisarev in Russia and Herzen from the safety of England.

Through the 1860's there were increasing disturbances in society as a result of a relaxation on censorship and the previous police state. It was a number of isolated

<sup>189</sup> Pipes Richard 1995. *Russia under the Old Regime*. London, Penguin Books Ltd: 293–294.

<sup>190</sup> Kucherov Samuel 1952. The Case of Vera Zasulich. *Russian Review* 11 (2): 86–96.



incidences that resulted in an increasing tightening of restrictions. The imprisonment of Chernishevsky, who had edited *The Contermporary*, in 1862 and subsequent exile to Siberia for views expressed in his novel *What's to be done?* can be considered excessive at a time when the new Minister for Education, Alexander Golovin, was introducing a freer university regime. Student freedom was also seen at the root of Dmitry Karakozov's attempt on the life of the Tsar. This resulted in stricter controls on all education in Russia, instigated by Count Dmitry Tolstoy, but also on the freedom of the press.

It was Chernishevsky's dissertation "Aesthetic Relation of Art to Reality" in 1855 that drew attention to the artist's social responsibility for realism.

True, art sometimes succeeds in grouping figures flawlessly, but it has no grounds for boasting of its extremely rare success, because in real life failure *never* occurs in this respect: in every group of living people all deport themselves in complete conformity with 1) the essence of the scene that is taking place among them, 2) the essence of their own characters, and 3) the circumstances. All this is automatically adhered to in real life, but is achieved with extreme difficulty in art.<sup>191</sup>

The painter Vasily Perov continued in this vein shortly after Chernishevsky's work had been published by depicting the realism of both rural and urban life. In 1858 he exhibited a very pointed attack on the peasant-authority relationship:



*Commissary of Rural Police Investigating.* Vasily Perov, 1857. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

The relationship with the Church was commented on in Perov's *Easter Procession in a Village* of 1861 (see p. 43).

<sup>191</sup> Chernyshevsky Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 342-43.

Herzen's associate in *The Bell*, Ogaryov's views were that young artists had to "find strength to curse" the evil institutions of the Empire and to address the problems and sufferings of the day.<sup>192</sup> In an obituary for Alexandr Ivanov he drew attention to the artist's position as servants of the Court. It was in the Russian satirical magazine *The Spark* (Искра) that Ivan Ivanovich Dmitriev criticised the Academy of Arts in 1863 with his article 'Art that Bows and Scrapes' with its formalised approach and the students for not reacting to the Academy demands for fear of losing later benefits:

Art has not brought any benefit to the people, has not given any content, because it has itself been empty, and has not brought any element of education into life. Here, from the beginning, it was a plaything for the rich and the powerful and it has remained as such to this day [...] Art must benefit the people and must be needed by the people, and clearly it will not achieve this by means of its useless, ancient ways.<sup>193</sup>

As Valkenier rightly argues the departure of the Association of Travelling Art Exhibits, the so-called *peredvizhniki*, from the Academy of Arts was not on political but artistic grounds. However, it did indicate a deeper break with the rules and regulations of an institution that was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Court. Artists at this time faced extensive social, cultural and legal barriers.<sup>194</sup> The leader of the group Ivan Kramskoi wrote to Stasov in 1886 that "By 1863 I had matured so much I sincerely wanted freedom [...] Free from what? [...] from the administrative supervision..."<sup>195</sup> However, it was the critics such as Stasov and Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin that read more into these realist paintings as demonstrating the conflict in Russian society.

It was this secession in 1863 that can indirectly be linked to the calls for a clear Russian national identity, which differed from Western influences that became seen to be a part of the cultural nationalism movement of the 1860's. In the same way as the group were calling for a national school of painting so too Balakirev and the *Kuchka* were advocating a Russian national music based on indigenous folk music rather than the Germanic influences of Rubinstein's Conservatoire. It was also a call for the directorate of the Imperial Theatres to recognise the Russian composers of the age instead of pampering to Westernised forms.

<sup>192</sup> Valkenier Elizabeth 1989. *Russian Realist Art*. New York, Colombia University Press: 20.

<sup>193</sup> Dmitriev.I. *Art that Bows and Scrapes: On the Annual Exhibition at the Academy of Arts (1863)*, Iskra, no. 38 (October 4, 1863), 521-30. Transl. Adam.C. 2002 <http://www.hrion.ac.uk/rva/texts/dmitriev/dmi01/dmi01.html>.

<sup>194</sup> *Ib.*: 17-18

<sup>195</sup> Valkenier Elizabeth 1975. The Peredvizhniki and the Spirit of the 1860s. *Russian Review*, 34 (3): 253.

At the same time following demonstrations by Polish extremists with a large student following, which also spread to the surrounding countries, Polish autonomy was retracted and the country became a part of 'Greater' Russia in 1864. Further restriction of student activities came in 1873 when the government recalled all Russian students studying in Switzerland to return to Russia. This led to the so-called "go to the people" movement which had been inspired by Bakunin and Pyotr Lavrov who understood that change would only occur through bringing the peasants attention to the injustice of the emancipation. They encouraged students to leave their studies and go to educate the peasants.

Irrespective of the liberal policies of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>, the extreme radical elements within society caused continual disruption and undermined the liberalisation policies through drawing attention to the deficiencies in emancipation, the false freedom of the peasants, the inefficiency of the *zemstvo*-system of local administration still dominated by the landowners. Through resorting to terror they forced the government to introduce measures to detain and exile persons accused of or seen to be involved in or even thought to be involved in terrorist activities against State property or persons. This administration of justice by bureaucrats or police without reference to the Attorney General marked a change of responsibility from the Ministry of Justice to the Ministry of the Interior. In 1880 the Third Department was replaced by a Department of State Police. Towards the end of the century when it appeared that terrorism was increasing a special section (*Особый отдел*) was introduced to concentrate on that aspect of policing. However, the original instructions introduced for the new police department in 1880 gave it powers 'to approve the statutes of various associations and clubs and to grant permission for the holding of public lectures, readings, expositions, and conferences'.<sup>196</sup>

It was the assassination of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> that led to extensive revision of his reforms. Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> instigated 'counter-reforms' the aim of which was to enforce the concepts of Official Nationality as outlined by Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>. The main architect of this was Konstantin Pobedonostsev who advised the new Tsar and was also the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod. He was a staunch conservative who was totally against trial by jury, the freedom of the press and the Westerners who had no background in Russian culture and history and secular education. Democracy was not to be condoned and the only

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<sup>196</sup> Pipes Richard 1995. *Op.cit.*: 300.

absolute authority was that of the Tsar.<sup>197</sup> The ‘Temporary Regulations’ were extended and censorship tightened to the extent that the radical press could not exist and even liberal journals were suspect. The new legislation was signed by Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> on 14<sup>th</sup> August 1881 and was entitled ‘Regulation concerning measures for the protection of the [established] system of government and of public tranquillity, the placement of certain of the Empire’s localities under a state of Reinforced Safeguard’.<sup>198</sup> This in effect established official permission procedures for everyday affairs and giving control for travel and publications to police authorisation

### 3.6 Rimsky-Korsakov and the censor

Although liberal in his politics, Rimsky-Korsakov had problems with the censors who, fearing revolutionary tendencies in sections of society, sought to dispel any hints of democratic rule in operas submitted

#### 3.6.1 The politics of *The Maid of Pskov* and *The Tsar’s Bride*

For both *The Maid of Pskov* and *The Tsar’s Bride* Rimsky-Korsakov turned to Mey’s plays for the libretti source. *The Tsar’s Bride* was published in 1849 and staged in Moscow and *The Maid of Pskov* published in 1859. The composer also used Mey for *Servilia*. Both Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky in their historical operas focus on the reign of Ivan the Terrible.

One should ask the question even at the time of his first opera, *The Maid of Pskov*, why Rimsky-Korsakov chose for his libretto’s, plots that would inevitably bring him into conflict with the Tsar and his bureaucracy; the play had already been banned by the censors after its première due to its portrayal of the citizens of Pskov as independent.<sup>199</sup> Following emancipation there were a number of riots by both peasants and within the universities. In addition in Tver in 1862 the local gentry led by Alexis Unkovsky demanded a new independence through the formation of a local assembly representing the people.<sup>200</sup> This was followed by insurrection in Poland leading to a curtailment of the country’s autonomy and an enforced Russification. Irrespective of this, in January 1864 both the *zemstvo* and city self-government legislation was enacted. Its critics pointed to the limited powers it possessed with policing and administration being retained by central government. In addition power was still effectively retained in the

<sup>197</sup> Riasanovsky Nicholas 2005. *Op.cit.*: 183; Byrnes Robert 1968. *Pobedonostsev. His Life and Thought*. Bloomington and London, Indiana University Press: 329, 259–260.

<sup>198</sup> *Ib.*: 305. See also Daly Jonathan W 1998. *Autocracy under Siege: Security Police and Opposition in Russia, 1866 - 1905*. DeKalb, Northern Illinois University Press.

<sup>199</sup> See [http://tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/mei\\_lev.html](http://tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/mei_lev.html). 7.10.2011.

<sup>200</sup> See, for instance, Riasanovsky Nicholas and Steinberg Mark. Vol.2. *Op.cit.*: 352

hands of the gentry. Following an attempt on the life of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> by the student Dmitry Karakozov the government took stricter control of education and increased press censorship, amongst others.

How did these two operas relate to political events? Both *The Maid of Pskov* and *The Tsar's Bride* are an intricate mix of history, the changing views concerning Ivan the Terrible in the 1860's but also drawing attention to events and concerns following emancipation. In the early 19<sup>th</sup> century Karamzin described Tsar Ivan 4<sup>th</sup> 'The Terrible' as living up to his name, however, there was a caveat:

In conclusion we have to say that Ivan's good fame outlived his bad reputation in the memory of the people: the groans fell silent, the victims crumbled to dust, and the old tales were eclipsed by new ones; but Ivan's name glittered on the Law Code and recalled the acquisition of the three Mongol khanates.<sup>201</sup>

However, it was particularly the Slavophile folklorists of the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century who drew attention to the positive image of Ivan in folksongs. The view rested to a certain extent on the records of the Englishman Samuel Collins who was court physician to Tsar Alexis from 1660-69. In his *The Present State of Russia* published in London in 1671 in Chapter XII he says "The people loved him very well, for he treated them kindly, but chastised his *Boyers*".<sup>202</sup> However, in the 1860's a number of negative tales were published including that of the folklorist Pavel Yakushkin in 1860 concerning Novgorod and Pskov<sup>203</sup> and Pavel Rybnikov's 1862 collection of songs including the prose tale 'Why treason came to Russia'. Linked to the historical basis of Ivan's cruelty was the *oprichniki* who were members of an organisation established by Ivan to govern the division of Russian known as the *Oprichnina* between 1565–72. Their black garb and horses inspired terror amongst the people and aim was to rid the Tsar of his enemies. It was the *oprichniki* that carried out the massacre of Novgorod.

Rimsky-Korsakov completed the orchestration of *The Maid of Pskov* in January 1872 and submitted the score to the censor. The Act II *вече/vyechе* (free city assembly) scene needed extensive alteration. This free assembly of the people existed in Rus' from the 10<sup>th</sup> to the 14<sup>th</sup> century and for longer in Novgorod and Pskov. The censors at the time did not want to enhance any suggestion of a republican form of government which

<sup>201</sup> Perrie Maureen 1987. *The Image of Ivan the Terrible in Russian Folklore*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 7; Карамзин, Н. 2002. *История государства российскою*, (History of the State of Russia) 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, vol.9, Санкт-Петербург, Литера: 543-4.

<sup>202</sup> Collins Samuel 1671. *The Present State of Russia*. myweb.uiowa.edu/mapoe/publications/Collins.pdf: 34.

<sup>203</sup> Perrie Maureen. *Op.cit.*: 169–72.

Pskov might have represented. Consequently *vyeche* became *сходка/skhodka* (meeting) and the *степенный посадник/styepeny posadnik*, the term for the mayor of a free city, had to be changed to Governor of Pskov, *псковский наместник/pskovski namyestnik*. Tucha's words of incitement in Act I Scene 2 had to be removed:

Притупились топоры,	Our axes have lost their edge
зазубрились мечи...	Our sword blades are all jagged...

Али не на чем точить	Or, have we naught on which
ни мечей, ни топоров? <sup>204</sup>	To sharpen swords or axes? <sup>205</sup>

In addition the censors referred to Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>'s order dating from the 1840's which stated that Russian rulers could only be represented in the theatre but not opera. "To my inquiry: why? I received the reply "And suppose the Tsar should suddenly sing a ditty; well, it would be unseemly"". <sup>206</sup> At this period Rimsky-Korsakov was still officially under commission in the Navy. It was through representation to the Secretary of the Navy, N. K. Krabbe, and through him to the High Admiral of the Fleet Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, brother of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> that the censor's objection was circumvented provided the reference to *vyeche* was removed.

The opera is significant in many aspects. The tolling of the bell calling the citizens of Pskov to the meeting in the square of the Pskov Kremlin and the news of Ivan the Terrible's massacre of Novgorod accords with historical fact. It was the Tsar's intention to destroy Pskov too and marched towards the city camping close by at Lyubyatovo. At midnight the church bells were rang for matins for the people to pray for salvation from the Tsar. He was received by the priests, dignitaries and people and entertained which is the action of Act II, Scene 1 and Scene 2.

Грозен царь идёт во Великий Псков.	Our terrible Tsar rides to Mighty Pskov.
Со гостиным хлебом-солью,	With the bread and salt of welcome,
с мёдом сыченым, с брагой хмельною	with mead and water, and our strongest
	beer,
все вы идите к царю, вы встречайте его!	all come out to greet the tsar, all step
	forth to meet him!

<sup>204</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н 1981. *Псковитянка. Опера в 3 действиях. Клавир*. (The Maid of Pskov. Opera in 3 Acts. Piano [score]) Ленинград. Издательство «Музыка», Ленинградское отделение: 112–114.

<sup>205</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1997. *The Maid of Pskov*, Kirov Opera and Orchestra, Valery Gergiev, Philips 446 678–2, CD. Accompanying libretto: 110. (Note this page also has the Russian words).

<sup>206</sup> MML: 125–26.

Со святыми крестами, с хоругвями,	With our holy crosses, our sacred banners,
со святыми честными иконами	with the ikons that you honour,
вы идите царю во сретенье.	before which you worship, go forward to meet the tsar. <sup>207</sup>

This description follows recorded events.<sup>208</sup> In Scene 2 Tsar Ivan teases Prince Tokmakov and his ideas of the city behaving independently of the Tsar.

Государь!..	Ruler-prince!
Все государи мы,	We are rulers alike,
и государь наш Псков и Новгород.	even Pskov and Novgorod are sovereign.
А кто ж против бога	But who goes against God
и Новгорода великого?! <sup>209</sup>	and against the Mighty Novgorod? <sup>210</sup>

In the opera his rage against Pskov is allayed by the realisation that Olga is his illegitimate daughter, Vera Sheloga's daughter. Although the reasons for Pskov's salvation differ, legend and the Orthodox Church record that it was the meeting of the Юродивый/*Yurodivyi*, Holy Fool of Pskov on the road that led the superstitious Tsar to turn back.<sup>211</sup> The composer's interpretation of the event is more dramatic:

Вот, обелил я Псков,	So, I have pardoned Pskov;
а девчонка все с ума нейдёт!	yet, the dear girl will not leave my thoughts.
Былое время, я молодость кипучая,	I'm haunted by times past, by wild days of youth,
былая страсть!..	passion that was!

But the continuation also has a strong political message:

[...] То только царство сильно, крепко и велико,  
где ведает народ, что у него один владыка,  
как во едином стаде единый пастырь.<sup>212</sup>

[...] It's clear a kingdom is only strong, firm and mighty,

<sup>207</sup> *The Maid of Pskov*. CD. *Op.cit.*: 114 (both Russian and English words). The words in the 1981 Russian piano score 125–127 differ slightly.

<sup>208</sup> See Yakushkin P. *Ivan the Terrible in Pskov* in Perrie Maureen 1987. *Op.cit.*: 169–71.

<sup>209</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н 1981. *Псковитянка*. *Op.cit.*: 156–157.

<sup>210</sup> *The Maid of Pskov*. CD. *Op.cit.*: 128–30.

<sup>211</sup> See Yakushkin and *Blessed Nikolai of Pskov*, <http://www.holytrinityorthodox.com/calendar/los/February/28-03.htm>. 6.10.2011.

<sup>212</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н 1981. *Псковитянка*. *Op.cit.*: 201–203.

where the people all know well that they have one  
supreme ruler, just as, in a flock, there is one single  
shepherd.<sup>213</sup>

Although this statement appears to confirm the composer's allegiance to the Tsar, the ending shows the common people represented by Mikhail Tucha, who previously in Act I, Scene 2 defied the authority of Pskov, now defying the Tsar.

*The Tsar's Bride*, termed a historical drama, is completely fictional, based around a possible scenario following the death of Ivan the Terrible's third wife. The opera, premièred in 1898, showed Rimsky-Korsakov's increasing concern over the measures taken following the accession of Tsar Nicholas 2nd in 1894 to enforce an autocratic state of government. The actions in the opera attest to the view that "unbridled autocracy can turn into a passion for destruction and revert to terror whenever human society cannot counter such behaviour with an intact moral code".<sup>214</sup>

As a result of the assassination of Alexander 2nd and the stricter censorship, the ban on previous Tsars being given voice roles was re-introduced. In *The Tsar's Bride*, Ivan the Terrible appears in a silent role. At the start of Act II Scene 3 two noblemen appear and although unidentified, the music in the orchestra is a mixture of the 'Slava' theme, used frequently in Russian opera to identify the Tsar, and Ivan the Terrible's *leitmotif* from *The Maid of Pskov*.<sup>215</sup> In addition the name of Grigory Griaznoy, the *oprichnik*, would have reminded an audience of Ivan the Terrible's name, *grozny*, "The Terrible".

### 3.6.2 The significance of Gogol

Prior to considering the political significance of the two operas Rimsky-Korsakov wrote using librettos based on two stories from Gogol's *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka*, it is important to understand the background of the stories and also their relationship to political events at the time the operas were written.

Following the wars with Poland around the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century Bohdan Khmelnytsky, the leader of the Cossack Hetmanate, approached the Russian Tsar, Alexei Mikhailovich, with the aim of securing a powerful ally. The Council of Pereiaslav in 1654 resulted in the Ukraine becoming an integral part of Russia with the Ukrainians owing allegiance to

<sup>213</sup> *The Maid of Pskov*. CD. *Op.cit.*: 154.

<sup>214</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1999. *The Tsar's Bride*, Kirov Opera and Orchestra, Valery Gergiev, Philips 462 618-2, CD. Accompanying libre tto "Shedding Light on the Present with a Historical Opera": 11.

<sup>215</sup> Taruskin Richard 1992. *Tsar's Bride*, The. *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. Ed. Stanley Sadie. London, The Macmillan Press Limited. Vol.4: 833.



the Tsar. Any connection with the formerly dominant Poland was severed and Orthodoxy replaced the Catholic church. The Polish upper class was gradually replaced. It was, however, a century later with the appointment of Prince Alexander Alexeevich Viazemsky as Imperial Procurator-General that the then Tsarina, Catherine the Great's views and aims for the Ukraine, amongst others, became clear.

Малая Россия, Лифляндия и Финляндия суть провинции, которые правятся подтвержденными им привилегиями; нарушить оные отрешением всех вдруг весьма непристойно б было, однако ж и называть их чужестранными и обходиться с ними на таком же основании есть больше, нежели ошибка, а можно назвать с достоверностию глупостию. Сии провинции [...] надлежит легчайшими способами привести к тому, чтоб они обрусели и перестали бы глядеть, как волки к лесу.<sup>216</sup>

Little Russia, Livonia and Finland are provinces governed by privileges' confirmed to them. To destroy these by abolishing them all at once would be highly improper. To call them foreign, however and to deal with them on this basis is more than a mistake, and can accurately be called stupidity. These provinces [...] must be brought by the smoothest means to the point where they Russianize and stop looking like wolves at the forest.<sup>217</sup>

and in her subsequent instructions to Pyotr Rumiantsev when he was appointed Governor-General of Little Russia, she especially pointed out that Russia had had no benefit and revenue from this rich and fruitful region and the disorder there was due to various foreign laws and rights leading to a lack of clarity and these matters needed addressing.<sup>218</sup>

Since the Ukraine was considered on Russia's periphery it was essential, for advancement in society, for Ukrainians to move towards St. Petersburg and Moscow. Due to the Ukraine's long association and influences from the West there were two renowned schools of learning, the Kiev Academy, established in 1672, and the Kharkiv Collegium in 1721. Both of these were established before those in St. Petersburg and Moscow. Consequently many Ukrainian's rose to high positions within the Russian arts and sciences and the bureaucracy, including musicians Berezovsky and Bortniansky, and Alesandr Bezborodko who became Grand Chancellor of Russia.<sup>219</sup>

<sup>216</sup> Соловьев Сергей 2008. *История России с древнейших времен. Том 26. Глава первая.* (The history of Russia since ancient times. Volume 26, Chapter 1). <http://www.rodon.org/ssm/irsdv/index.htm>. 23.11.2012.

<sup>217</sup> Catherine II 1784 Собственноручное наставление Екатерины II князю Вяземскому при вступлении им в должность генерал-прокурора (Directions in the hand of Catherine II to Prince Viazemsky on the assumption of the office of Procurator-General). Quoted in Saunders David 1985. *The Ukrainian Impact on Russian Culture 1750~1850*. Edmonton, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, University of Alberta: 16–17.

<sup>218</sup> *Ib.*: 17.

<sup>219</sup> See, for instance, Magocsi Paul 2010. *A History of Ukraine. The Land and Its Peoples*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press: 273–274 and 301–302.

However, irrespective of a political coexistence, the Ukraine in the 19<sup>th</sup> century was culturally, linguistically and socially very different and foreign to most Russians. With an increasing centralisation of the imperial government and a questioning of national identity it is not surprising that Russia resented Ukrainians in central bureaucracy labelling it as “Little Russian infestation”.<sup>220</sup> The question that the socialite and Maid of Honour to the Imperial Court Aleksandra Smirnova asked of Gogol in 1844 “In your soul, are you a Russian or a Ukrainian?”<sup>221</sup> was very pertinent at a time when Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> had instigated his ‘Official Nationality’ policy. There was to be no separatist notions even on the southern border of the Empire. Consequently on arrival in St.Petersburg in 1828, although having been brought up in typical Ukrainian nobility circles, Gogol found himself viewed as a Ukrainian and known as a *khokhol*, an ethnical slur. It was at this time that Gogol’s Ukrainian national identity sentiments were aroused together with a criticism of Russia’s imperial designs. With this frame of mind he began to write *Dikanka* and realising the prejudice against ‘Little Russia’ gave authorship to a beekeeper named Rudi Panko who had collected the stories and who wrote them in Russian but also with a list of Ukrainian words with their Russian equivalents. The *Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* were a series of short stories written by Gogol and published in two volumes in 1831 and 1832.

It is interesting to follow the debate that ensued following the publication of the first stories which has been outlined by Saunders. There were two main views. Writing under the name Tsarynnyi, Andrii Storozhenko viewed that the writer could not be Ukrainian due to the errors in his understanding of and ability to capture Ukrainian life and underlined this view:

There are of course writers who by their works make difficult the solution of the question: is it absolutely necessary to live in a certain region to know the manners, customs, and beliefs of the people? But such phoenixes are the products of centuries of development [rediatsia vekami]. While impatiently awaiting such a genius, it seems that as yet we are unable, without leaving the capital, to study the popular life of the highly varied inhabitants of our extensive fatherland, whose customs constitute a whole course of study, necessary for the cleverest of them [i.e., writers].<sup>222</sup>

The other main view was presented by Vasilii Ushakov in *The Northern Bee*. He drew a pan-slavic view that the literature and culture of the periphery enriched the central

<sup>220</sup> Bojanowska Edyta M. 2007. *Nikolai Gogol Between Ukrainian and Russian Nationalism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press: 31.

<sup>221</sup> *Ib.*: 1.

<sup>222</sup> See, Saunders David 1981. Contemporary Critics of Gogol’s *Vechera* and Debate about Russian *narodnost*’ (1831-1832). *Harvard Ukrainian Studies* V (1): 66–82 quoting Tsarynnyi, *Mysli malorossiianina* 6.

Russian culture. He sided with Karamzin when he wrote that the *Dikanka* stories offered something new for the Russians who were “orientated towards falsity, even in the use of language”.<sup>223</sup> However, there was also a political connotation to the literary output at the time since discussions concerning life in Russia was very much centralised in the capital. Any considerations of national identity had to have a wider forum since the capital had become very colonial; the *Dikanka* stories gave a view of the simplicity of life in the South, more representative of the Slavic nation.

*Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka* became prominent in discussion in intellectual and political life in St. Petersburg. Gogol purposefully did not want to present the stories in what would have been considered a socially correct form but as a political comment. He stresses comparison in the introduction that their “*evenings*” are more informal not like the balls of the capital and later goes on to say: “*As for the park [garden], I don’t suppose you would find anything like it in your Petersburg*” (А про сад и говорить нечего: в Петербурге вашем, верно, не сыщете такого).<sup>224</sup> The comparisons between Ukrainians and Russians continue, with the description of the priest, Foma Grigorevich who represents tradition and the gentleman with a pea-green coat, a refined Russified Ukrainian, criticised for being pretentious. These criticisms of centralised authority translate themselves into the stories.

In both *May Night* and *Christmas Eve* there is a clash between the younger and older generation. They are differentiated by speech, the older using coarse terminology, however, as with the “pea gentleman” the older insist on using Polish titles ‘pan Golova’ but also referring to status being conferred by having been, at some time in the past, physically close to the ruler, Catherine the Great in his case. In terms of the first four stories there is a change from *The Fair at Sorochintsy* (Сорочинская ярмарка) where Gogol refers to a summer day in ‘Little Russia’ (в Малороссии) whilst in *May Night* he already uses ‘Ukraine’ (Украина) which was used in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but had been replaced in the Russian Empire. Bojanowska interpretes this as a rejection of the Imperial designs.<sup>225</sup> Gogol as Ivan Kotliarevsky earlier in *Aeneid* (1798) through a focussed description of Ukrainian customs makes fun of the foreigners, the Imperial centre. George Grabowicz points out that the function of the cultural intertext known as *kotliarevshchyna* is to “mock the inflated, self-important, artificial, cold and ultimately ‘inhuman’ world of normative imperial society and normative canonical literature” it

<sup>223</sup> *Ib.* 70 quoting *Северная пчела* (The Northern Bee), 1831, no. 219, 3.

<sup>224</sup> Гоголь Н.В. 1984 *Собрание сочинений. Том I. Вечера на хуторе близ Диканьки*. Москва, «Художественная литература»: 11, 13 and Gogol Nikolai. *Evenings Near the Village of Dikanka*. Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House: 12, 15.

<sup>225</sup> Bojanowska Edyta. *Id.*: 52.

also gives a surreptitious way of mocking the foreign “without direct risk”. Gogols’s *Dikanka* was a powerful comment on the literature of the centre.<sup>226</sup>

In Gogol’s *May Night*, for instance, the use of language is significant; the songs of Levko are written in Ukrainian whilst that of the Headman, referred to in the opera as Pan Golova, is in Russian. The reference to Catherine the Great in the story refers to her visit to the newly annexed Crimea when she stopped for three months in Kiev. The way she took was noted for its splendour and colourful peasant scenes which Prince Grigory Potemkin had arranged. This visit is enacted in the story where Golova was chosen to serve as a guide and “had the high honour of sitting with the imperial coachman on the box”.<sup>227</sup> This also shows the result of Catherine’s policies concerning the Ukraine showing the level to which Ukraine’s hierarchy had sunk. However, his position in the village is not respected since it exists because it has only been attained through imperial promotion and the backing of an imperially appointed commissar.

Да, голову [...] Он управляется у нас, как будто гетьман какой. Мало того что помыкает, как своими холопьями, еще и подъезжает к дивчатам нашим [...] Мы, слава богу, вольные козаки!<sup>228</sup>

Yes, [the headman/Hetman] [...] He rules us as if he were a Hetman. He is not satisfied with treating us as though we were his serfs, but he must go after our girls, too [...] Thank God, we are free Cossacks.<sup>229</sup>

These words are also used almost identically by Rimsky-Korsakov. These anti-authoritarian views are also expressed by the peasant Kalenik: *Head[man] indeed! I am my own head[man]* (Ну, голова, голова. Я сам себе голова) and later insults Golova: *Why should I lie about it? I am ready to tell the head[man]himself so. What do I care for the Head[man][...] I wish a wagon would run over him, the one-eyed devil!* (Что мне лгать! Я готов объявить это хоть самому голове. Что мне голова? [...] Чтоб его, одноглазого черта, возом переехало!).<sup>230</sup> And it is to the commissar, the imperial power that Golova threatens to report the disturbances.

<sup>226</sup> Grabowicz George 2003. “Between Subversion and Self-Assertion: The Role of Kotliarevshchyna in Russian-Ukrainian Literary Relations” in *Culture, Nation, and Identity: The Ukrainian-Russian Encounter (1600-1945)*. Ed. Kappeler Andreas. et al., Edmonton, Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies Press: 215.

<sup>227</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 79.

<sup>228</sup> Гоголь Н.В. *Op.cit.*: 65.

<sup>229</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 83.

<sup>230</sup> *Ib.* (Russian) 61, 67-68; *ib.* (English): 78, 87.

Following the demise of the Cyril and Methodius Brotherhood in 1847, a Ukrainian society based in Kiev and whose aims were, amongst others, the rights of all Slavic nations to develop their national language and culture, imperial Russia continually attempted to curb Ukrainian nationalism.<sup>231</sup> It was from his St.Petersburg university base, where he was Professor of Russian History that Nikolai (Mykola) Kostamarov began to promote Ukrainian nationalist ideas supported by Herzen, Chernishevsky and Dobrolyubov. He founded and contributed to the Ukrainian journal *Foundation* (Osnova) which was written in both Ukrainian and Russian and existed from 1861–62. It was in this journal that he made his opinions known in his article *Two Russian Nationalities* (Две русские народности). Following fears of separatist inclinations subsequent to the emancipation of the serfs and the Polish uprising in 1863 and the publication of a Ukrainian translation of the New Testament, the local cultural organisation, *hromada*, activities together with their publications were closed by the then Russian Minister of Internal Affairs Count Pyotr Valuev.<sup>232</sup> In his secret instruction he wrote:

No separate Little Russian language has [ever] existed, does exist [now], and can [ever] exist, and the dialect used by the common folk is the very same Russian language, only adulterated by the influence on it of the Polish language [...] The all-Russian language is just as understandable for Little Russians as it is for Great Russians, and even more understandable than the so-called Ukrainian language, presently fabricated for them by certain Little Russians, and in particular the Poles.<sup>233</sup>

Following this on reports concerning the activities and publications of the South-Western Branch of the Imperial Geographic Society in Kiev, Tsar Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> appointed an Imperial Commission on Ukrainophile Propaganda. This reported that a dangerous state existed in the Ukraine and that the contents and extent of Valuev's decree be extended. This resulted in the Ems Ukaz, issued in 1876, which was again secret but essentially banned all elements of Ukrainian culture, language and music. The damaging result of this was partially alleviated by Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1881 with permission to publish and perform Ukrainian music and plays after approval by the local authorities. Russian ideology was central to schools and the army and official business could only be carried out in Russian.<sup>234</sup>

<sup>231</sup> Subtelny Orest 1994. *Ukraine: A History*. Toronto, University of Toronto Press: 235–237; Magocsi Paul. *Op.cit.*: 387.

<sup>232</sup> Magocsi Paul. *Ib.*: 390–394.

<sup>233</sup> Valuev Petr. *Encyclopedia of Ukraine*. <http://encyclopediaofukraine.com/display.asp?linkpath=pages...> 12.10.2011.

<sup>234</sup> Magocsi Paul. *Op.cit.*: 395. A translation of the Ems Ukase is also given: 396–397.

### 3.6.3 Rimsky-Korsakov and Gogol

Taking the political climate vis-à-vis the Ukraine it is certainly curious that Rimsky-Korsakov's chose Gogol and *A May Night or the Drowned Maiden* (Майская ночь, или Утопленница) as the source for his second opera. He made little alteration to Gogol's text and extensively used authentic Ukrainian folk tunes and songs.<sup>235</sup> This was written in 1878 and 1879 and first performed at the Mariinsky Theatre on 9<sup>th</sup> January (21<sup>st</sup> January) 1880 under the baton of Eduard Nápravník. *May Night* passed the censors without comment and the only criticism of note came from Nápravník concerning Act 3. The veiled support for the Ukrainian cause was not a cause for concern. The opening to Act 2 is in the 'Tempo di Polacca' which can be interpreted in two ways, reflecting on the Headman and his associates imagined relationship with the imperial centre or as a reference to the former Polish influence.

For *May Night* Catherine the Great is referred to as visiting the Ukraine; with *Christmas Eve*, Gogol's description of St. Petersburg, the court, Potemkin and the Tsaritsa clearly places the action. The censor's reaction towards Rimsky-Korsakov's opera of the same name, composed in 1894–95, was clear due to the re-enactment of the edict forbidding the appearance of representatives of the House of Romanov in voice parts on stage following the assassination of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1881. The composer had avoided putting a name to the Tsaritsa and linked her not to the capital St. Petersburg but to a 'град-столица' (capital city). His view was that "On the whole, *Christmas Eve* is a fairy-tale, and the Tsaritsa merely a fairy-tale personage."<sup>236</sup>

The opera was initially rejected by the censorship bureau on the basis that everyone would have known Gogol's tale and the reference both to the court and personage of Catherine the Great. During discussions with the Minister of the Imperial Court, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov, concerning direction of the Court Chapel following Balakirev's resignation, the composer brought up the question of *Christmas Eve* and the censor's rejection. A petition was drawn up by Rimsky-Korsakov and submitted to Vorontsov-Dashkov which resulted in the Tsar giving his approval for it "to be produced on the Imperial stage without change in the libretto."<sup>237</sup> The Director of Theatres Ivan Vsyevolozhsky was determined that *Christmas Eve* would be produced on a lavish scale aiming to have an enormous portrait of Catherine the Great on stage and replicating both herself and her court, much to the composer's disapproval.<sup>238</sup> However, the dress

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<sup>235</sup> Yastrbtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 70.

<sup>236</sup> MML: 350.

<sup>237</sup> *Ib.*: 352.

<sup>238</sup> *Ib.*: 352.

rehearsal was attended by two Romanov Grand Dukes, Vladimir Alexandrovich and Mikhail Nikolaevich, who objected to their ancestors being portrayed on stage and forced Rimsky-Korsakov to change the Tsaritsa role to a high ranking nobleman “Most Serene Highness”. In addition it was required that the drops be altered so the Cathedral representing St. Petersburg and the Fortress of St. Peter and St. Paul be removed since the latter was the burial place of many Romanovs. The composer did not approve of the changes and did not attend the première.<sup>239</sup>

It is, however, curious that the censor paid no attention to the text used. Again Rimsky-Korsakov stuck closely to the words of Gogol. The songs used are typical for the time of year. However, pagan customs and the appearance of both Solokha, a witch, and Chort, the Devil, challenge the ‘orthodoxy’ concepts of Official Nationality. It is Act 3 scenes VI and VII which can be considered critical. The composer translated Scene VI which describes Vakula’s terrifying ride on the Devil’s back to St. Petersburg and the glaring lights and noise of the city into a cacophony of sound. For Scene VII Rimsky-Korsakov almost uses Gogol’s text when the Zaporozhian Cossacks address the Tsarina but with alterations to better fit the music and verse:

зачем губишь верный народ? Чем прогневили? Разве держали мы руку поганого татарина; разве соглашались в чем-либо с турчином; разве изменили тебе делом или помышлением? За что ж немилость? [...] Чем виновато запорожское войско?<sup>240</sup>

Why do you punish your faithful people? How have we angered you? Have we taken the hand of the vile Tartar? Have we come to agreement with the Turk? Have we been false to you in deed or in thought? Why have we lost your favour? [...] Wherein are the Zaporozhian troops in fault?<sup>241</sup>

This is a direct reference to Imperial Russia’s destruction of the Zaporozhian republic by Catherine the Great which at the time would have been associated with Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup>’s repression of the individual Ukrainian language and culture. It is perhaps the happy ending between Oksana and Vakula that appeased the authorities since it shows a village at peace.

### 3.6.4 Interest in the *Dikanka* stories by other Russian composers

The *Dikanka* stories had attracted interest from composers from the time of its publication. According to Gosenpud a performance of *Evenings on a Farm Near*

<sup>239</sup> *Ib.*: 358-359.

<sup>240</sup> Гоголь Н.В. *Op.cit.*: 128-129

<sup>241</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 174.



*Dikanka* was put on by the Bolshoi Theatre in St. Petersburg in 1833 where, according to the poster, the music and dances were assembled by the court composer D.Selikov.<sup>242</sup> However, it was Serov who for his first ‘fairy’ opera chose *May Night*, working on it between 1849 and 1855 but apparently destroyed the score. In 1870 he gave the reasons as “dissatisfaction with his work from the point of view of its style, in which the influence of Glinka and that of the German classical models [...] were too evident,” along with the impossibility for a “beginning composer” to achieve the “originality of form” the subject demanded.<sup>243</sup> It appeared he was not also fully knowledgeable with Ukrainian music and expressions and, as a result, carried out an extensive study of Little Russian tunes.<sup>244</sup>

After completing his most famous opera *Judith* in 1863, Serov once again turned to Gogol for an opera based on *Christmas Eve*. The opera was commissioned by the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna and the libretto was provided by Yakov Polonsky, a leading Pushkinist poet. On Serov’s death in 1871 the libretto became the subject of a competition sponsored by the Russian Musical Society and won by Tchaikovsky with *Кузнец Вакула* (*Vakula the Smith*) which had its premiere at the Mariinsky Theatre in 1876. This was later revised and became *The Slippers* (Черевички) which was premiered at the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow in 1887. Although it is Mussorgsky’s adaption of *The Marriage* (Женитьба) for which his interest in Gogol is remembered, in 1884 the composer also started composing an opera on the theme of *The Fair at Sorochinytsi*, the first of the *Dikanka* stories, which was uncompleted on his death in 1881. Rimsky-Korsakov, in his autobiography already in 1874 comments: “It [*The Fair at Sorochinytsi*] was composed in a rather queer way. Its first act and last act had no real scenario or text, save musical fragments and characterizations”. Following the composer’s death Rimsky-Korsakov suggested to Lyadov that he complete the opera and that Mussorgsky’s friend A.A. Golenishchev-Kutuzov complete the libretto. It was, however, Cui who finally completed the opera which had its première in Petrograd in 1917. Mussorgsky also considered writing an opera *Вечер накануне Ивана Купала* (*St. John’s Eve*) which his brother together with Balakirev and some friends discussed on Christmas Day in 1858.<sup>245</sup>

<sup>242</sup> Гозенпуд А 1952. Гоголь в музыке (Gogol and music). *Литературное наследие*, 58: 924.

<sup>243</sup> Taruskin Richard 1981. *Opera and Drama in Russia as Preached and Practiced in the 1860’s*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press: 36.

<sup>244</sup> Keefer Lubov 1970. Gogol’ and Music. *The Slavonic and East European Journal*, 14, (2): 168.

<sup>245</sup> Calvocoressi Michel-Dimitri 1946. *Mussorgsky*. London, J.M.Dent and Sons Ltd: 20.



### 3.6.5 Representations and characterisations

Both operas, *May Night* and *Christmas Eve*, can be seen to be a battle between good and evil, the pagan elements over Christian morality, the relationship between the conservative and corrupt older and the younger radical generation not accepting the existing status quo is also highlighted. In his analysis of the *Vechera* stories Vsevolod Setchkarev draws attention to the use of language. The authoritative older generation are “representatives of crude reality” whilst the young Cossacks, Levko and Hannah, in *May Night* are poetic, lyrical<sup>246</sup> and their music is the Ukrainian folk. Their love is pure. The older generation are there because of their being installed in a position of authority by the Tsarist bureaucracy. Act II starts with a polacca, indicating that the main characters of the act, the Headman and his sister-in-law consider themselves the village aristocracy. The Headman is portrayed as pompous, demanding attention and respect from everyone whilst having his own designs on the young girls, and Hannah, in particular. The loose morals of his ‘sister-in-law’ are indicated by asking the Distiller if he is bringing his wife. They are, however, frightened of the consequences of not obeying their superiors and the Headman also threatens reporting the village police to the Commissar at the end of Act II Scene 2. In the opera the Commissar never appears but his letter is read by the Scribe in the final act in which he orders (*приказываю*) “Headman Makogonen” to marry his son Levko to Hannah. In the letter he calls the Headman an old fool (*старый дуракъ*) who is not keeping the village in order and behaving disgracefully (*вмѣсто того, чтобы вести въ селѣ порядокъ, одурѣлъ и строишь пакости*).<sup>247</sup> The lack of a visible upper authority led to the outrageous actions of those in authority. This can be seen as a theme running through Gogol’s stories which was also criticising the Tsarist regime’s inability to control the country.

In *Christmas Eve* there is again the same situation, a group of middle-aged village aristocracy in the form of Chub, the Headman, the Deacon all of whom are interested in seducing Soloxa. The Headman’s address to Soloxa is not only slow and pompous, to emphasise his status, but he also addresses her with the formal ‘ty’. The Deacon follows him addressing her with the informal ‘vy’ and accompanied by ecclesiastical-based music. Finally when Chub arrives he initially is formal (*ty*) but soon relaxes into the familiar form. As a macho-type he distinguishes himself from the others as being an everyday man, playing a Ukrainian folksong on a bandura and drinking vodka with her. This cross-section of the village elders is contrasted with the poetic, lyrical and

<sup>246</sup> Setchkarev. Vsevolod 1965. *Gogol: His Life and Works*. Transl. Robert Kramer, New York University Press: 102–103.

<sup>247</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 2004. *May Night Opera. Vocal Score*. Elibron Classics Replica Edition of edition published in 1895 by M.P. Belaieff, Leipzig, Adamant Media Corporation: 11 bars before Aaa.

righteous youth of the village intent on celebrating traditionally singing Ukrainian *kolyadki* before the ‘star in the east’ appears, towards the end of Act III of the opera.

As mentioned previously the opera also has an additional political interpretation to Vakula’s visit to the Empress’s court with the Zaporozhian Cossacks who ask why they have deserved disfavour with the Empress since they have not linked themselves to the Tartars or Turks? Although not used in the opera the continuation in Gogol refers to their help in Catherine’s annexation of the Crimea. Also mentioned is the fortress built by the Russians in 1735 to control the Zaporozhian Sich. All this was a reference to Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup>’s aim to eliminate the autonomy of the Ukraine. In answer to the Empress’s question “What do you want? Speak boldly!”, Vakula praises the little slippers on her feet and ends wishing his wife could wear slippers like that:

Из чего, не во гнев будь сказано вашей царской милости, сделаны черевички, что на ногах ваших? Я думаю, не один швец ни в одном государстве на свете не сумеет так сделать. Боже ты мой, что, если бы моя жинка надела такие черевички!<sup>248</sup>

Of what, be it said without offence to your Royal Grace, are the little slippers made that are on your feet? I fancy there is no shoemaker in any kingdom of the world can make them like that. Merciful heavens, if only my wife could wear slippers like that!<sup>249</sup>

Since Rimsky-Korsakov followed Gogol almost word for word one can surmise that he wanted to emphasise the fact that:

The subject of their [the Zaporozhians] grievances and possible remedies never returns after Vakula has derailed the potential for addressing it. Catherine II thus manages to “buy” the Zaporozhian Sich for a pair of used shoes and, with it, the last vestige of Ukrainian independence.<sup>250</sup>

### 3.6.6 *Pan Voyevoda* and the Polish uprisings

Although considered his worst opera, with *Pan Voyevoda* in 1903 Rimsky-Korsakov returned to criticising the tsarist regime’s attitude towards the peripheral States, in this case reminding the audience of Poland’s plight. Through the partitioning of Poland by Prussia, Austria and Russia between 1772 and 1795 Russia had essentially acquired those parts of Poland that previously had been a part of the Kievan State and were mainly Orthodox. The Poles resented this partitioning and, when discontent was spreading throughout Europe in 1830 Warsaw rebelled against Russia. This resulted in

<sup>248</sup> Гоголь Н.В. *Op.cit.*: 129

<sup>249</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 175.

<sup>250</sup> Bojanowska Edyta. *Op.cit.*: 71.

the constitution of 1815 which established the Polish State under Russian domination at the Congress of Vienna, being revoked. This was replaced with the Organic Statute of 1832 which made Poland “an indivisible part” of the Russian Empire which also abolished parliament, closed establishments of higher education and incorporated the army into the Russian army in conjunction with Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>’s centralising policies. Marshal Paskevich who was appointed as the Tsar’s representative accorded with the Tsar’s authoritative and brutal manner. Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>’s liberal policies led to much of Poland’s previous autonomy being restored. However, following unrest by extremists in both the army and by students this autonomy was revoked and Poland became fully integrated into the Russian bureaucracy. This Russification extended to language where, particularly in the Western borderlands, the use of Polish was forbidden.

The culture and art of Poland were closely connected. However, although united by friendship and respect Pushkin and the Polish poet and political writer Adam Mieciewicz had opposing views concerning the Polish question. Already Pushkin wrote:

..., Нередко	..., It will not be uncommon
Он говорил о временах грядущих,	In future times, he said
Когда народы, распри позабыв,	That the people, will share their worries,
В великую семью соединятся. <sup>251</sup>	With a great united family. <sup>252</sup>

The importance of the sentiment expressed was not lost on Rimsky-Korsakov amongst others. At the time of the 1863 Polish uprising he was on the “Almaz” and together with his fellow trainee officers read Herzen’s article in *Kolokol*:

Нет, это – не народная война, это – полицейское усмирение войсками, это – те ружья, которые стреляли в Бездне, это – те приклады, которыми били петербургских студентов, это – те штыки, которые завтра будут колоть крестьянина русского [...] <sup>253</sup>

No, this was not a national war, this was a police suppression of war, this was guns which fired into a Chasm, these were the butts that beat the Petersburg students and which will tomorrow break the Russian peasants [...] <sup>254</sup>

<sup>251</sup> Quoted in Данилевич. Л. 1961. *Последние оперы Н.А. Римского-Корсакова* (The Last Operas of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov), Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 117.

<sup>252</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>253</sup> Герцен. А.И. 1920. *Полное собрание сочинений и писем*, т. XVI стр. 27 (Herzen A. I. The Complete Works and Letters). quoted in Данилевич. Л. *Op.cit.*: 117.

<sup>254</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

It was Rimsky-Korsakov's disgust with the brutal suppression by the 'governors' (*воеводы*), where law and order have no meaning, that he later turned into his opera *Pan Voyevoda*. Here the powerful provincial governor, Voyevode, abducts the orphan noblewomen Maria and forces her to marry him. Her fiancée Chaplinsky tries to rescue her but in doing is captured. The Voyevode orders his execution. However, the end of the opera shows that in the end the 'regime' will become a victim of its own faults. Through the complex intrigues within the 'court' the Voyevode himself is poisoned by accident and the opera ends with the wronged Maria freeing Chaplinsky.

### 3.6.7 Pushkin – the most damning criticism

Following the death of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1894, he was succeeded by his son Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>. It was hoped that the increasing Russification of the country together with a militant Orthodoxy would be replaced by more liberal policies. This was not to be since Nicholas believed that it was the unrestricted power of the Tsar that gave the country stability and this was linked to the 1833 Official Nationality policy inclusion of Orthodoxy and Nationality. Addressing a gathering of representatives of the gentry, *zemstvo* assemblies<sup>255</sup> and cities in January 1895 he declared:

It is known to Me that voices have been heard of late, in *zemstvo* assemblies, by persons carried out by senseless dreams of participation of representatives of the *zemstvos* in the affairs of internal administration. Let all know that, in devoting all my strength to the people's well-being, I will preserve the principles of autocracy as firmly and unswervingly as did my late unforgettable father.<sup>256</sup>

The previous religious persecution grew and extreme conservative ministers appointed such as Dmitry Sipiagin and Vyacheslav von Pleve, the former Director of Police and the *Ohrana* set out to extend the "Temporary Regulations", increase censorship, control and restrict education and restrict the activities of the *zemstvos* and municipal governments. The Russification policy was extended to include the former loyal Grand Duchy of Finland.

These developments would not have gone unnoticed by Rimsky-Korsakov. The composer turned to Pushkin at the time of his life when he became totally disillusioned

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<sup>255</sup> *Zemstvo assembly*: Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> had reformed local government and set-up the *zemstvo* system; the law was enacted in January 1864. The assemblies were established at both the district and provincial level and consisted of three levels: the towns, the peasant communes and all individual landowners.

<sup>256</sup> Riasanovsky Nicholas, Steinberg Mark 2005. *A History of Russia. Vol.2: Since 1855*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 369.

with political developments in Russia and for which he found sympathy in the veiled criticism to be found in Pushkin's works.

*The Tale of Tsar Saltan*, which had its première in 1900, can also be seen in this light. Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> was weak agreeing with everyone who advised him, treating his ministers almost as household servants and turning to people close to himself, but without any sense of imperial administration, for advice. Konstantin Pobedonostsev who was his tutor and advisor wrote of him:

He only understands the significance of some isolated fact, without connection with the rest, without appreciating the interrelationship of all other pertinent facts, events, trends, occurrences. He sticks to his insignificant, petty point of view.<sup>257</sup>

This attitude can be compared to that of a remote Tsar Saltan who is reliant on and acts on hearsay without checking the facts and is surrounded by jealous advisors (sisters), demoted to household servants, and citizens (sailors) who appeal to reason. The messenger bringing the Tsar's decree appears drunk, again a comment concerning the state of Russia, and show a people reluctant to act.

As mentioned previously, in Act I the dialogue between the *skomorokh* and The Old Grandfather (*Старый дед*): *Oh my sire, my dearest grandfather* (Государь ты мой, родный дедушка)<sup>258</sup> appears to be based on a popular poem by Aleksey Tolstoi. The Old Grandfather's reference to his poverty as a result of Tsar Saltan's actions can be taken to be Rimsky-Korsakov's criticism of the increasing restrictions the Tsar's interior ministry were placing on the people. The Old Grandfather tells Tsarina Militrisa a story referring to the animals gathering because a nobleman bear is shouting (*All the forest beasts were gathering Toward the nobleman-bear, who had been shouting so/ Люты звери собиралися Ко тому ли медведю ко боярину*). There is also a commander wolf ready to bite (*There came running the commander-wolf, Who had teeth that seemed almost ready to bite And was looking around with envious eyes/Прибегал тут воевода волк, у него то зубы закусливые, У него то глаза завистливые.*). The cause of the commotion is a minor, personal problem, the geese had eaten his old worn-out shoe:

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<sup>257</sup> Figes Orlando 1997. *A People's Tragedy. The Russian Revolution 1891–1924*. London, Pimlico: 22.

<sup>258</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov.N. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan. Opera. Vocal Score*. Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation, 2007, 45–46.

Выл у меня лапоть старый, порванный,  
 Много лет лежал ни кому не надобный,  
 Прилетали гуси серые,  
 Расщипали лапоть, раздергали.  
 По чисту полю поразвезли.<sup>259</sup>

I had an old worn-out shoe, my fav'rite one.  
 Many years it lay; no one even needed it.  
 Then a flock of gray geese came my way,  
 Picked at my poor shoe and then tore it up.<sup>260</sup>

When to this is added that amongst the animals there is also a “...a smelly hare, a poor hare, a grey hare!/зайка смерд, зайка бедненький, зайка серенький”<sup>261</sup> “the little hare” being a metaphor for the Russian peasant<sup>262</sup>, there can be little doubt that the composer is referring to the trivialities of the Tsar and the extremism of his ministers causing the country to respond over trivialities and resulting in their poverty.

Rimsky-Korsakov had originally intended *Kitezh* to be his final opera, a summing-up of his philosophy of both pagan and Christian religion, his pantheistic beliefs, legend and history. Irrespective of the Minister of Finance, Serge Witte's protestations, the Tsar with his believe in his 'divine right' drove an expansionist policy in the Far East and particularly in Southern Manchuria justified by defending the new Trans-Siberian Railway. This, however, did not take into consideration Japan's existing interests in the region and their advanced state of military modernisation. The result was the complete humiliation of the Russian military which was caught unprepared and disorganised and led to the complete destruction of the Russian navy at Tsunami in May 1905. This was just another indication of the Tsar's vacillation in the face of political unrest which had started with the 'Bloody Sunday' massacre on January 9<sup>th</sup> (January 22<sup>nd</sup>). In addition to extensive strikes throughout the country, the naval mutinies at Sevastopol, Vladivostok, Kronstadt and on the *Potemkin*, in March all academic institutions were closed. Rimsky-Korsakov's support for the student protests led to his dismissal, and will be discussed in detail later. Irrespective of promises of reform leading to the Zemstvo Congress in September, which granted basic civil rights and the establishment of the Duma as a central legislative body on 17<sup>th</sup> October (30<sup>th</sup> October), the Tsar reneged on

<sup>259</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov.N. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan. Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.:* 54 and 59–60.

<sup>260</sup> Neff Lyle 2008. Private communication. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*. English singing version. Copyright ©: 7–8.

<sup>261</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov.N. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan. Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.:* 55–56.

<sup>262</sup> Edmunds Catherine. *Op.cit.:* 176.

his promises. The autocracy was finally and totally re-established in 1907 with severe repression and censorship.<sup>263</sup>



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Caricature in *Zubel* showing the result of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>'s repressions.

It was as a result of total disgust with the senseless vacillation of the Tsar that Rimsky-Korsakov decided to add his protest. For this he chose Pushkin's satirical poem *The Golden Cockerel*. It is interesting to see the introduction written by the librettist Vladimir Belsky in 1907 since Rimsky-Korsakov wrote to him on 27<sup>th</sup> December and reminded him: "Don't forget that it is necessary that your 'forward' for *"The Cockerel"* is to be deliberately for the censors" (Не забудьте, что предисловие Ваше к «Петушку» необходимо и даже нарочито для цензуры).<sup>265</sup> However, it leaves one in no doubt as to the direction of the opera:

The purely human character of Pushkin's story, *The Golden Cockerel* – a tragic-comedy showing the fatal results of human passion and weakness – allows us to place the plot in any surroundings and in any period. On these points the author does not commit himself, but indicates vaguely in the manner of fairy-tales: "In a certain far-off kingdom", "in a country set on the borders of the world" [...] Nevertheless, the name of Dodon and certain details and expressions used in the story prove the author's desire to give his work the air of a popular Russian tale (like *Tsar Saltan*) [...] the tale is intended to depict, historically, the simple manners and the daily life of the Russian people [...] Pushkin has shrouded in

<sup>263</sup> There are a number of books written on the subject. See, for instance, Ascher Abraham. 1988. *The Revolution of 1905. Russia in Disarray* and 1992. *The Revolution of 1905. Authority Restored*. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press.; Shanin Teodor 1986. *Russia, 1905 – 1907. Revolution as a Moment of Truth*. Basingstoke, Hampshire, The Macmillan Press Limited; Riasanovsky Nicholas, Steinberg Mark. *Op.cit.*

<sup>264</sup> *Zubel*, 1906, No.3.

<sup>265</sup> Орлова А. А., Римский-Корсаков В. 1973. *Страницы жизни Н.А.Римского-Корсакова. Выпуск 4. 1905–1908.* (Pages from the life of N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov. Vol. 4. 1905–1908.). Ленинград, Издательство «Музыка»: 142.

mystery the relationship between his two fantastical characters: The Astrologer and the Queen.

Did they hatch a plot against Dodon. Did they meet by accident, both intent on the king's downfall?...The principal charm of the story lies in so much being left to the imagination...

Many years ago, a wizard, still alive today sought, by his magic cunning to overcome the daughter of the Ariel Powers. Failing in his project, he tried to win her through the person of King Dodon. He is unsuccessful and to console himself, he presents to the audience, in his magic lantern the story of heartless royal ingratitude.<sup>266</sup>

In addition to his conception of the poem as appropriate for the situation, as Gozenpud has pointed out, Rimsky-Korsakov may also have been encouraged by Alexandr Blok's poem written and published in 1906 *The Tale of the Cockerel and the Old Woman* (Сказка о петухе и старухе) in which he refers to the red fires of change flashing up where the cockerel has walked and pecked:

А над кучкой золы разметенной,  
Где гулял и клевал петушок,  
То погаснет, то вспыхнет червонный  
Золотой, удалой гребешок.<sup>267</sup>

A handful of ashes are scattered from above,  
On where the cockerel walked and pecked,  
Now he grows feeble, and now flares up  
In golden red, the bold cockerel's crest.<sup>268</sup>

There are many controversial aspects of the opera some of which the censor objected to. Andrej Kodjak has analysed the stylistic aspects of the Pushkin's original work and these can be also be considered in respect of the opera since most of Dodon's speech is retained. Kodjak notes a dominance of popular speech and substandard elements which indicate the crudity and simplicity of the Tsar.<sup>269</sup> Throughout the opera there recurs the theme of forgetfulness. In its most blatant form it is the early promise of Tsar Dodon to grant the Astrologer whatever he asks in return for the 'protective' cockerel. This is conveniently forgotten at the end of the opera when he asks for the Tsarina of

<sup>266</sup>Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *Le Coq D'Or*. Conductor's Score, Edwin F.Kalmus & Co., Inc, Florida, reprint of 1908 first edition, Moscow, P.Jurgenson (in Russian); [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Golden\\_Cockerel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Golden_Cockerel). 23.11.2011.

<sup>267</sup>Гозенпуд А. 1957. *Н.А. Римский-Корсаков. Темы и идеи его оперного творчества*. Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 168.

<sup>268</sup> Transl. John Nelson.

<sup>269</sup> Edmunds Catherine. *Op.cit.*: 270.



Shemakhan. However, the Astrologer has already questioned in Act I of the opera on whose authority his 'rights' will be conferred:

*Звездочёт*

Дать мне запись по законам,  
Чтоб стояло твёрже скал,  
То, что царь мне обещал.

*Astrologer*

On what law am I promised,  
In order that it stands firm,  
That which the Tsar has promised.

The answer given by Tsar Dodon is:

*Царь Додонъ*

По законам?  
Что за слово?  
Я не слыхивал такого.  
Моя прихоть, мой приказ  
Вот закон на всякий.  
Только ты не сомневайся  
И за всем ко мне являйся.<sup>271</sup>

*Tsar Dodon*

On what law?  
On whose word?  
I have not heard such before.  
My whim is my law at anytime.  
Only you seem to doubt it  
And it is for me to show.<sup>270</sup>

This directly indicating that the promises made in 1905 meant nothing to the Tsar.

In respect of other influences it is an interesting coincidence that the painter Ivan Bilibin published a cartoon in the artistic satirical journal *Zupel* at the beginning of 1906 showing a well-fed Tsar stupidly contemplating the possibility of annexing the moon to his dominions. It is significant that it was Bilibin who later designed the sets for the première of the opera at the Solodovnikov Theatre in Moscow in 1909.



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Illustration in *Zubel* by Bilibin showing a well-fed Tsar contemplating annexing the moon.

<sup>270</sup> Transl. J.Nelson.

<sup>271</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nicolai 1983. *The Golden Cockerel. Vocal Score K 05266*. Miami, FL, A Kalmus Classic Edition, Belwin Mills: 42–43.

<sup>272</sup> *Zubel* 1906, No.1.

Since the opera had a Prologue, Rimsky-Korsakov considered that an Epilogue was also necessary. He originally planned to have the Astrologer, after the curtain, to appear and tell the audience that the presentation had finished and that everyone could go home to sleep: “до зари” and “до нмыха” (“until dawn” and “until the cock crows”).<sup>273</sup> From the composer’s autobiography there is reference to discussions with Belsky concerning the Epilogue, which the latter was not in favour of, perhaps because he envisaged how the censor would react in view of, recent Russian humiliations. His suggestion for the ending was to avert this reaction with the Astrologer saying:

Вот чем кончилась сказка.	Here ends our tale.
Но кровавая развязка,	Although there was a bloody outcome
Сколь ни тягостна она,	We hope it is not too distressing,
Волновать вас не должна.	And you are not disturbed.
Разве я лишь да царица	Only the Tsaritsa and I
Были здесь живые лица,	Were real people,
Остальные – бред, мечта,	The other - delirium, daydreams,
Призрак бледный, пустота [...] <sup>274</sup>	A pale spectre, emptiness. <sup>275</sup>

However, even this ending did not appease the censor; “bloody” had to be replaced by “unexpected”, for instance. Quoting from a letter from A.Krupyensky (February 25, March 9): “The dramatic censorship has permitted performances of the opera *Le Coq d’Or* composed by you, but with the omission of a few passages in the text (the entire Introduction, the Epilogue and 45 lines of the text).”<sup>276</sup>

It is obvious from some of the text, and in the political climate of the time, certain statements would not be accepted. This even extended to some of Pushkin’s original lines having to be deleted or changed. The frequent reference to a lazy Tsar always “lying on his side” whenever danger appears and the cockerel crows was also seen as a detrimental view of the Tsar. The introductory description for Act I refers to the Tsar’s duma, which at the time was a matter of great political dispute. Whereas previously the composer had, in general, been at his strongest when painting scenes in the historical and fairy-tale operas and weakest in creating strong individual characters here he achieved the opposite. The satirical portrayal of King Dodon as ineffective, vain and gullible was a clear caricature of the Tsar and, in addition to the text, was emphasised in

<sup>273</sup> Орлова А. А. Римский-Корсаков. В. 1973. *Op.cit.*: 121.

<sup>274</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nicolai 1983. *The Golden Cockerel. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 231–232

<sup>275</sup> Transl. J.Nelson.

<sup>276</sup> MML: 449.

his use of popular melodies of the period such as Dodon's sons marching to war to a dance hall melody.<sup>277</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov's strong views concerning political events and concerning the censors is expressed quite clearly in his letter to the publisher Jurgenson, to whom a transfer agreement had been signed in October 1907. In the letter of March 8<sup>th</sup> (21<sup>st</sup> March 1908) the composer wrote:

To come back to the question of censorship, I consider that neither in the piano score nor in the libretto should any changes be made. The piano score and orchestral score must remain in their original form for all time, and the libretto, too, must be preserved.<sup>278</sup>

To the approved score was added a note from the composer "The composer does not permit any cuts".<sup>279</sup>

### 3.7 The politics of performance

With all the problems that Rimsky-Korsakov encountered with the Imperial Theatre Directorate, it is not surprising that from *Sadko* onwards the majority of his operas had their premières at the newly established private theatres and at Mamontov's Private Opera (MPO) in particular.<sup>280</sup>

In Chaliapin's memoirs he compared the Mariinsky with the MPO as a "luxurious sarcophagus" to a "lovely green field full of simple fragrant flowers." The singer and stage director Vasily Shkafer in his description said "the theatre of the Russian Private Opera is an exceptional institution-a kind of academy, with its own rules and regulations."<sup>281</sup> Savva Mamontov's motto which was printed on the MPO's documentation was *Life is short, art is eternal*/Жизнь коротка, искусство вечно.

There can be little doubt that the aims of both Mamontov and Rimsky-Korsakov were close. Both wanted a stage for the *Kuchka* operas since the policies of the Imperial Theatres did not, in general, condone Russian operas. The theatre concept of Mamontov for a colourful spectacle leant itself to the fairytale operas of Rimsky-Korsakov and, in

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<sup>277</sup> Edmunds Catherine. *Op.cit.*: 291.

<sup>278</sup> MML: 451.

<sup>279</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov.N. *The Golden Cockerel, Vocal score. Op.cit.*: "Forward".

<sup>280</sup> This is referred to by a variety of names: The Russian Private Opera, Moscow Private Russian Opera, Mamontov's Private Russian Opera (MPO) in Moscow, Korotkov's Theatre, Vinter's Theatre, Private Opera Society and the Solodovnikov Theatre.

<sup>281</sup> Haldey Olga 2010. *Mamontov's Private Opera. The Search for Modernism in Russian Theatre*. Bloomington & Indianapolis, Indiana University Press: 45.

fact, *Sadko* and *Snegurochka* were his favoured productions. In a similar way to Tretyakov, Momontov believed in the importance and autonomy of art. The accessibility of the Imperial Theatres to the common public was negligible due to the high prices and the system of subscription. Consequently it was necessary to introduce an appreciation of 'higher' art both to this social group and younger audiences through both lower pricing and also, for example, through the possibility to see free morning performances.<sup>282</sup>

Let us not forget that the stage is not an entertainment for the rich or a show for amusement-seeking persons with capital, but a school, a platform from which pure and noble art flows to people [...] People need music, people love opera...<sup>283</sup>

### 3.7.1 The Imperial Theatre monopoly

To understand the situation of the Imperial Theatres within the Russian political and social arena it is essential to appreciate that it was an organisation that had developed since 1756 when a decree was signed by the Empress Elisabeth establishing a State Theatre financed by the State. The Directorate was established ten years later. Later, in 1806, the Imperial Theatre was established in Moscow. In 1823 Alexander 1<sup>st</sup>'s ministerial committee created a separate Moscow Directorate which reported to the Moscow Governor-General Count Dmitry Golitsin. Immediately following the accession of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>, in 1826, the St. Petersburg Directorate became a part of the newly created Ministry of the Imperial Court and to this was added Moscow in 1852.<sup>284</sup> Through its name the affiliation is clear, *the Emperor's Theatre* (Императорские театры), In this respect the formal head was the tsar and the employees were servants of the crown. Already in 1843 the Directorate was granted control of all aspects of the theatrical life in the capitals through the 'Statute on the Prevention and Suppression of Crimes'. Through this it was able to prohibit all 'private entertainments'<sup>285</sup> which was an indication of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>'s obsession with censorship. The Alexandrovsky, Mikhailovsky, Bolshoi and Mariinsky Imperial Theatres in St.Petersburg and the Bolshoi and Maly theatres in Moscow enjoyed a monopoly until their abolition in 1882. Although some private entertainment took place the Directorate was able to protect its position though a levy of up to twenty five percent of the entertainment takings.<sup>286</sup>

<sup>282</sup> *Ib*: 64.

<sup>283</sup> Artnov.V. "Snegurochka v Narodom Dome" [*The Snow Maiden at the People's House*], *Русское Слово* 287, 13 December 1913, 7.

<sup>284</sup> See Бубнова. О. *От Локателли — к Медоксу, от Медокса — к «Дому Щепкина»*. [http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/red\\_port/00600.php](http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/red_port/00600.php). Printed 09.11.2010.

<sup>285</sup> Frame Murray 2005. 'Freedom of the Theatres': The Abolition of the Russian Imperial Theatre Monopoly. *The Slavonic and East European Review* 83 (2): 268-269.

<sup>286</sup> *Ib.*: 268.

Although known as a liberator, Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>'s attitude towards the theatre is controversial. A committee was set up under Vladimir Sollogub in 1857 to examine the economic viability of the Imperial Theatres and possibilities to reduce costs. The report submitted placed part of the blame on high costs and the inefficiency with which the theatres were ran and advocated that private theatres be permitted to increase competition. However one of the main dissenters was Alexander Gedeonov, Director of the Imperial Theatres, who convinced the Minister of the Imperial Court Count Vladimir Adlerberg that the private theatres were politically dangerous giving a platform for people looking to overthrow the existing order; this was passed on to the Tsar in a secret memorandum. The Tsar added his own comment to this 'private Russian theatres will not be introduced into the capital'<sup>287</sup> which was then incorporated into his formal response.

It was a continual complaint that the Mariinsky Theatre was limited, in general, to operas which were apolitical, had artistic merit and where they could use their considerable financial muscle to attract both local and foreign talent through pay, pensions and better performing conditions.<sup>288</sup> There was first and foremost a militaristic culture in the Theatre; in fact, one official writing of the Imperial Theatre system noted "The period of the eighties and nineties was called by the press at the time the epoch of second lieutenants [...]"<sup>289</sup> Count Vorontsov-Dashkov the Minister of the Imperial Court was a commander of the Life Guards and had a habit of appointing his colleagues to significant positions. Ivan Vsevolozhsky a former diplomat was appointed Director of the Imperial Theatres in 1881. Prince Sergei Volkonsky succeeded him in 1899 and following his resignation in 1901 Vladimir Telyakovsky was appointed. Telyakovsky had trained for a military career and was appointed colonel in 1897. It was his step-father Count Vladimir Fredericks, Minister of the Imperial Court from 1897 to 1917 that initially appointed Telyakovsky as head of the Moscow Imperial Theatres and later promoted him. Although the administration came under the Ministry of the Imperial Court, they did not act as censors. All scripts and libretti had to be approved by the Chief Administration of Press Affairs attached to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

With respect to the censorship the tsar did have the final voice on one aspect which both Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov had to address. An edict already existed from the

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<sup>287</sup> *Ib.*: 266.

<sup>288</sup> Although the Mariinsky had staged various operas which could be considered political such as *The Maid of Pskov* and *Boris Godunov* they had been censored to lessen any political connotation. In the latter's case it was removed from the repertoire after Alexander II's assassination.

<sup>289</sup> Frame Murray 1969. *The St. Petersburg Imperial Theaters: Stage and State in Revolutionary Russia, 1900 – 1920*. Jefferson, North Carolina, and London, McFarland & Company, Inc, Publishers: 27.

time of the Empress Elisabeth which restricted the portrayal of church officials “[...] at Russian comedies they will not dress up in black garments or other garments having to do with ecclesiastical persons [...]” and this is further confirmed in the Imperial Law Code of 1857.<sup>290</sup> It was a query from the Director of the Imperial Theatres Alexander Gedeonov to Prince Volkonsky, the then Minister of the Court in 1837 concerning Baron Egor Rozen’s drama *The Daughter of Ivan III* that received the response that was problematic for the composers later:

This is to inform Gedeonov that His Majesty permits the production of Rosen’s drama *The Daughter of Ivan III* and, in future, the acceptance of dramas and tragedies, but not operas, in which are represented on stage Russian tsars who ruled before the Romanovs, but excluding those who have been canonized, as for example, Alexander Nevsky.<sup>291</sup>

This was amended in 1872 to include only Romanov tsars. Other censorship was very vague, for instance negative portrayals of Ivan the Terrible were forbidden such as Ostrovsky’s *Valisia Melenteva* (1867). The tsar’s dignity and humour had to be maintained and consequently Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> gave permission for Albert Lortzing’s opera *Zar und Zimmermann* (1837) at the Nicholas II People’s House in St.Petersburg since it showed Peter the Great’s devotion to his people and Russia. The latter also shows the sensitivity of the authorities giving approval for presentations at the new People’s Theatres and often plays that had been approved for popular stage were not allowed. Subjects which the censor imagined might fuel discontent and protest within a popular worker-based (*narod*) audience were banned. As a result Mozart’s *The Marriage of Figaro* was considered inappropriate for the popular stage due to its portrayal of the aristocracy’s questionable rights *vis-à-vis* servants as well as showing servants as being cleverer than their masters. The guiding principle was always to promote patriotism and national pride. In the wake of 1905 the censors became even stricter and Schiller’s *William Tell* was banned since they believed an audience would not be able to evaluate the play in the right light.<sup>292</sup>

A restriction on the performances of the Imperial Theatres was also their adherence to the Orthodox calendar. Whilst during the freer regime of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> performances were permitted during Lent by Imperial Theatre troupes, the strict Konstantin Pobedonostsev, the *de facto* head of the Russian Orthodox Church from 1880 banned

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<sup>290</sup> See Emerson Caryl & Oldani Robert William 1994. *Modest Mussorgsky & Boris Godunov*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 127.i

<sup>291</sup> *Ib.*:129.

<sup>292</sup> Swift Anthony E. 2002. *Popular Theater and Society in Tsarist Russia*. Berkely, California, University of California Press: 105.

such participation at this time. However, foreign and private troupe productions were allowed. Although this restriction was eventually lifted in 1898, none of the operas performed were Russian repertoire with the exception of *Onegin*.

### 3.7.2 The growth of private theatres

It was the new Minister of the Imperial Court Illarion Vorontsov-Dashkov who recommended the abolishment of the monopoly and also instructed Vsevolozhsky not to tax private individuals for theatrical performances. The Tsar instructed the senate to abolish the exclusive rights of the Imperial Theatres on 24<sup>th</sup> March 1882.<sup>293</sup> Although Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> is noted for the increasing censorship and restrictions to curb political demonstration, in this light his ending of the Imperial Theatre monopoly is a curious anomaly. Frame argues that it was prompted by an anti-Western feeling and a genuine interest in the old indigenous customs and beliefs and a need to patronise Russian national art and culture.<sup>294</sup>

It was the abolition of the monopoly that opened the doors to the possibility of staging productions aimed at the growing middle, professional and intellectual class. Here was a growing clientele that had essentially been excluded from opera productions by a system of subscriptions and high prices. The critic P. Krasnov writing in the *Teatral'naia gazeta* in 1905 focussed on the problem “the right to listen to the Imperial opera has become the privilege of a small official and rich circle of Petersburgers.”<sup>295</sup> The operas performed at the Mariinsky identified with the Imperial court which saw itself as a part of the European cultural world. Consequently the ‘Western’ Wagner, Meyerbeer, Rossini, Gounod and Verdi were considered safe. Themes which had any hint of radical or revolutionary themes, such as *Don Carlos*, were off bounds. The only exceptions were operas that were considered to have artistic or patriotic merit such as Glinka’s *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan*, Mussorgsky’s *Boris Godunov* and Serov’s *Rogneda (Pozheda)*. In the period 1900 – 1911 of twelve operas performed over fifty times, of the Russian repertoire, in addition to Glinka’s operas the others were Tchaikovsky’s *Onegin* and *The Queen of Spades (Пиковая дама)*, Rubinstein’s *Demon (Демон)* and Nápravník’s *Dubrovski (Дубровский)*.<sup>296</sup> The inclusion of Tchaikovsky’s work is not surprising since he was the Russian composer Telyakovsky most admired. It

<sup>293</sup> Frame Murray 2005. *Op.cit.*: 283.

<sup>294</sup> *Ib.*: 289.

<sup>295</sup> Krasnov, P. 1905. Pri zakrytykh dveriakh. *Театральная газета* (Theatrical Gazette), August 20, no. 34, 1049; quoted in Frame Murray 1969. *Op.cit.*: 67.

<sup>296</sup> See Fryer Paul 2009. *A Chronology of Opera Performances at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg, 1860–1917*, Lewiston\*Queenston\*Lampeter, The Edwin Mellon Press.

is notable that the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov and the modernist school were virtually ignored.

It is interesting to note that perhaps the attraction Rimsky-Korsakov had for Ostrovsky emanated from a coming together of similar views in 1880. In his autobiography the composer admits that when he read *The Snow Maiden* shortly after its publication in 1873 he was not impressed. Towards the end of the decade whilst involved with *May Night* he writes about his enthusiasm for ‘the poetry of pagan worship’ and subject matters drawn from this world ‘as in *Snyegoorochka* and *Mlada*’.<sup>297</sup> And later in his autobiography he writes:

During the winter of 1879–80, when I re-read *Snyegoorochka*, its wonderful, poetic beauty had become evident to me. At once I conceived a longing to write an opera on the subject: and the more I pondered my intention, the more enamoured I felt of Ostrovsky’s fairy-tale.<sup>298</sup>

It was at this time that both the actress Anna Brenko, a member of the Maly Theatre and Alexander Ostrovsky were petitioning for private theatres. Brenko had achieved a semi-legal existence with a troupe at the Pushkin Theatre which, however, was financially unstable due to the high tax paid to the Directorate.<sup>299</sup> During 1880 and 1881 Ostrovsky wrote three main critiques: ‘Club Stages, Private Theatres, and Amateur Performances’, ‘A Note on the Condition of Dramatic Art in Russia at the Present Time’, and ‘On the Causes of the Decline of Dramatic Theatre in Moscow’. In his first he blamed the monopoly as the cause for the decline in both the stage and dramatic art in Russia, neglecting Russian drama and fearing competition. It was also the second that would have struck a chord with Rimsky-Korsakov. He argued that a national theatre was needed to ‘cultivate patriotism among the inhabitants’, that this should be financed privately by Moscow merchants. “The city needed a theatre that would exert the ‘civilizing influence of dramatic art’ on its changing population and also express its historical and national identity.”<sup>300</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov visited Ostrovsky in Moscow in the spring of 1880 and was very receptive to the composer’s request to base his libretto on his play and authorising any changes he thought necessary. The composer submitted the libretto to Ostrovsky in the

<sup>297</sup> MML: 207.

<sup>298</sup> MML: 229

<sup>299</sup> Schuler Catherine 1996. *Women in Russian Theatre. The Actress in the Silver Age*. London and New York, Routledge: 113–127.

<sup>300</sup> Frame Murray 2005 .*Op.cit.*: 274–276. See also: Thurston Gary 1998. *The Popular Theatre Movement in Russia, 1862-1919*. Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern University Pree: 132–161; Swift Anthony. *Op.cit.*: 4–5.



autumn of the same year and on subsequent visits showed him excerpts. Following a visit to Ostrovsky Kruglikov sent a letter to his former teacher on December 30<sup>th</sup> 1880 (January 11<sup>th</sup> 1881) quoting the author:

Korsakov's music to my Snyegoorochka is wonderful; I never could imagine anything more appropriate to it and so vividly expressive of all the poetry of the ancient Russian pagan cult and of this at first snow-cold, and then unrestrainably passionate heroine of the fairy-tale.<sup>301</sup>

Both aimed for a true and free development of a national identity which was what the potential audience yearned for – accessibility and Russian. Both had been frustrated with the vagrancy of the Imperial Directorate and also the Tsar's vacillations.

As a result of the abolition of the state monopoly there emerged three types of theatre, private theatres that were essentially established by wealthy merchants such as Savva Mamontov, commercially-orientated theatres which were in general akin to a music hall and/or nightclub and popular theatres. The last mentioned *narodnyi teatr* were set up by factory owners and temperance societies to promote moderation in drinking alcohol but also to offer an alternative; it served a much needed social function, however, it was seen that it was very important that the repertoire be carefully controlled. With the end of the *balagany* at the Field of Mars in St.Petersburg, the fairground showman Aleksei Alekseev-Yakovlev eventually ended up running the Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>'s People's House which opened in 1900 and could hold 3000 people. Here Russian operas were often played in the evenings including *Prince Igor* and *The Snow Maiden* in amongst a repertoire including lighter works in order to acquaint the audiences with more serious and intellectual works. Both Rimsky-Korsakov and Yastrebtsev<sup>302</sup> note performances of *Sadko* at the People's House in September 1906.

### 3.7.3 Rimsky-Korsakov and Mamontov – the doors open at last

It was the dedication of Savva Mamontov to fill a serious gap in the music world in Moscow that attracted Rimsky-Korsakov. The bureaucracy of the Imperial Theatres, the harassment of the Tsar and his immediate court and the narrow-minded and Western-orientated repertoire committee of the Mariinsky Theatre had constantly been at odds with the composer. In his autobiography he frequently refers to the lack of central coordination leading up to a performance, an insufficient number of rehearsals and the

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<sup>301</sup> MML: 229–30n15.

<sup>302</sup> MML: 425. Yastrebtsev: 530n31.

lack of complete rehearsals, a presumptuousness amongst the artists and a lack of detail and concentration. And above all he was plagued by incessant cuts:

[...] no words and no prohibitions whatever will avail if it is impossible to hail one into a court of justice for violating conditions. Now, the Directorate of the Imperial Theatres cannot be hailed into a court and therefore it behoves a composer to be gentle and meek. Richard Wagner would have given it to them one and all in Germany if a trick like this had been played on him!<sup>303</sup>

But in summary, following the cuts made to *The Snow Maiden* at the Mariinsky, he admits “...where else could the opera be given if not at the Imperial Theatre?”<sup>304</sup> This was just prior to the abolition of the monopoly.

Mamontov had an enthusiasm for Russian culture which he had already developed extensively at his artist colony of Abramtsevo near Moscow and attracted many of the *peredvizhniki* artists. Through the intervention of Rimsky-Korsakov’s former pupil Semyon Kruglikov, who acted as a repertoire advisor, Mamontov secured a major coup, the staging of the première of *Sadko*. This especially in the light of it being turned down by the Mariinsky and the Tsar who “requested something a little more cheerful.”<sup>305</sup> At the MPO Rimsky-Korsakov found that there was extensive interaction between the singers, stage directors and conductors as a result of Mamontov’s new approach to stage direction. The incorporation of his artists from Abramtsevo changed the role of the designer who assumed a major role in the creative process. Here each stage set and costumes were unique and artistically met the circumstances of the opera rather than being considered on their possible re-use. The success of *Sadko* resulted in Rimsky-Korsakov effectively severing his connections with the Mariinsky Theatre. The opera was acclaimed by the public and press and gave the MPO legitimacy and a leading role in the promotion of the much-neglected Russian operas. This success was viewed by “Russia’s political liberals as a triumph of private initiative over the Imperial bureaucracy, essentially as a victory of modern capitalism over outdated feudal law”<sup>306</sup> which as it so happens is also the theme of the opera. In the five years after *Sadko* the MPO, subsequently renamed the Private Opera Society after Mamontov was accused of embezzlement in connection with the building of the Yaroslav railway in 1899, staged a further five premières of Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas.

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<sup>303</sup> MML: 319–320.

<sup>304</sup> MML: 254.

<sup>305</sup> Haldey Olga. *Op.cit.*: 97.

<sup>306</sup> *Ib.*: 97.

The collaboration between Rimsky-Korsakov and Mamontov was far from easy due to the clash of operatic ideology. Although the latter considered opera as a perfect art form he considered the visual presentation as of prime importance and had a lack of interest in the music, whilst the composer considered the music and singing as dominant. Consequently it is on these aspects that Rimsky-Korsakov particularly focuses on in his comments on the MPO productions; acknowledging the professionalism of the conductors and accepting that unfortunately the best orchestral musicians would be found at the Bolshoi. The conducting undertaken by Rimsky-Korsakov was very infrequent. However, in terms of artistic presentation they were as one.

For *Sadko* both Mamontov and Rimsky-Korsakov wanted to remind the audience of the Russian folk legend and the poetry and music of that time and in this they were successful. It also demonstrated that a well-run and directed private professional opera house could compete successfully with the Imperial Theatres in both repertoire and for the audience. MPO was able to expand their repertoire rapidly and were attuned to the spirit of the time and their potential audience. Both *Новости Дня* (*Daily News*) and *Новости Сезона* (*Seasonal News*) in November 1896 commented on both the excellence of the MPO performances which “could rarely be heard on the Russian operatic stage, neither the private nor, truth be told, the crown one”<sup>307</sup> and also the reluctance of the Imperial Theatres to tackle both Russian and foreign operas that they considered too difficult or radical and only presented “the diet of the tired and worn-out operas.”<sup>308</sup> With respect to *Sadko* not a single review in either capital failed to comment on its rejection at the Mariinsky and how the Solodovnikov Theatre had fifteen sold-out performances in less than two months.<sup>309</sup> The revival of *The Snow Maiden* also was performed more times in the 1896–97 MPO season than in total at the Bolshoi.<sup>310</sup>

An interest in the nationalist art had also been supported by Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup>'s patronage of the *peredvizhniki* artists. Following his death in 1894 a decision to house his collection separately was taken in 1895 by his successor Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>. The opening of the Museum of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> (now the Russian Museum) took place in 1898.<sup>311</sup> The nationalistic art message was taken up by the *Seasonal News* in its editorial in September 1897 referring to MPO that the Muscovites:

<sup>307</sup> Театральная Хроника, *Новости Дня* 4823 (Theatrical chronicle. Daily News), 9.11.1896, 2–3.

<sup>308</sup> I.L., “Частная опера,” *Новости Сезона* 93 (“Private Theatre”, Seasonal News), 2 November 1896, 2–3.

<sup>309</sup> Haldey.O. *Op.cit.*: 219.

<sup>310</sup> A.G., “В Большом театре,” *Русское Слово* 253 (“The Bolshoi Theatre”, The Russian Word), 21 September 1897, 3.

<sup>311</sup> See Valkenier Elizabeth. *Op.cit.*: 124–127, 210n36.

ended [their] blind attraction to the foreign. If there is a small group of people who still reject the significance of the Russian compositional school, the majority is now firmly convinced of the beauty and richness of Russian operas.<sup>312</sup>

And Kruglikov, the critic now at the *Daily News*, following the première of *The Maid of Pskov* with Chaliapin in the role of Ivan the Terrible poured derision on the Bolshoi:

So, the Moscow première of *The Maid of Pskov* has finally taken place. Rimsky-Korsakov's eldest opera has waited its turn for a long time, but certainly not to be presented to the audience from the Bolshoi Theatre stage. Why would they do that?! They have had other things to do besides such trifles! They proudly leave all those [Prince] *Igors* and *Maids of Pskov* to private enterprises.<sup>313</sup>

Mamontov drove his message home by taking his opera to St. Petersburg in the spring 1898 where he presented *Sadko* at the Conservatoire theatre with the rehearsals under Rimsky-Korsakov's direction. *May Night* and *The Snow Maiden* were also performed.

At this time an initial rift occurred between the composer and Mamontov concerning the title role for the latter which was entrusted, apart from the last performance, to the young singer Alevtina Paskhalova favoured by Mamontov rather than Nadezhda Zabela-Vrubel, who the composer considered more appropriate for his works.<sup>314</sup> At the same time the Mariinsky was hosting a Wagner season featuring the de Rezke brothers. Cui criticised the Petersburg elite in the *News and Stockbroker Gazette* (Новости и Биржевая Газета):

Faced with a choice between a foreign and Russian opera, between "the great Richard" (as [Alexander] Serov used to call Wagner) and some rejected local paper-stainer, between singing athletes and some Mr. Rozhansky, there could be no hesitation. *Tout Pétersburg* saw it as its duty to turn away from the national and bow to the foreign.<sup>315</sup>

This visit was a success with audiences for both about equal.<sup>316</sup>

<sup>312</sup> "Русская опера", *Новости Сезона* 318 ("Russian Opera", Seasonal News), 9 September 1897, 2.

<sup>313</sup> S. K-ov, "Театральная хроника" *Новости дня* ("Theatrical chronicle" Daily News), 4860, 16 December 1896, 3. Transl. Hadley Olga. Id.: 224.

<sup>314</sup> MML: 371–72.

<sup>315</sup> Ц.Кюй, "Открытие Московской Частной Русской Оперы", *Новости и Биржевая Газета* ("The Revelation of Frequent Russian Opera in Moscow", News and Stockbroker Gazette), 54, 23 February 1898, 3. Transl. Hadley Olga. *Op.cit.*: 254

<sup>316</sup> See Haldey Olga. *Op.cit.*: Table.7.1, 257–58.

Mamontov also achieved great success on a subsequent visit the following year when he presented *The Maid of Pskov*, *Vera Sheloga*, *Sadko*, *Mozart and Salieri* and *Boris Godunov* with Chaliapin. By this time the seat prices were on a par with the Imperial Theatres.<sup>317</sup>

It was, however the continual clash of personalities that caused the final breakdown over *The Tsar's Bride* irrespective of Mamontov's respect and promotion of his biggest asset, Rimsky-Korsakov, and the composer's respect for Mamontov's directing abilities. For the new opera Rimsky-Korsakov set out his conditions for the production including casting. These were ignored apart from the concession that Zabela would sing the title role. His letter to Zabela of 6<sup>th</sup> July 1899 indicates the problems and, although the composer appears to have reluctantly backed-down he wrote to Zabela concerning who should court whom:

Вы пишете, что Савва Иванович недоволен мной и что будет с него ухаживать за мной, а что пора и мне за ним поухаживать. Дело в том, что я вовсе не требую ухаживания за собой. Если мой оперы ему не нужны, – пусть их не ставит, а если нужны, то пусть ставит хорошо [...] Вообще мне кажется, что вопрос об ухаживании совершенно праздный. Никто ни за кем ухаживать не должен. Если б композиторы не сочиняли бы, антрепренерам нечего было бы ставить; а если бы не было оперных сцен, то композиторам незачем было бы сочинять оперы. А ставить оперы надо как можно лучше, и автор есть лучший оценщик и лучший советник даже самого лучшего режиссера.<sup>318</sup>

You write that Savva Ivanovich [Mamontov] is dissatisfied with me and expects that I need looking after. However I do not require looking after. If he doesn't need my operas – very well, we will not put them on and if they are needed then that's fine by me [...] Anyway, it seems to me the issue of courting is absolutely pointless. Nobody should court anyone. If composers didn't write operas, entrepreneurs would have nothing to produce; and if there were no operatic stages, there would be no need for composers to write operas. And operas should be staged the best possible way, and the author is the best judge and best advisor even to the best stage director in Russia.<sup>319</sup>

Following the split that ensued, it was not until 1907 that Rimsky-Korsakov contacted Mamontov concerning the proposed production of *The Snow Maiden* in Paris. Following Mamontov's bankruptcy the theatre initially operated as an 'Association' run

<sup>317</sup> *Ib.*: 253, 263.

<sup>318</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н. А. 2008. *Переписка с Н. И. Забелой-Врубель* (Correspondence with N.I. Zabela-Vrubel). Москва, ООО Издательство «КОМПОЗИТОР»: 150–151.

<sup>319</sup> See Haldey Olga. *Op.cit.*: 278-79. Additional translation J. Nelson.

by the employees at which the première of *Kashchei the Immortal* was given. *The Golden Cockerel* was effectively given on the same stage by the Zimin Opera.

The director of the Moscow Imperial Theatres Telyakovsky had followed and learnt from the success of the MPO. He succeeded in attracting stars such as Chaliapin and the stage artists to the theatres under his direction through lucrative salaries, pensions and more lavish working conditions. In 1906 he even invited Mamontov to become chief stage director of the Bolshoi, an offer which was refused. For *Kitezh* Rimsky-Korsakov knew he was in safe hands since Korovin and Vasnetsov were appointed as the scenic designers and Mamontov's former stage director Vasily Shkafer was, by then, at the Mariinsky having moved to the Imperial Novy Theatre already in 1904. Nadezhda Zabela was also in the cast.

#### **3.7.4 The composer's aims fulfilled**

There can be no doubt that Rimsky-Korsakov was attracted to the aesthetic aims of the private opera houses and the Mamontov Opera in particular. He was continually harassed by the bureaucracy of the Imperial Theatres, the interference of the court and the general lackadaisical approach to production. The new approach to direction introduced by Mamontov was a revelation. In addition there were similar interests in being able to present operas which drew inspiration from the familiar territory of Russian culture to the growing middle-class and workers. In addition the criticism of the existing order could be presented without incurring the wrath of the censors. Irrespective of the differences between the two 'impresarios' Rimsky-Korsakov valued the opportunity to present his operas to an appreciative public and once the step was taken to Moscow he only looked back once when he was certain that the Mariinsky's production of *Kitezh* would match that of Mamontov.

#### **3.8 *Kashchei the Immortal* - political and student unrest**

The seeds for the student unrest in the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1905 and the reactions of the principles can already be found almost fifty years earlier. The Russian Musical Society (RMS) and the St. Petersburg Conservatoire had been effectively set up by the Grand Duchess Elena Pavlovna, the widowed sister-in-law of Tsar Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>, in 1859 and 1862 respectively. It was Elena Pavlovna's treatment of these as her own personal organisations established for her pleasure and under her direction that led to continual conflict up to her death in January 1873. Already in 1865 she had snubbed Rubinstein in her refusal to elect a director having sole responsibility for the Conservatoire and established a Chief Directorate having authority over all the RMS

organisations. This was drawn from people outside Rubinstein's sphere of influence. In addition, although through her Anton Rubinstein had attained his aim of establishing the Conservatoire, he resented his role of accompanist at her musical evenings as well as her interference in affairs for which he considered himself better qualified. Having two strong personalities in opposition eventually led to Rubinstein's resignation in December 1867 from both the Conservatoire and RMS following a disagreement between himself, Elena Pavlovna and the Faculty Council concerning the granting of diplomas. Nikolai Zarembo, who followed Rubinstein, was as conservative as his predecessor.

Following the assassination attempt on Tsar Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1866 by a student, the liberal regime which had existed in the early part of his reign ended. The Tsar appointed Count Dmitri Tolstoy as the new Minister for Education who had a reputation for rigorous educational methods and standards. This control, he believed, would prevent the further development of liberal and radical ideas which had taken root amongst the student population. Although the Conservatoire was not under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, Elena Pavlovna saw the new edicts as a means of getting the Conservatoire to return to its initial aims of being a school to train instrumental musicians for the opera and theatres. Since the musical taste of society was still Italian, German and French orientated there was little need within the government spheres for trained composers, theoreticians or historians and these subjects she felt should be discouraged. Zarembo resisted these impositions since he felt they contravened the school's charter. Elena Pavlovna prevailed and Zarembo was forced to retire. His successor Mikhail Azanchevsky whilst publically agreeing to the proposals opposed them through his subsequent actions. In the autumn of 1871 he engaged Hermann Laroche to teach music theory and followed this by the appointment of Rimsky-Korsakov later in the year to teach composition and orchestration. Elena Pavlovna's successor as president of the RMS and patron of the Conservatoire was the Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich, her nephew, and brother of Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>. He did not insist on changes to the existing organisation, leaving the control of the Conservatoire under the local RMS which was subsequently confirmed by the Tsar in 1873.<sup>320</sup> It was the influence of the RMS and its essentially 'non-musical' directorate on the Conservatoire that was to be a cause of friction leading eventually to the conflict surrounding the Conservatoire and the role of Rimsky-Korsakov in March 1905.

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<sup>320</sup> See, for instance, Ridenour Robert.C. *Op.cit.*: 211–217.

It was already in the reign of Catherine the Great that the intellectuals became an active force and became known as the общественное движение, a 'social movement'. This group in the 1860's were joined by the liberal idealists, *raznochintsy*, intelligentsia not drawn from the upper classes. The increasing domination of the bureaucracy in the affairs of local government, the *zemstvo*'s, caused the liberal intellectuals to move politically left. This group was becoming increasingly made up of the professional ranks, professors, lawyers, writers doctors and the like who also saw that the changed times needed a new public identity. The Ministry of Internal Affairs viewed this so-called 'third element' as the source of disturbance since, in particular, they were able to propagate their views through the press. The restrictions placed on the universities in 1884 meant that all appointments were made by the Ministry of Education in place of the academic councils. Inspectors were also assigned to the universities to ensure order was kept. However, this 'peace' ended following a warning against disorderly behaviour during an annual festival in 1899 by the Rector of St. Petersburg University followed by subsequent police brutality. This led to demonstrations at universities and similar educational establishments throughout the country against the existing bureaucratic regime. Since many of the students represented the upper levels of society this voicing of opinion attracted much attention.<sup>321</sup> In his memoirs Rimsky-Korsakov refers to these disturbances as the main reason he and his wife sent their son Andrei to study abroad.<sup>322</sup>

It was a number of events that triggered the major events of the spring 1905. The catastrophic Russo-Japanese war which had started a year earlier showed not only the incompetence of the Tsarist regime but also the infallibility of the Tsar. As a result of deteriorating working and social conditions within the urban population a peaceful march was organised by Father Gapon to petition the Tsar to deliver them from:

[...] the hands of the beureaucratic administration composed of embezzlers of public funds and robbers, who not only care nothing for the needs of the people, but flagrantly abuse them. The bureaucratic administration brought the country to the brink of ruin, involved her in a humiliating war, and is leading Russia closer and closer to disaster. We, the workers and people, have no voice [...].<sup>323</sup>

It is essential to note that irrespective of both the political and social aspects, the procession, carrying icons and portraits of the Tsar, and Gapon believed the Tsar to be

<sup>321</sup> See, Ascher Abraham. 1988. *Op.cit.*: 33–36 and Shanin Teodor. *Op.cit.*: 9.

<sup>322</sup> MML: 388

<sup>323</sup> *Ib.*: 87–88.



their ‘father’ and would react benevolently to their message. The reaction of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>’s administration resulted in the ‘Bloody Sunday’ massacre of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 1905. Many public events were cancelled involving the intelligentsia and funds collected for the families of the victims.

As Bradley points out a personalised autocracy with a dedicated bureaucracy to maintain it aimed at keeping society fragmented and preventing the formation of societies and similar bodies that could publically discuss and question the state authority.<sup>324</sup> It is not surprising then that the Imperial Russian Musical Society (IMRO), which had remained a conservative organisation with a strong historical link to the Tsar, was seen by many of the staff and students of the Conservatoire alike as akin to the autocracy. They too had been unable to accommodate the changing social aspirations and culture of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The local associations were dominated by musical amateurs whilst the Conservatoire employed competent professional musicians. As it was musicians had to overcome a major social historical burden, their roots in serfdom. Musicians were continually hampered by the lack of a *chin* which would ensure some kind of success in the Russian bureaucratic society. Already in 1878 a new statute for the Conservatoires compounded the situation when it failed to award the rights of ‘honoured citizen’ to graduates of the Conservatoires and required graduates of lower estates to have to petition for removal from tax registers in order to be awarded the title of free artist. “This attempt to clarify the rights of conservatoire graduates effectively separated the title (*zvanie*) of free artist from the status (*soslovie*) of honoured citizen”.<sup>325</sup> Not only did this lack of *soslovie* mean that those not having this recognition did not have clear civil rights but also free artists whose origin were in taxable estates were not protected by the law and could be returned to their place of origin. The cause of the conservatoire graduates was taken up by IMRO that petitioned the State Council. Through the authority of the Tsar the legal controversy was removed and an amended statute stated:

Persons who are awarded a diploma with the title of free artist by one of the conservatoires of the Imperial Musical Society are ranked as personal honoured citizens, if they do not belong to another, higher social estate.<sup>326</sup>

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<sup>324</sup> Bradley Joseph C. 2002. Subjects into Citizens: Societies, Civil Society, and Autocracy in Tsarist Russia. *American Historical Review*, 4: 1103.

<sup>325</sup> Sargeant Lynn 2004. A New Class of People: The Conservatoire and Musical Professionalization in Russia, 1861–1917. *Music & Letters*, 85 (1): 45.

<sup>326</sup> *Ib.*: 46. Quoted from the Russian State Historical Archives 1894.

Although the 1878 statute stated that the conservatoire professors were considered to be in state service their rights were limited and advancement was not based on length of service. Within music education the struggle was to reduce the authority of voluntary organisations over music performance and education and to place it more firmly within an official state body such as the Ministry of Education and through this gain recognition. This was proposed in 1891 by Rubinstein during his second term as director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, however, this was resisted by both the State and the IRMO.

The 1905 revolution highlighted the status of the IMRO and it was seen to be a tool of the state especially as the relationship between the state and voluntary organisations was essentially cooperative.<sup>327</sup> Issue 37 of the newspaper *Наша дни* (*Our Day*) published a letter signed by twenty nine Moscow composers and musicians to which Rimsky-Korsakov added his name later, Issue 39. This declaration was also published in *Русская музыкальная газета/Russian Musical Gazette* (1905) No.7. The statement was very clear in political tone:

[...] When life is bound hand and foot, art cannot be free, for feeling is only a part of life. When there is neither freedom of thought and conscience, nor freedom of speech and press in the land, when obstacles are erected to all the creative undertakings of the people, artistic creativity withers. The title of “free artist” sounds like a bitter joke. We are not free artists, but, like all other Russian citizens, the disenfranchised victims of today’s abnormal social conditions. It is our conviction that there is only one solution: Russia must at last embark on a road to radical reforms, the reforms set forth in the well-known eleven points of the resolution of the District Council [...].<sup>328</sup>

The main points of the resolution concerned political reform, the creation of a popular representative body with legislative powers, the introduction of civil liberties, equality of social classes and the broadening of the activities of local self-government. However they also realised that this would only be possible on the Tsar’s initiative.

Around a half of the enrolled students took part in a meeting at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire on 10<sup>th</sup> February supporting the on-going protest movement. By a vast majority they voted for a discontinuation of their studies until 1<sup>st</sup> September. The student’s demands primarily concerned artistic, pedagogical and professional issues

<sup>327</sup> Sargeant Lynn 2011. *Harmony and Discord. Music and the Transformation of Russian Cultural Life*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 231.

<sup>328</sup> Yastrebtsev. V. *Op.cit.*: 352–353 and n.6, 524. For further background see also Wartenweiler David 1999. *Civil Society and Academic Debate in Russia 1905–1914*. Oxford, Clarendon Press: 47–48.

whilst also passing a resolution to petition the State Council for a greater financial support for the Conservatoire. Although the faculty council considered suspending classes until mid-March they were pre-empted by the St. Petersburg branch of the IMRO who decided to suspend classes until the 15<sup>th</sup> March. Rimsky-Korsakov together with some other faculty members decided to uphold the demands of the students.<sup>329</sup> In Moscow the Conservatoire students in March went a stage further and decided to go on strike until September. It is notable that the student action was directed more towards internal matters rather than the broader political issues.<sup>330</sup> The St. Petersburg Conservatoire reopened on 16<sup>th</sup> March whilst striking students blocked the entrance. The course of events is outlined in Rimsky-Korsakov's open letter to the Director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire dated March 16 (March 29) which was published in *Русские ведомости/Russkie vedemosti* and reprinted in *Rus* no.70, March 19.

[...] The consequences foreseen have become a reality: today after 11 a.m. the Conservatory found itself surrounded by a cordon of mounted and foot police who scattered those pupils vainly desiring to enter the building. Admission into the Conservatory was by tickets distributed beforehand to pupils who wished to go on with studies; in this category of pupils only an insignificant number put in an appearance (some ten in all). Thus it has been today, so will it be tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, etc. The striking pupils have been left to the tender mercies of the police; while those who have not gone on strike are guarded by the same police. Is a regular course of instruction possible under such conditions? I find it impossible; many other instructors find it likewise. The Conservatory authorities – the Director, the Inspectors, the Directorate of the Musical Society – view it differently, without being disconcerted by things that make the Government itself stop to think. Is any progress in the cause of artistic music possible at an institution where the resolutions of the Art Council have no value; at an institution where, under its constitution, the musical artists are subordinated to the Directorate – that is, to a circle of amateur dilettantes – at an institution where, under the same constitution, the Director is not elected for a term, but represents an irremovable element; at an institution, finally, that is utterly indifferent to the fate of its pupils in questions of education? All the above regulations of the constitution as well as the acts of the Conservatory administration I find inopportune, anti-artistic and harsh from a moral point of view, and I deem it my duty to express my moral protest.<sup>331</sup>

Together with his public support for the Moscow school published in both *Our Day* and the *Russian Musical Gazette* earlier, the tone of this letter leaves one in no doubt that the composer was expressing views which he had already held for a long time but

<sup>329</sup> See the composer's entries for 1905-1906, MML: 411-414.

<sup>330</sup> For further discussion on the issues involved see, for instance, Ascher Abraham 1988. *Op.cit.*: 95, 195-196 and Ascher Abraham 1992. *Op.cit.*: 257. Sargent Lynn 2011. *Op.cit.*: 233-235.

<sup>331</sup> MML: 473-474.

perhaps suppressed. The musical political atmosphere gave him the forum to express clearly his thoughts without using veiled criticism in his operas. Yastrebtsev's comment was "This letter was the spark that ignited the fire—and how brilliantly it burned!"<sup>332</sup>

Since there was general indignation at the actions of the Conservatoire Director Bernhard, the St. Petersburg IMRO board accepted his resignation on the 19<sup>th</sup> March and in view of his public critical letter, they dismissed Rimsky-Korsakov for:

Приняв во внимание, что профессор Н.А. Римский-Корсаков публично, в резкой форме и с извращением фактов, заявил протест против деятельности дирекции, направленной к восстановлению в консерватории приостановленных занятий, что явно препятствует стараниям дирекции водворить в консерватории спокойствие и правильное течение учебной жизни, дирекция считает дальнейшую профессорскую деятельность Н.А. Римского-Корсакова невозможной, а потому постановила [...] увольнении Н.А. Римского-Корсакова от должности профессора.<sup>333</sup>

Taking into consideration that Professor N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov has publicly in a harsh manner and with a distortion of the facts announced his protest against the purposeful actions of the Directorate to restore the interrupted studies at the Conservatoire and has hindered the efforts of the Directorate to establish a quite [atmosphere] and correct continuation of the training at the Conservatoire, the Directorate consider that the further professorial activities of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov are impossible and consequently take the resolution [...] to dismiss N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov as an official Professor.<sup>334</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov again answered this in an open letter dated March 24 (April 6). He pointed to the fact that the majority of opinion was to close the Conservatoire until "passions had calmed" which, although an inexact phrase he considered perhaps even more remote than September 1 (14). The grounds of the dismissal "[...] proves once more that I am right in thinking that it is from the Constitution that the abnormality in the relations between the Art Council, the Director of the Conservatory, and the Directorate arises."<sup>335</sup>

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<sup>332</sup> Yastrebtsev V. *Op.cit.*: 356.

<sup>333</sup> Орлова А.А. 1973 Выпуск 4. *Op.cit.*: 14.

<sup>334</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>335</sup> MML: 475.



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Caricature from 1905 showing the sacking of Rimsky-Korsakov.

It is perhaps one of those quirks of history that the students of the Conservatoire had been rehearsing a performance of *Kashchei the Immortal* at the private theatre of the actress V.F. Komissarzhevskaja that had its première on 27<sup>th</sup> March (April 9) conducted by Glazunov. The world première had been given on 25<sup>th</sup> December (12<sup>th</sup> December) at the Solodovnikov Theatre in Moscow in 1902. However, the libretto was written by the composer and composed in 1901 – 02 at a time when there was an increasing control and interference by the state not only within the universities but also a curtailing the work of the *zemstvo*'s. Apart from the forceful domination of the Tsarevna by Kashchei, the mournful chorus in Act 1, the Storm-Bagatyr complains of being restrained but once freed the road to freedom from the oppressed opens wide. There could be no clearer portrayal of Imperialist Russia at the time of the opera's conception and the message of the ending of the opera "Go in freedom! The storm has opened the doors for you!... Oh, beautiful sun, freedom, springtime, and love!"<sup>337</sup> could not be clearer. Gossip certainly put a political interpretation on the opera with Kashchei being interpreted as Konstantin Pobedonostsev, the procurator of the Holy Synod.<sup>338</sup>

<sup>336</sup> Янковский. М. 1950. *Римский-Корсаков и революция 1905 года* (Rimsky-Korsakov and the 1905 Revolution). Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 42.

<sup>337</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1999. *Kashchei the Immortal*, Kirov Opera and Orchestra, Valery Gergiev, Philips 446 704-2, CD. Accompanying libretto: 68.

<sup>338</sup> Sargeant Lynn 2005. Kashchei the Immortal: Liberal Politics, Cultural Memory, and the Rimsky-Korsakov Scandal of 1905. *The Russian Review*, 64: 22–43.



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Caricature from 1905 reflecting the response to the production of Kashchei at Vera Komissarzhevskaja's Theatre.

In view of the recent events the performance became a big show of support for the composer which focussed on the political implications. It united the liberally educated society and the reports in *Word* (Слово), *Russian Gazette* (Русские ведомости) and the *News and Stockbroker Gazette*<sup>340</sup> drew attention to both the audience and how Stasov's presence and his speech united the whole of society

But, like all truly great people, you, Nikolai Andreyevich...have a great soul and therefore, the most fitting, wonderful words one can say to you about your enemies are those of the Christians: 'Forgive them for they know not what they do.' But, besides these great words, there are still others, spoken by a great man, our Pushkin: 'The hammer is so heavy that, in breaking the glass, it shatters the sword.' These words apply to you exactly.<sup>341</sup>

Yastrebtsev also lists many other periodicals that reported on the event and also outlines many of the cartoons also published. It also interesting to note in this entry the vast and varied addresses presented which also included the Ukrainian Circle, a country the composer had championed through his Gogol operas. The composer Gnesin who was then a compositional student at the Conservatoire in his *Мысли и воспоминания* (Thoughts and Recollections) reports that "The performance turned into a completely

<sup>339</sup> Янковский. М.Ор.цит.: 58.

<sup>340</sup> See, for instance, Ossovski A. Театр и музыка: 'Кашей бессмертный' (Theatre and music: 'Kaschei the Immortal'). *Слово* 29 March 1905, Чествование Н.А. Римского-Корсакова (Rimsky-Korsakov celebration). *Русские ведомости*, 28 March 1905, Чествование Н.А. Римского-Корсакова (Rimsky-Korsakov celebration). *Новости и Биржевая Газета*. 28 March 1905.

<sup>341</sup> Yastrebtsev V. Ор.цит.: 358.

unprecedented demonstration for Rimsky-Korsakov and at the same time against the government.”<sup>342</sup> The IMRO and indirectly the State had miscalculated when firing Rimsky-Korsakov since it demonstrated in how little esteem they held the academics and educated society as a whole and, in effect, their inability to accept that the new professional classes held qualified views of the social and political conditions and climate. They then poured oil on a volatile situation by banning his compositions. Irrespective of this ban, as can be seen from Appendix 9, Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas still commanded the greatest attention during from the 1903/1904 through to the 1905/1906 seasons

### 3.9 Summary

Rimsky-Korsakov’s first opera *The Maid of Pskov* clearly addresses the question of authority and questions the mode of government. This was at a time when the failure of the emancipation of the serfs and the establishment of a more fair legal system and local government, the *zemstvo*, became apparent. Almost ten years later, for his second opera, *May Night*, he turned to Gogol’s Dinkanka stories at a time when the suppression of Ukrainian language and culture was being enforced following the Ems Ukaze. There are also indications that he had an interest in the *Christmas Eve* story which was initially set to music by Tchaikovsky and premièred in 1876. It was not until after the death of Tchaikovsky in 1893 that Rimsky-Korsakov realised his own version. However, it was the accession of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> in 1894 and the resultant repressive actions at home and a misguided foreign policy that lead to Russia’s economic and military collapse. In the period from 1898 through to 1907 there appears to be an increasing and clear criticism on the State of Russia, the Tsar and the effects of repression. *The Tsar’s Bride* comments on the destruction of the individual through an autocracy, the uncompromising rule and demands of the Tsar. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* concentrates on the effect on a Tsar surrounded by self-centred advisors and being distracted from accepting facts. *Kashchei* examines captivity by a cruel and inflexible ‘tsar’ and how a country will only begin to blossom in freedom.

The Polish question was prevalent in Rimsky-Korsakov’s early life and brought to the public’s attention by Herzen. He viewed the suppression of the Polish language and culture in a similar way to the government action against the Ukraine, a Tsar with an over-ambitious ego acting brutally and without consideration for human feelings to achieve his aims. However, Rimsky-Korsakov clearly indicated in his next opera, *Pan Voyevoda*, which played out this theme that this *modi operandi* would lead to

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<sup>342</sup> See Sargeant Lynn. *Op.cit.*: 30.



destruction from within. Having heard Chopin's music during childhood he emphasized his appreciation of the Polish plight by dedicating the opera to Chopin.

In many ways, his next opera *Kitezh* continued this same theme, a heroine living a life in harmony with nature being savaged by a narrow-minded society where envy and greed prevail, Lesser Kitezh. This leads to it being overrun by the Tartars, known in Russian history as a destroyer of society, its culture and religion; this battle also leads to the death Prince Vsevolodovich. However it is the Tatars own internal squabbles and greed together with seeing the unattainable that eventually lead to their own demise. Greater Kitezh can be equated to the ideal society based on an acceptance of all humans as equals. Rimsky-Korsakov here is seen to predict the future course of Russian history.

Following *Kitezh* Rimsky-Korsakov expressed an opinion in 1906 that it was time for him to finish his career.<sup>343</sup> It was the the total irresponsibility of the regime of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> together with his badly-prepared expansionist policies and vacillations during 1905 – 1906 that led Rimsky-Korsakov to parody the Tsar in *The Golden Cockerel*. So blatant was the criticism that there was no possibility for it to pass the censor. However, the composer was adamant that nothing should be altered.

When one examines the politics of the time, the immature efforts of the tsarist bureaucracy to curtail the development of liberal ideas and the response of Rimsky-Korsakov, one can be left in no doubt that the composer, throughout his life attempted to focus on the restrictive autocratic practices and their results. It was his aim not only to highlight the linking of Russian literature, a national heritage, to libretti but also to point out the existing irregularities between opera and theatre in the eyes of the Tsar and the censors. It is significant to note that when the opportunity arose, the focus of performance for him switched from the Imperially controlled theatre, such as the Mariinsky, to the 'people's' theatres where the audience would be from a broader social background and his criticism and messages would fall on a more fertile ground.

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<sup>343</sup> MML: 423.



#### 4. The Russian spiritual world reflected in Rimsky-Korsakov's works

Peter the Great succeeded in creating in Russia a greater divide between the élite and the people (*narod*) than in the West. Although this élite were few in number they governed and controlled all aspects of life. As mentioned previously they were also separated by use of language. This Western way of life also affected their relationship with religion. As Pascal outlines the élite

...saw in Orthodoxy merely a state religion with certain ritual obligations but involving nothing in the way of belief or morality, and developed according to the fashions which came from the West, moving from Voltairean rationalism to the sentimentalism of Rousseau, and thence rapidly to an absorption in Freemasonry, Pietism and Martinism.<sup>344</sup>

This view is also supported by the Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, appointed in 1880, whose view of the church in Russian life was:

Кто русский человек – душой и обычаем тот понимает, что значит храм Божий, что значит Церковь для русского человека [...] Надо жить народною жизнью, надо молиться заодно с народом, в одном церковном собрании, чувствовать одно с народом биение сердца, проникнутого единым торжеством, единым словом и пением. Оттого многие, знающие Церковь только по домашним храмам, где собирается избранная и наряженная публика, не имеют истинного понимания своей Церкви и настоящего вкуса церковного [...]<sup>345</sup>

Any person who is Russian, in soul and in custom understands the significance that God's temple and the Church has for the Russian people [...] One has to live the life of the people, one must worship as one with the people, in a united church assembly, feel that one has a common heartbeat with the people, suffused with the same sense of celebration, the same word and song. It is for this reason that many [aristocrats] who experience church only in private chapels, attended solely by a select and well-attired public, do not possess a genuine understanding of their own Church or have a true sense of ecclesiastical taste [...].<sup>346</sup>

And he later draws attention to singing as the soul of the church service “*Just as the folk song, Russian liturgical singing issues forth from the people's breast in a free and*

<sup>344</sup> Pascal Pierre 1976. *The Religion of the Russian People*. Transl. Rowan Williams. London and Oxford, A.R.Mowbray and Co Ltd: 3–4.

<sup>345</sup> Победоносцев, К 1993. *Великая ложь нашего времени. Сборник статей*. (The great lie of our time. Collected essays). Moscow, 61. Rakhmanova Marina 1999. Quoted in Ed. Morosan Vladimir 1999. *Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. The Complete Sacred Choral Works*. USA: Musica Russica: xx.

<sup>346</sup> *Ib.*: xxxi–xxii.

*mighty stream[...]*<sup>347</sup> (Русское церковное пение – как народная песнь, льется широкой, вольной струей из народной груди).<sup>348</sup> However, the provincial and rural masses remained loyal to the old customs: the true Russian language, the Orthodox faith, and often even the ‘old religion’ from before the time of Nikon.<sup>349</sup>

The question of double-belief is one that has become a question of academic discussion in recent years and the boundaries have been set admirably by Stella Rock in *Popular Religion in Russia* published in 2007.<sup>350</sup> The present chapter outlines how the customs, songs and dances, which played a part in the lives of the people and had their origin in pagan beliefs and were related to the agrarian cycle, formed a part of the cultural identity and because of this became an integral part of Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas. The Russian archaeologist Rybakov in his *Paganism in Ancient Rus* (Язычество древней Руси) writes that “it is important for an understanding of the folk culture of the villages and merchant suburbs, and the complex and multifaceted culture of the feudal aristocracy” ([...] важный раздел русской средневековой культуры, без которого невозможно понять ни народную культуру деревни и городского посада, ни сложную и многогранную культуру феодальных верхов [...]) to appreciate the importance of paganism in Russian medieval culture.<sup>351</sup> As Rimsky-Korsakov so aptly put it: “The people, as a nation sing their ceremonial songs by force of habit and custom, neither understanding nor suspecting what really underlies these ceremonies and games”<sup>352</sup> (Народ поет свои обрядовые песни по привычке и обычаю, не понимая их и не подозревая, что собственно лежит в основе его обрядов и игр).<sup>353</sup>

The people were surrounded by images of both pagan and Christian cultures in the home, for instance, in the imagery of the folk embroidery and wood carvings. They wore their crosses and attended church but also continued with the celebration of pagan festivals since this was an integral part of village life.<sup>354</sup>

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<sup>347</sup> *Ib.*: xxxii.

<sup>348</sup> *Ib.*: xx.

<sup>349</sup> Pascal, Pierre. *Op.cit.*: 3–4.

<sup>350</sup> Rock Stella 2007. *Popular religion in Russia. ‘Double belief’ and the Making of an Academic Myth*. London and New York, Routledge.

<sup>351</sup> Рыбаков Б.А. 1987 *Язычество древней Руси* (The Paganism of Ancient Russia). Москва, Издательство Наука: 6. Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>352</sup> MML: 207.

<sup>353</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н.А. 2004. *Летопись моей музыкальной жизни* (A Chronicle of My Musical Life). Москва, Согласие: 227.

<sup>354</sup> See, Hilton Alison 1991. *Piety and Pragmatism. Orthodox Saints and Slavic Nature Gods in Russian Folk Art in Christianity and the Arts in Russia*. Eds. Brumfield William and Velimorovic Milos. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 55–64.

The highlighting of the close association between pagan beliefs with the rituals of the Orthodox Church in many of his operas would have brought Rimsky-Korsakov into a collision course with the upper class Russian society. However, with the other classes of society the reaction would have been different. Gogol's assertion that the Russian people were the most religious on earth was denied by Belinsky who wrote:

That is a lie! The basis of religiousness is pietism, reverence, fear of God. Whereas the Russian man utters the name of the Lord while scratching himself somewhere. He says of the icon: "If it isn't good for praying it's good for covering pots."<sup>355</sup>

This sentiment was also born out by Sergey Stepniak-Kravchinsky who considered that the peasantry were essentially non-religious and also notes that although "the peasant utters God's name at every step...pagan deities and rites survive in peasant consciousness and action".<sup>356</sup>

#### 4.1 The Orthodox Church and pagan traditions

The process by which the Orthodox Church and pagan belief became intertwined is complex and will not be dealt with in detail here. Some gods retained their old identities whilst others were moulded into Christian saints; Volos, the protector of animals became St. Blasius (Vlasii) who lived amongst wild animals. There was a need to invoke protection, health and fertility from both Christian and pagan divinities throughout the agrarian cycle of the year.<sup>357</sup> Consequently prayers addressed to saints were modelled on pagan incantations. Lado and Lada appear in songs to do with spring with the planting of grain and also weddings which are a major feature of *The Snow Maiden*. By invoking images of the rusalki in *May Night* Rimsky-Korsakov could also have been reminding an audience of their origins, of being connected with water and rain, fertility and spring festivals.<sup>358</sup> The link to Christian beliefs comes at the end of the opera with a prayer for forgiveness.

From early in Russian Christianity the church continually drew the Tsar's and Church Council's attention to the prevalence of pagan games, dancing, singing and the ignoring

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<sup>355</sup> Belinsky Vissarion 1956. *Selected Philosophical Works*, Transl. L. Navrozov. Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House: 540.

<sup>356</sup> Vucinich Wayne S (Ed.) 1968. *The Peasant in Nineteenth-Century Russia*. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press: 78.

<sup>357</sup> Warner Elizabeth. *Op.cit.*: 20.

<sup>358</sup> For a discussion on both Lado, Lada and the rusalki see Ralston William 2005. *The Songs of the Russian People as Illustrative of Slavonic Mythology and Russian Social Life*. Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation. Unabridged facsimile of 1872 edition published by Ellis & Green, London: 105, 139–146.

of prohibitions on musical instruments and *skomorohki* (minstrels) in society.<sup>359</sup>

Questions concerning these observations were also presented in the name of Ivan the Terrible to the Council headed by Metropolitan Makarii held in 1551 and addressed in the *Stoglav* or *One Hundred Chapters* that recorded the rulings of the Council. Chapters 41, 92 and 93 address practices which the Church considered unacceptable. In Question 16, Chapter 41 the *skomorohki* are condemned for their involvement in wedding ceremonies, where, it is said they often take precedence over the priest.<sup>360</sup> Question 24 of Chapter 41:

Русал(ь)и о Иване дни и в навечерии Р(о)ж(е)ства Х(ри)с(то)ва, и Кр(е)щения сходятца мужи и жены, и д(ѣ)в(и)ци на nocturnal splashing and на безчинный говор, и на бесовские пѣсни, и на плясание, и на скакание, и на б(о)гомерские дѣла.<sup>361</sup>

At the Rusalii for [St] John's day and on the Eves of Christmas, and of Epiphany men and women gather together, and maidens, for night splashing and for improper conversations, and devilish songs, and for dancing and skipping, and impious acts.<sup>362</sup>

The *skomorohki*'s intimate involvement with these festivals is noted. Similarly Chapter 92 notes that:

Еще ж(е) мнози от неразумия простаа чадъ православныхъ христианъ въ градѣхъ и в селехъ творятъ еллинское бесование, различныя игры и плескание противъ праздника Р(о)ж(е)ства великаго Иоанна Пр(е)д(о)т(е)чи: и в нощи на самый празникъ в вес(ь) д(е)нь и до нощи мужи и жены, и дѣти в домѣхъ, и по улицамъ обходя, и по водамъ глумы творятъ всякими играми и всякими скомираш(е)ствы и пѣснями сотониньскими, и пляснями, и гусльми, и иными многими видами, и скаредными образованиями, еще же и пианствомъ. Подобна же сему творятъ во днехъ и в на/вечерии Р(о)ж(е)ства Х(ри)с(то)ва, и в навечерии Василиа Великаго, и в навечерии Б(о)гоявления.<sup>363</sup>

Still many foolish and drunk orthodox Christian men in the towns and villages take part in Hellenic devilry, various games and splashing before the festival of the Nativity of John the Baptist, and in the night of the same festival and all the day until night men and women, and children in houses and on the streets go about, and by water they mock with all sorts of games and all clowning and satanic songs and dances and *guslis* and many

<sup>359</sup> See, for instance, Fennell, John 1995. *A History of the Russian Church to 1448*. London and New York, Longman.

<sup>360</sup> Zguta Russell 1978. *Russian Minstrels: A History of the Skomorokhi*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 47.

<sup>361</sup> Емченко.Е.Б. 2000. *Стоглав: Исследование и текст* (Stoglav: Analysis and text). Москва, Издательство «Индрик»: 313–314.

<sup>362</sup> Transl. J.Nelson.

<sup>363</sup> Емченко.Е.Б. *Op.cit.*: 399–400.

unclean sights, and also drunkenness. They do similarly on the days and eve of Christmas, and on the eve of St Basil the Great, and on the eve of Epiphany.<sup>364</sup>

There are also references to Russian customs associated with celebrations of feasts that were prohibited, the January Kalends (*koliada*) and the pre-Lenten carnival of *Maslenitsa*. An 18<sup>th</sup> century sermon of Tikhon of Zadonsk called for the abolition of the annual festival called *Yarilo*. It was not the common festivities that Tikhon objected to so much but that they coincided at a time when the church decreed fast “in that period in which the holy Church has not [yet] had time to celebrate Pentecost” which for the eastern Orthodox Church was between Easter and Trinity Sunday.<sup>365</sup> The week before this is the *Rusal'naia* week, the festivities around *Semik* and the *rusalki*.<sup>366</sup> *Yarilo* is also linked to the spring agrarian rituals to encourage fertility for crops and newly-weds alike.

There can be little doubt that with a growing interest in the folk culture of the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Russia, an interest in their religious beliefs and the retained pagan elements developed. As a result of this interest in ethnography in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century a number of books were published which examined the life of the common people and their rituals including, for instance *Festivals and Superstitions of the Common People* (Русские простонародные праздники и суеверные обряды) by Ivan Snegiryov published in 1837 and Alexandr Tereshchenko's *Быт русского народа* (*The life of the Russian people*) in 1848. Sergei Solovyov, one of the significant historians of the period, wrote in his *History of Russia from the Earliest Times* about the resistance to changes imposed by Christianity on the everyday life of the people:

for a long time the demands of Christianity had force only in the highest layers of society and with difficulty penetrated beneath, to the masses, where paganism lived on still in the workings of their rituals. We have seen that because of the clan [nature of] everyday life of the Eastern Slavs [paganism] could not develop public worship, could not form a priestly class; had nothing to oppose Christianity with, paganism had easily to give up its place in society to [Christianity]; but being a religion of the clan, the family, the home, it remained here for a long time [...] The struggle, the hostility of ancient pagan society to the influence of the new religion and her servants manifested itself in superstitious signs,

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<sup>364</sup> Transl. J.Nelson.

<sup>365</sup> Rock, Stella. *Id.* 37–43. Rock quotes extensively from: Емченко, Е.Б. (ed.) 2000 and Kollmann Jack 1978. *The Moscow Stoglav (hundred chapters) Church Council of 1551*. Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Michigan.

<sup>366</sup> For a description of the *rusalki* in Russian mythology and links to Orthodox Christian festivals see Warner Elizabeth 2002. *Op.cit.*: 43–44.

not without meaning, but having had meaning in the first century of Christianity in Rus.<sup>367</sup>

References are also to be found in Ralston's study concerning the songs of the Russian people published in 1872 where he refers to

[...] the 'faithful proselytes of the new religion could not at once forget the teaching of the old, so they retained a mass of familiar traditions, chiefly of a mythical nature, but they substituted in them for the names of their elementary gods and demigods, others which they took from the calendar of the Church. The consequence was a confusion of ideas which justified the epithet "two-faithed" which an old ecclesiastical writer bestowed on the Russian people.<sup>368</sup>

It can be concluded that irrespective of the views of the church, the calendar festivals, songs and rituals had become such a feature of everyday life in rural regions that it was easier for the church to accept them. Even today the Russian calendar includes the festivals of *Koliada*, *Maslenitsa*, *Troitsa* (also *Rusaliia*) and *Ivan Kupalo*, for instance. The practices which survived, and which the Stoglav attacked, were essentially the spring festivals in which the god of the sun, light or fertility Yarilo was invoked and represented and at the end of the summer the god's symbolic burial. There are also traces of a tree-cult around Easter, Lent and Whitsun. There are beliefs surrounding spirits inhabiting the woods and waters.<sup>369</sup> Pavel Melnikov (alais Andrei Pecherskii), in his novel *In the forests* (В лесах) describes many scenes of rituals such as hanging garlands on the trees which have their origins in pagan beliefs; *In the forests*, as will be shown, had a major influence on Rimsky-Korsakov's *Kitezh*.<sup>370</sup> Both peasant girls and the elite young girls in the towns read their fortune on 31<sup>st</sup> December by dropping molten wax into water.<sup>371</sup> The pre-Christian element which has been dominant in the faith of the people has been linked to venerating the 'earth' (земля), a feminine noun, also referred to as 'mother earth' (матюшка земля) with its annual life-giving fertility, and is also linked to the Russian mother cult (*Божеруца*).<sup>372</sup> Stepniak also outlines the

<sup>367</sup> Rock Stella. *Op.cit.*: 88–89, quoting from С. М. Соловьев 1982. *История России с древнейших времен* т.1 (History of Russia from the Earliest Times Vol.1). Изд. социально-экономической литературы, Москва: 262.

<sup>368</sup> Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 419–420.

<sup>369</sup> See discussion on common beliefs and practices in, for instance, Stepniak S, 2010. *The Russian Peasantry: Their Agrarian Condition, Social Life and Religion*. Memphis, Tennessee, USA, General Books. Reprint from original 1888: 116–125 and also Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 235–240.

<sup>370</sup> Мельников П.И. (Андрей Печерский) 1955. *В лесах* (In the forest). Москва, Государственное Издательство Художественной Литературы.

<sup>371</sup> Pushkin Alexander 1977. *Eugene Onegin* Chapter 5, Verse VIIIю Transl. Charles Johnston. London Penquin Books: 136.

<sup>372</sup> See, for instance, Warner Elizabeth. *Op.cit.*: 28–31. The subject is also dealt with in detail in Hubbs Joanna 1988. *Mother Russia: the Feminine Myth in Russian Culture*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press.

relationship between people and the devil which is both invoked in legend and song.<sup>373</sup> The humorous aspect of this is the basis of Gogol's story *Christmas Eve* which was also subsequently turned into an opera by Rimsky-Korsakov.

## 4.2 The *Skomorokhi*

In his 1889 *The Skomorkhi of Russia* (Скоморохи на Руси) Alexander Famitsyn described them as popular entertainers who were already active in the eleventh century and there is little doubt of the predominance of the *skomorikhi* in daily Russian life from then onwards. In the *Life of Saint Nifont*, who was Archbishop of Novgorod, and which dates from the 12<sup>th</sup> century, reference is made to men wearing animal masks and playing tambourines, bagpipes and fifes who oversaw the ceremonies, and who were the forerunners of the *skomorokhi*.<sup>374</sup> At *Rusalia*, the Saturday before Trinity Sunday, it was traditional for villagers to initially gather at the cemetery and cry bitterly at the graves of their ancestors. This was then followed by the *skomorokhi* playing on musical instruments in which the villagers joined in clapping, dancing and singing "satanic songs".<sup>375</sup> Although the *skomorokhi* were less prominent at the winter solstice celebrations, their presence is very much indicated by both the mention of the instruments associated with them, when entertaining the master of the house, and some of the types of song sung.<sup>376</sup> Another major event in which the *skomorokhi* featured was in marriages. In addition to providing music for the games and dancing, prophylactic and productive magic was essential for making the marriage successful. It was necessary not only to keep evil spirits away but also to ensure future fertility, wealth and good health. The aide to the groom, the master-of-ceremonies, was often a *skomorokh*. This role persisted into the 19<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>377</sup> It was the dominance of the *skomorokhi* in the religious ceremonies that the church objected to.

### 4.2.1 The Orthodox Church and the *skomorokhi*

The 1648 Gramota<sup>378</sup> of Tsar Alexei addressed the question of church discipline and to a whole range of pagan practices common among the people. Particular attention was directed at the *skomorokhi* and their practices which were condemned. This led to a ban on this form of entertainment. The formal proscription came in December, *On the*

<sup>373</sup> Stepniak S. *Op.cit.*: 118–119.

<sup>374</sup> See, for instance, Фаминцын, Александр Сергеевич 1889. *Скоморохи на Руси / исследование Ал. С. Фаминцына* (*The Skomorkhi of Russia*) С.-Петербургъ and Zguta Russell 1978. *Russian minstrels: a history of the skomorokhi*. Oxford University Press, Oxford: 3–22.

<sup>375</sup> See *Смоглас* (Stoglav), Chapter 41, Question 23 and Sokolov Y.M. 1950. *Russian Folklore*. Transl. Catherine Ruth Smith. New York, The Macmillan Company: 188.

<sup>376</sup> Zguta Russell. *Op.cit.*: 11.

<sup>377</sup> Zguta Russell. *Op.cit.*: 10–13.

<sup>378</sup> Gramota – the old name for charter or contract.

*Righting of Morals and the Abolition of Superstition*, which addresses popular pastimes and amusements. It was considered that the pagan practices, which were central to the *skomorokhi* entertainment, were a dominant factor in taking people away from the Orthodox faith. Their role in weddings was particularly condemned since they often led the wedding party into the church ahead of the priest. The Gramota was particularly concerned about the continuing role of pre-Christian customs and rituals in the period from Christmas Eve to Epiphany alongside those of the Church. There are numerous songs and verbal accounts about the festivities around Christmas Eve and New Year in which the plough is invoked to encourage a good harvest in coming year for the household.<sup>379</sup> To put an end to these activities Aleksei proposed that all musical instruments associated with *skomorokhi* were to be confiscated and burnt. Adam Olearius, who was in the employ of Frederick III, Duke of Holstein, visited Russia on many occasions and noted this edict of the Tsar's in his book concerning his travels.<sup>380</sup> In addition, both performers and audience, if found to participate in such activities, were severely punished. For first offences the punishment was for them to be whipped and for subsequent offences they were exiled. This punishment continued into the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century.

The second Gramota signed the 5<sup>th</sup> December 1648 “Concerning *Koliada*, *Usen'*, and Other Popular Games” focuses on pagan rituals associated with Christmas and New Year's Day. The most severe sentence came later in 1657 when the original Gramota was re-issued and to which was added the penalty of excommunication if the *skomorokhi* were found to be actively pursuing their trade.<sup>381</sup>

Although the activities of the *skomorokhi* were continually under attack from the mid-11<sup>th</sup> century due to their association with pagan rituals, the bans only had local impact. In the regions around Moscow and St. Petersburg where Peter the Great's Westernisation policies influenced, amongst others, music, the profession changed, but in the countryside both the songs and rituals were virtually unaffected. There is a record of a letter sent in 1768 by Demidov, a wealthy mill owner, commissioning Kirsha Danilov to compile his well-known collection of *byliny* and historical *Sbornik*.<sup>382</sup>

<sup>379</sup> See section 5.4.1 Ritual or Calendar Songs Christmas and New Year and *Christmas Eve* and Zguta Russell. *Op.cit.*: 61.

<sup>380</sup> Olearius Adam 1967. *The Travels of Olearius in Seventeenth-Century Russia*. Transl. and ed. Samuel H. Baron. Stanford, California, Stanford University Press: 262.

<sup>381</sup> See Zguta Russell 1972. The Russian Minstrel-Entertainers. *Slavic Review* 31 (2): 297–313, Zguta Russell 1978. *Op.cit.*: Chapter 3 *Decline and Dispersal* discusses the Gramotas of Tsar Alexei in length and Иванов, П 1850. *Описание Государственного Архива старыхъ дѣлъ/составленное П. Ивановымъ* (An account of ancient matters from the State archives/author P.Ivanov). Москва въ типографіи с. селивановскаго: 296–299.

<sup>382</sup> Zguta Russell 1978. *Op.cit.*: 96–97.



Evreinov in his *История русского театра с древнейших времен до 1917 года* (A history of Russian theatre from ancient times to 1917) records ancient traditions still in use in the early 20th century.<sup>383</sup>

From the above it can be seen that the *skomorokhi* had a significant role in the identity of the nation and an impact on Russian culture. This extended through a continuation of the secular music traditions involving the seasons and music linked to rituals such as weddings, and dances. The music was characterised by simple melodic structure, a free rhythmical style, and the repetition of short melodies. The range of melodies was that of thirds, fourths and fifths and it was basically diatonic in progression. An interesting feature is also the use of alternating major and minor modes.<sup>384</sup> The *skomorokhi* also influenced a folk literature tradition and influenced the continuation within the folk culture of the *byliny* and other historical tales through song. There is some controversy concerning the role in society of the *skomorokhi*. They were a type of lower-class buffoon who amused whilst the *gusliari* or *gusli* players served as court minstrels. Whilst this was the role in Kievan Rus, it appears that with the shift northwards to Novgorod the *gusliari* disappeared.<sup>385</sup> In the light of this, it is interesting to note that Rimsky-Korsakov highlights the separate functions of both in *Sadko* in both Tableaux I and IV. Although the opera is situated in Novgorod it refers to Nezhata as ‘a young *gusli* player from Kiev’. The *bylinys* of Novgorod were conceived and modified by the *skomorokhi* and concentrate on the wealthy merchant class and commerce but also mixed with fantastic elements subject such as in *Sadko*. Here, whilst the hero is portrayed as an accomplished musician it is through song that he gains wealth by charming even the Tsar of the Sea with his *gusli*. The *gusli* together with other musical instruments such as the *gudok* (a three-stringed instrument played upright with a bow), *domra* (an early version of the *balalaika*), drum, fiddle, flute and horn became associated with the *skomorokhi* and can be seen in various frescos such as in the St.Sophie Cathedral in Kiev and are also mentioned in Olearius’ travels in Russia.<sup>386</sup> It was, however, the *gusli* which is the most significant in Russian culture.

<sup>383</sup> Евреинов Н. 1955. *История русского театра с древнейших времен до 1917 года* (A History of the Russian Theatre from Ancient Times to 1917). Chekhov Publishing House of the East European Fund, Inc, USA: 35.

<sup>384</sup> See, for instance, Swan Alfred.J. 1943. The Nature of Russian Folk Song. *Musical Quarterly* 29: 498–516 and Vernadsky Nina 1944. The Russian Folk Song. *Russian Review* 3: 94–99.

<sup>385</sup> Zguta Russell 1978. *Op.cit.*: 83–84.

<sup>386</sup> Olearius Adam. *Op.cit.*: 48.



Skomorokhi and musicians. Fresco in the tower of the Sophia Cathedral in Kiev.<sup>387</sup>

Another aspect of peasant life in which the *skomorokhi* were involved was in dance, which has always played a significant role in man's relationship to nature. In addition to giving a rhythmical pattern to seasonal tasks it was a means of invoking the spirits to provide fertility and abundance. The success of the harvest also needed rituals and ceremonies which found its form in the circle dance or *khorovod* which is also associated with the cult of the sun, *Yarilo* and emphasizes the link between man, movement and nature. According to Zguta, dance "served as a means of communication between primitive man and nature and played an important part in his cult conceptions and ceremonies".<sup>388</sup> However, the association between dance and movement was also important in an agricultural-based community since it imparted rhythmical movement to related tasks. These songs and dances remained as a cultural heritage and are still performed in Russia today.<sup>389</sup>

With the coming of Christianity some native religious music was suppressed outright, some like seasonal songs were incorporated into the church's liturgical calendar and some even found their way into the new *znamenny* chant. As a result of his investigations in 1955 Vladimir Malyshev found eleven Gospel canticles which showed the extent of the influence of folk-song on the early Russian religious and secular music

<sup>387</sup> [http://sofiyskiy-sobor.polnaya.info/en/frescos\\_st\\_sophia\\_cathedral.shtml](http://sofiyskiy-sobor.polnaya.info/en/frescos_st_sophia_cathedral.shtml), 13.07.2012.

<sup>388</sup> Zguta Russell 1978. *Op.cit.*: 107.

<sup>389</sup> Prokhorov Vadim 2002. *Russian Folk Songs. Musical Genres and History*. Lanham, Maryland, and London, The Scarecrow Press, Inc: 49–52.

and which also points to their common origins.<sup>390</sup> Consequently irrespective of their attitudes the church which was developing at the same time is found to have a link to the pagan rituals and songs, and the essential conduit for this was the *skomorokhi*.

Another effect of the combining of beliefs was that although some of the dances lost their original pagan religious significance, the dances became entertainment entwined with a ritualistic aspect in, for instance, courting. The *skomorokhi* continued to have an important role in the cultural and social life of community as dance-masters. The previously-mentioned Gramota also draws attention to dancing as pagan and “looked upon as sinful especially when engaged in by women.”<sup>391</sup> Olearius also describes performances and styles of dancing:

[...] the Russians do not join hands while dancing, but each one dances by himself. Their dances consist of movements of hands, feet, shoulders, and hips. The dancers, particularly the women, hold varicolored embroidered handkerchiefs, which they wave about whilst dancing although they themselves remain in place all the time.<sup>392</sup>

#### 4.2.2. The role of the *skomorokhi* in the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov

Given the *skomorokhi*'s significant role in Russian culture as maintaining the old ritualistic traditions linked to pre-Christian Rus' songs and dances and associated with the two main focal points of the agrarian cycle, Kolyada and Rusalia, it is not surprising to find them featuring in Rimsky-Korsakov's operas. Within the historical context and irrespective of the efforts of the Church the *skomorokhi*'s role persisted. Rimsky-Korsakov's operas show this as a significant facet of Russian culture. *The skomorokhi* feature in three of the operas, *Sadko*, *Tsar Saltan* and *The Snow Maiden*. However, as outlined in section 5.2.1 the kolyada songs associated with the *skomorokhi* feature in many operas.

In the first Tableaux of *Sadko*, the second elder at the feast for the merchant traders in the banquet hall asks for entertainment: *Begin a merry dance! Strike up an amusing song!* (Начинайте пляску вы веселую! Заводите песенку потешную!). At this point the *skomorokhi* appear together with Duda and Sopel, also called *skomorokhi* in the cast list, who dance whilst others play on their typical instruments the flute, pipe, fife and

<sup>390</sup> See Swan Alfred J. 1973. *Op.cit.*: 38.

<sup>391</sup> Zguta Russell 1978. *Op.cit.*: 108.

<sup>392</sup> Olearius Adam. *Op.cit.*: 48–49.

tambourine.<sup>393</sup> This is followed by Duda's song pouring scorn on Sadko: *In great Novgorod there lived a simpleton, there lived a silly old fool* (В Новгороде великом жилбыл дурен, жилбыл бабин). In Tableaux 4 in the harbour of Novgorod in the excitement surrounding the foreign merchants, following the procession of the wandering pilgrims, Duda together with the *skomorokhi* and their instruments appear. Again the score mentions the typical instruments of the *skomorokhi*, guslis, fifes and tambourines, score mark 50, *Oy, dudi, minstrels, come out!* (Ой дуди, скоморохи, выходи!). Here the song mocks the sentiments of the pilgrims. In the finale whilst Nezhata, true to the role of the 'court' gusli player, sings of Sadko's glorious feats *Богатырская ты песня!* (Heroic was your singing!), the *skomorokhi* Duda and Sopel jest about demise of the Sea King and his Queen *Ho there, thou terrible Sea King!* (Гой ты, гой еси, грозен Царь морской!).<sup>394</sup>

In Act I of *Tsar Saltan* a *skomorokh* appears as a part of the court surrounding the Tsaritsa Militrisa. As a court jester he tries to keep her amused by playing his tambourine and singing *Mother-sov'reign, have you forgotten us? You no longer call all the clowns to you [...]* (Уж ты матушка, государыня, Не зови ты нас скоморохами [...]). The Old Grandfather (*Старый Дед*) arrives at court and the *skomorokh* pokes fun at him through immediately engaging in a question answer dialogue with him:

СКОМОРОХ

(подшучивая над ним; с напускным почтением)

Государь ты мой, родный дедушка,

Видно, много тебе лет будет?

СКМОРОКХ (*poking fun at him, with affected respect*)

Oh, my sire, my own dearest grandfather,

Do you know how long your life will be?

The second exchange between them comes during the tale which the Old Grandfather tells the Tsaritsa Militrisa. The tale concerns various animals that can be compared to the various classes and social status of people in Russia. During the recitation the *skomorokh* makes ironic comments:

<sup>393</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nicolai 1984. *Sadko. An Opera in Seven Scenes. Vocal Score*. Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp. Melville, N.Y.: 80-81 and English transl. from Philips Classics Productions, Germany 1994, cd booklet accompanying *Sadko* cd number 442 138-2: 74.

<sup>394</sup> *Ib.* score: 503-504; cd booklet: 194.

СТАРЫЙ ДЕД  
(Продолжает.)

Приходила лисица подьячиха,  
  
Подьячиха, казначеиха;  
Приходил скоморох горностаюшка,  
  
Приходил тут зайка смерд,  
Зайка бедненький, зайка серенький...

OLD GRANDFATHER

Then behind her the scrivener-fox  
arrived  
(The scrivener was the treasurer).  
And a clown-ermine came who was next  
in line,  
And a poor serf-rabbit, too.  
Oh, grey serf-rabbit, oh, poor serf-  
rabbit!

СКОМОРОХ  
Не кори ты мужика,  
Мужик господу свеча  
И царю прямой слуга!<sup>395</sup>

SKOMOROKH  
Don't disgrace the peasant's plight:  
He's to God a shining light,  
To the tsar a serving knight.<sup>396</sup>

The *skomorokh* understands the reference to the rabbit and underlines the social criticism. One again Rimsky-Korsakov portrays the traditional role of the *skomorokhi* as jesters.

In Act III of *The Snow Maiden* during the Tsar Berendey's celebrations in the forest, the *skomorokhi* present a dance as a part of the festivities.

#### 4.3 Church chant and the *Obikhod*

Pobedonostsev's concern about church singing was a public expression of views also held by others. The Archbishop of Kherson and Odessa, Nikanor, complained that in his diocese "*the rich, old, content-filled melodies according to the [eight] tones had been forgotten*" (старые многосодержательные напевы на глас забыты) and the "*Obi[k]hods of the Imperial Chapel are having a ruinous effect upon ancient church singing throughout Russia*" (обиходы Придворной капеллы действуют на всероссийское древнее пение губительно).<sup>397</sup> This was a collection of common hymns harmonized by Alexei Lvov and revised by Bakhmetev which it was compulsory to use throughout Russia. Prior to his appointment to the Court Kapella, Balakirev had already been in discussions with Pobedonostsev in 1881 concerning the harmonization of the *Obikhod* (The Book of Common Chants).<sup>398</sup>

<sup>395</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 2007. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.:* 45–46.

<sup>396</sup> Lyle Neff. *Op. cit.*

<sup>397</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1999. *Op.cit.:* xx (Russian text) and xxxii (English translation).

<sup>398</sup> *Ib.:* xxxi.

### The development of Russian Orthodox Church chant

In many books on Russian church music the focus has been on *znamenny* (знаменный) chant which is considered the basic chant form. The other forms which developed through the Middle Ages, *demestvenny* (демественный) and *putevoy* (путевой) chants, can be considered as developments from the *znamenny* central core.<sup>399</sup> Tatiana Vladyshevskaia compares the chants to icons:

The Russian chant, which corresponds to the spirituality of medieval Russian icon painting, avoided external effects and embellishments in favour of the depth and expression and feelings and thoughts that were contained in religious songs.<sup>400</sup>

The words of the Cherubic Hymn central to the Orthodox service emphasises this point: *Now lay aside all cares of this life* (Всякое ныне житейское отложим попечение).<sup>401</sup> In the period from the mid-eleventh century through to the initial period of the fourteenth century the foundations for singing in the Russian church can be found. At this period two types of liturgical singing existed *stolp* (столп) or *znamenny* chant which was a simple form whilst *kondakarian* (кондакарная) chant was more complex technically and melodically. Both had a staffless notation. The latter adhered more to a Byzantium style and appears to have had its base in Kiev. With the fall of Constantinople in 1204 and the Mogol invasion of 1257 and overthrow of Kiev, the spiritual base of the Russian church centred on Vladimir and Novgorod. Cyril, the Metropolitan of Kiev summoned the Council of Vladimir in 1274. Although not addressing the question of singing directly it appears that since no *kondakarian* manuscript was written and it was performed through memorised response, the simplicity of *znamenny* melodies was considered more acceptable.<sup>402</sup> The *znamenny* chant is made up of eight tones (octoechos) and make up the liturgical scale. There were also hymns which were sung to pattern melodies. These pattern melodies determined which type of hymn was performed at each stage of the service, the sticheron, kontaktion, troparion, hirmos or the communion hymn.<sup>403</sup> In the Russian Orthodox Church an eight tone week cycle is used with one tone being set for one week. *Znamenny* chant dominated up until the sixteenth century with new variations, *pervody*, being introduced up to around the eighteenth century. These variants were easily

<sup>399</sup> See discussion in von Gardner Johann 2000. *Russian Church Singing. Vol.2.* Transl. and ed. Vladimir Morosan. St Vladimir's Seminary Press: 230–237.

<sup>400</sup> Vladyshevskaia Tatiana 1991. *Op.cit.*: 14.

<sup>401</sup> For the words see, for instance, Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1999. *Op.cit.*: 3–10.

<sup>402</sup> For a detailed discussion see von Gardiner, Johann. *Op.cit.*: 145–147

<sup>403</sup> See Vladyshevskaia Tatiana. *Op.cit.*: 19. An excellent explanation of the mentioned terms is given in Morosan Vladimir (Ed.) 1991. *One Thousand Years of Russian Church Music: 988–1988. Series I, Volume 1.* Washington D.C, Musica Russica: 723–752.



incorporated since the *znamenny* chant structure was based on a number of unchanging melodic structures, *popevki*, which could be combined in different ways. The importance of singing and choral practise in the service can be seen from the numerous icons of the period.



**Pskov School**

**The Synaxis of the Virgin.** 14<sup>th</sup> Century. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

When Nikon became Patriarch of Moscow staff notation was introduced into church music and around this time polyphonic part-singing and three-part kant became widely used which was similar to a Western-style. In addition the language abuse of *khonomiya* was banned. This practise had effectively introduced a distortion between read and sung texts due to the mute nature of certain letters in the Russian language and related accentuation. Melodies were altered to fit the text. The older form of singing was continued by the Old Believers. By the beginning of the eighteenth century triadic harmony had supplanted all previous types of liturgical singing.<sup>404</sup>

The importance of singing in the church services can be discerned by the number of references made to it in the Stoglav Council. Particular reference is made to the liturgical practice of *mnogoglasie* (*многогласие*), “many-voicedness” which was to be discouraged since it shortened the service. The Council also decreed that schools should

<sup>404</sup> von Gardner. *Op. cit.*: 251.

be set up to teach liturgical singing, and reading in addition to writing. The singing had two aims, one was the memorising of hymns whilst the other was the ability to read musical notation and recognise melodies.<sup>405</sup>

Of his many reforms, Peter the Great abolished the Patriarchate in 1721 and replaced it by the Holy Governing Synod which effectively brought the Church under the control of the State and was modelled on the Swedish State control of the Lutheran Church. The Synod took responsibility for the first printed books of chants through an *ukaz* issued in June 1769. These chants were published between 1770 and 1772 in four volumes in square-note or Kievan notation in C clef and on a five line stave – *the Obikhod, Otkoikh, Hiemologian and Feasts in musical notation* (Обиход, Октоих, Ирмологий, and Праздники нотного пения). This covered all the melodies required for the year. The *Obikhod* was central since this covered the *znamenny* chants related to the daily order of service. Since the majority of churches did not have choirs this publication gave them the needed music for unison singing and became the authoritative version.<sup>406</sup>

It appears that the chants used in the Court Kapella were passed on orally through to the early nineteenth century when Alexander I commissioned the then director Dmytro Bortniansky to compile a setting of the liturgy to be used in the imperial churches. Just previous to this, towards the end of the eighteenth century, the *pridvorny* (придворный) or ‘court’ chant, essentially based on *znamenny* chant, developed. These were based on the existing chants but in a simplified form. The first of Bortniansky’s settings was the Divine Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom in two-parts and published in August 1814.<sup>407</sup> However, since he had studied in Italy, the settings still retained an Italian influence. His successor, Fyodor Lvov disliked the perpetuation of the long tradition of Italian composers and Italian-influenced composers in court. In an article published in *The Northern Bee* in 1831 he made his views public:

1. Russians are accustomed to simple church singing [...] the majority of people standing in church know the prayer and its chant and, from experience, can follow the voices and words of the prayer which are not distorted by the unexpected musical changes found in the Italian style;

<sup>405</sup> *Ib.*: 252–261. See also Емченко.Е.Б. *Op.cit.*: 261 and Kollmann.Jack Edward. *Op.cit.*: 251.

<sup>406</sup> Dunlop Carolyn. 2000. *The Russian Court Chapel Choir 1796-1917*. Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers: 63. There are also a number of articles on the *znamenny* chant also touching on the relation with folk music in: Swan Alfred 1940. The *Znamenny* Chant of the Russian Church – Part 1. *The Musical Quarterly* 26 (2): 232–243 and Part II. *The Musical Quarterly* 26 (3): 365–380.

<sup>407</sup> Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 64.



2. Italian music is not understood by the common people [...] many of the common people have left the church, no longer finding in it the singing to which they have become accustomed from infancy;
3. It is clear that Italian music, being more varied in its harmonic structure, often degenerates into a theatrical style, captivating the educated listener with its charm and leading him unwittingly from the reverence and the spirit of the prayer, while repelling the uneducated [listener].<sup>408</sup>

Lvov recommended that the Kapella should publish a revised *Obikhod*. The Ministry of the Imperial Court appointed Pyotr Ivanovich Turchaninov to the post of precentor on Lvov's recommendation and, together with a committee familiar with chant singing, he set about revising the chant melodies to more conform with the 1772 Synod approved versions. This formed the basis of the new *Obikhod*. This eventually resulted in the publication of the *Cycle of simple chant used at the Imperial Court since ancient times* (Круг простого церковного пения издавна употребляемого при Высочайшем Дворе) in 1830.<sup>409</sup> The main criticism of this work was that it did not cover the whole liturgical year and many important chants were missing. In essence there was little difference to that of Bortniansky's arrangements apart from the omission of bar lines and time signatures. Although this was set on two staves, alto and bass, when a choir of sufficient size was available it was sung in four-part harmonisation with the soprano and tenor improvising. Lvov's son Aleksei commented on this:

In a full choir sopranos and tenors will sing at will, causing such disparity that the same chant is performed at different speeds, causing a certain embarrassment; the tenors too, not having a fixed line, indulge in various florid outbursts which are completely inappropriate to church music.<sup>410</sup>

Aleksei Lvov succeeded his father at the Kapella in 1837 and retained the post until 1861. Although having embarked on a military career and attaining the rank of General and Aide-de-camp to Nicholas I,<sup>411</sup> he was also an accomplished violinist.<sup>412</sup> It was in 1846 that Count Alderberg, the Minister of the Imperial Court, gave him an instruction to harmonize all the sacred works sung in churches throughout the year. This resulted in eleven volumes, the last of which was published in 1859. He particularly paid attention to the rhythm and text of the original chant melody, publishing his views in a pamphlet

<sup>408</sup> Lvov F.P. 1831. *Tserkovnaya muzyka. O obrazovanii drevnago tserkovnogo peniya* (Church music. Concerning the teaching of the ancient chant singing) Северная пчела 97, 4. Translation in Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 67.

<sup>409</sup> *Ib.*: 67–69.

<sup>410</sup> *Ib.*: 69.

<sup>411</sup> Taruskin Richard 1997. *Op.cit.*: 200.

<sup>412</sup> Swann Alfred 1973. *Russian Music and its Sources in Chant and Folk-Song*. New York, W.W. Norton & Company, Inc: 63.

entitled *Regarding free or asymmetrical rhythm* (О свободном или несимметричном ритме) in 1858. His main point was that the music must enhance the words and not distort them. The chants used in the imperial churches were divided into those before the beginning of the eighteenth century and published in the 1772 Synod chant books, and those subsequent to these that have bars and are not based on the eight church modes i.e. contain accidentals. In the latter scheme the music was dominant and the text distorted to match the rigidity introduced by a barred configuration. Lvov maintained that the harmonisations should only have bar lines which accorded with the text phrasing and without time signatures.<sup>413</sup> As can be imagined the reception to the arrangements varied. The simplicity of the arrangements were welcomed by the public and some of the church, however, Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, the critic Odoevsky and the specialist on Russian church music, Dmitry Razumovsky, later Professor of Church Music at the Moscow Conservatoire, were critical since the harmonic language of Western music had been lost. A particular comment of Philaret concerned court music per se:

The court music has its own acknowledged merit and reputation. But one who knows and loves the ancient church music can say that [although] some parts of court music have retained their closeness to the spirit and character of ancient church music, others have undergone change at the hands of arrangers, and not for the better.<sup>414</sup>

It was the new version of the *Obikhod*, published in 1848, that was sent by Imperial decree to all dioceses with instructions that it be used whenever members of the Imperial family were present.<sup>415</sup>

It was during Nikolai Bakhmetev's direction of the Kapella that Razumovsky's three-volume work dealing with liturgical chant was published between 1867 and 1869, *Church chants in Russia: an attempt at a historic-technical exposition* (Церковное пение в России: опыт историко-технического изложения). The first volume dealt with early liturgical singing, the second with Russian chant and the last with polyphonic music in the Russian Orthodox Church. It was at this time that an interpretational dispute arose concerning the extent of the *Kapella* authority over liturgical publications. Together with Razumovsky there were a number of leading figures in Russian society including Stasov, Lomakin and Odoevsky who favoured a return to the simple melodies

<sup>413</sup> See Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 71–72, Morosan Vladimir (Ed.) 1991. *Op.cit.*: liv and Morosan Vladimir 1986. *Choral Performance in Pre-revolutionary Russia*. Ann Arbor, MI, UMI Research Press: 78–81.

<sup>414</sup> Razumovsky D.V. *Tserkovnoe penie v Rossii* (Church singing in Russia) vol. 2, 249. Quoted in Dunlop Carolyn. *Op. cit.*: 74.

<sup>415</sup> Morosan Vladimir 1986. *Op.cit.*: 80–81.

approved and published by the Synod in 1772. It was maintained that the settings published by Nikolai Potulov in 1873 were merely simplified harmonisations of the more complex *Obikhod* of the court and in refusing their publication the *Kapella* was abusing its power. This was also seen to full effect when Bakhmetev revised his predecessors work making it even more chromatic and had it replaced by Imperial order in 1882.<sup>416</sup>

#### 4.4 Rimsky-Korsakov and the Orthodox Church

Prior to the establishment of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862, the Court Chapel Choir or *Kapella* was the only institution providing specialised musical education which included instrumental performance, music theory and choral training. The choristers' main function was to provide music at the liturgical services of the imperial churches which included the chapels at the Winter Palace, Peterhof and Tsarskoe Selo, the Cathedral at the Peter and Paul Fortress and the Anichikov Palace. In addition to this the choir participated in court events such as balls and, when needed, in concerts of the Philharmonic Society.<sup>417</sup> From 1816 the *Kapella* also sanctioned the publication and performance of all religious music in Russia. Possibly as a result of his experiences in the West, Peter the Great took a great interest in the choir and, in a similar way to the establishment of orchestral music at court, ensured that the choristers were of the highest quality. Whilst still in Italy Dmitry Bortniansky was requested by the Director of the Imperial Theatres, Ivan Elagin, to return to St. Petersburg where he was appointed *Kapellmeister* of the *Kapella*. It is Bortniansky who dedicated his life to developing the musical abilities of the *Kapella* and the repertoire up to his death in 1825.<sup>418</sup> Carolyn Dunlop in her book *The Russian Court Chapel Choir 1796–1917* gives an excellent description of the Directors, the functions and development of the *Kapella*.<sup>419</sup>

On the accession of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> various major changes occurred and from 1883 the *Kapella* was granted an independent status as an educational establishment. At this time there was a reorganisation of the administrative functions. Count Sergei Dmitrievich Sheremetev was appointed to the post of *Начальник* (head) of whom Rimsky-Korsakov wrote “was not even a dilettante in the art of music...”<sup>420</sup> This function was to liaise with the Ministry of the Imperial Court; artistic matters were to be dealt with by the

<sup>416</sup> See Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 75–78 “Nikolai Bakhmetev and Court Chant” for further discussion on this controversy.

<sup>417</sup> *Ib.*: 1.

<sup>418</sup> Findeizen Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 203–204; Morosan Vladimir 1986. *Op.cit.*: 69–73.

<sup>419</sup> Dunlop Carolyn. *Op. cit.*

<sup>420</sup> MML, 264.

управляющий (director) and помощник управляющего (assistant director). Balakirev was appointed Director and Rimsky-Korsakov his assistant on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1883. It can be assumed that it was both Balakirev's and Rimsky-Korsakov's close association with Tertii Filippov concerning folk songs, who was also a Senator and Imperial Comptroller and had influence in church circles, that laid the ground for the appointments.<sup>421</sup> With their appointments there was also a change of musical direction since both their predecessors, Lvov and Bakhmetev, had studied under German and Austrian tutors.

The task of the composers was very wide-ranging and included full responsibility for the choir, their performances and repertoire and musical education. With his proven background in pedagogical affairs in the Conservatoire, Rimsky-Korsakov took over the education function of the Kapella. This has suffered under the previous director Nikolai Bakhmetev. At the time of his appointment, although recognised as a competent amateur performer, it was for his administrative abilities and military background, and together with the support of his predecessor Alexsi Lvov, that he secured the post. His dismissal in January 1883 came as no surprise since his competence was already under question in court circles.<sup>422</sup> During the time of his depression, starting in 1871, Balakirev turned to the Russian Orthodox faith and became obsessive in his pursuance of it. Rimsky-Korsakov describes a totally changed composer in his diary entry for the autumn 1875. He comments on his changed eating habits, his concern over the smallest insects and his deep knowledge of the church artefacts and familiarity with the church officials.<sup>423</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov's view of the church was essentially based on his childhood experiences. His reminiscences of childhood are of hearing the singing in the convent and the monastery:

I was fond of some of the Cherubim choruses and other compositions by Bortnyansky; also of his concertos *Gloria in Excelsis*, and of the plain chant *Benedice, anima mea; Cruci tuæ; Lux silens* – after vespers. Church singing, amid the beautiful surroundings of the archmandrite's divine service, produced a deeper impression on me than secular music, although, generally speaking, I was not an impressionable boy [...] My mother, too, sang some Russian songs. I loved these songs, but heard them comparatively seldom

<sup>421</sup> See Орлова А.А. Римский-Корсаков В.Н. 1971. *Страницы жизни Н.А. Римского-Корсакова. Летопись жизни и творчества. Выпуск 2. 1867–1893.* (Wanderings in the life of N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov. A chronicle of his life and works. Vol.2. 1867–1893) Ленинград, Издательство «Музыка». Ленинград, Издательство «Музыка»: 211; Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 36; Rakhmanova Marina 1999. *Op.cit.*: xxxiii.

<sup>422</sup> Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 36.

<sup>423</sup> MML: 169–172.

from the people, as we lived in town, where I none the less had the opportunity, year in, year out, to witness the “seeing out” of Butter-week with the procession and effigy.<sup>424</sup>

As a result he approached the music with a fresh, unbiased view. As with all his studies in music he approached it in a dedicated fashion. During his time in Moscow for the coronation of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> he visited Razumovsky and various cathedrals and monasteries to acquaint himself with the ancient chant. Already in July 1883 he writes to Kruglikov:

I sit composing the *Obikhod*, all around me all sorts of Potoolovs, Razumovskys, and publications of the Holy Synod. At present the entire Vespers is ready in single-voice form and presently it will be harmonized. The Rubrics as I know it know [...] I have turned into a sexton altogether. Only I fear that M.A. [Balakirev] may begin to tangle matters too much, for some snarl is already on [...].<sup>425</sup>

As indicated, the composer’s problems revolved around the vacillations of Balakirev who was continually changing his mind concerning whether single-lined versions or harmonised chants would be the standard. As a result Rimsky-Korsakov turned his interests more towards the teaching aspects. Later in 1888 he did, however, publish a new four-part harmonization *Пение при Всенощном бдении древних напевов* (The singing of ancient chants during the All-Night Vigil). He had a preference for the simple harmonisations of Potulov and Razumovsky. This new approach found favour with musicians and the church, however, since most churches already had Bakhmetev’s version they did not invest in the new. Following the retirement of Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov, the Kapella’s interest in new harmonisations of chants declined.<sup>426</sup> Although impressed with the running of and standard of the choir it was the instrumental classes for the boys which Rimsky-Korsakov found:

[...] beneath all criticism [...] But the illiterate boys, beaten without mercy as they were uneducated, and taught the violin, the cello, or the piano only after a fashion, they, as a rule, met with a sorry fate after the loss of their voices. They were provided with a certain amount of money due to them and were dismissed from the Chapel to the four quarters of the globe – ignorant and unaccustomed to work. From their ranks came scribes, common servants, provincial singers, and – in the best of cases – ignorant precentors and petty officials. Many of them took to drink and went to the devil.<sup>427</sup>

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<sup>424</sup>MML: 6–7.

<sup>425</sup>MML: 267 n6.

<sup>426</sup>Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 79 and Morosan Vladimir 1986. *Op.cit.*: 98–99.

<sup>427</sup>MML: 265.

He later comments that the entire system for instruction in both the instrumental as well as precentor classes established by Aleksei Lvov in 1857 was useless and needed a total revision. This was the initial work Rimsky-Korsakov embarked on which resulted in:

- *Draft regulations of the Court Kapella Music School* (Проект устава музыкального училища при Придворной Певческой Капеллы), summer, 1883. Later ratified by the Ministry of the Imperial Court;
- *Regulations and detailed programme of the Instrumental Class of the Court Kapella* (Правила и подробная программа инструментального класса Придворной Капеллы) which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1884;
- *Programme of the Precentors' Class at the Court Kapella* (Программа регентского класса при Придворной певческой Капелле) which was approved by the Ministry of the Imperial Court on 17<sup>th</sup> March 1884.

The last was a five year course similar in content to that at the Conservatoire. In essence with these regulations Rimsky-Korsakov addressed the questions of entrance examinations, musical requirements, general education and the rights and privileges of the pupils on completion of their studies.<sup>428</sup> The composer initially taught the Instrumental Class and when Joseph Hunke retired in 1884 he also took on the teaching of harmony and counterpoint. It was at this time that, through discussions with Anatoly Liadov, he conceived the idea of writing a textbook with a totally new approach to teaching harmony and which he subsequently tested on his Chapel pupils with great success.

Essentially, Lyadov's system was an outgrowth of his professor Y.I. Johansen's system, and mine of Lyadov's. Four scales were taken as the foundation of harmony: major and minor natural, and major and minor harmonic. The first exercises consisted in harmonizing the upper melodies and basses with the aid of the principle triads alone: the tonic, the dominant, and the subdominant and their inversions. With so scant a stock of chords, the rules of part-writing proved very accurate. Through exercises in harmonizing melodies, with the aid of only the principal steps, the pupil's sense of rhythmic and harmonic balance and tendency towards the tonic were developed. Later to the principal triads there were gradually added accessory ones, the dominant chord of the seventh and the other chords of the seventh. Figured bass was entirely done away with; on the other hand, to exercises in the harmonization of melodies and basses was added independent writing of half-periods from the same harmonic material. Later followed modulation, the science of which was based on the relationship of keys and the modulational plan, and

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<sup>428</sup> Dunlop, Carolyn C. *Op. cit.* gives the regulations in detail in English translation. See Appendices 2-5.

not on the external connection (through common tones) of chords foreign to one another. In this way modulation proved ever natural and logical. After modulation followed suspensions, passing notes, subsidiary notes, and all other devices of figuration. Finally came the science of chromatically transformed chords and false progressions.<sup>429</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov worked on this book entitled *Practical Harmony Textbook* during the summer and autumn of 1884. He sent the first issue of the book to Kruglikov in October of the same year commenting in his letter that it was “commenced together with Lyadov and finished by me”. In the preface to the first Russian edition in 1886, in addition to a summary of the above he comments that:

Ознакомившись основательно с таким учебником, ученик все-таки не знает, [...] как сочинить прелюдию в несколько тактов и как применить модуляционные средства.<sup>430</sup>

Having thoroughly acquainted himself with such a manual [previously existing manuals], the student [...] is unable to write a few bars of a prelude, does not know how to apply the rules for modulation [...].<sup>431</sup>

The result of the improvements in the standard of the instrumentalists led to the Tsar requesting that they train musicians for the Court Orchestra. In addition whilst on a visit to the Kapella in February 1886 he noted that the Instrumental Class orchestra only consisted of strings<sup>432</sup> and requested this to be expanded to include wind instruments. This was put into effect in the summer 1887.<sup>433</sup>

As can be seen from his letter to Kruglikov in 1883, the relationship between Rimsky-Korsakov and Balakirev was far from easy. In his autobiography he gives one of his reasons for resigning as having been at the Kapella for ten years and already in government service for over thirty which qualified him for a pension. However, he goes on to say:

The relations between Balakirev and me had become so strained, affairs at the Chapel were managed so stupidly, the entire personnel at the Chapel—except the music-instructors—was so distasteful to me, the whole atmosphere of the Chapel was so permeated with gossip and partiality, that it was quite natural on my part to be eager to get out [...].

<sup>429</sup> MML: 272 and n13.

<sup>430</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н. 1937. *Практический учебник гармонии*. (Practical Harmony Textbook). Москва, Государственное музыкальное издательство: 3.

<sup>431</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, N 1930. *Practical Manual of Harmony*. Trans. Joseph Achron. New York: Carl Fischer Inc., Forward.

<sup>432</sup> This was because of financial constraints.

<sup>433</sup> Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 39.

However, on discussion with Balakirev he gave his reason as illness.<sup>434</sup> He finally tendered his resignation on November 3<sup>rd</sup> (15<sup>th</sup>), 1893. Balakirev retired in December of the following year, 1894. Shortly after this the Minister of the Imperial Court, Count Vorontsov-Dashkov suggested to Rimsky-Korsakov that he assume responsibility for the Kapella, hinting also that he was aware of the real reason for his resignation. The composer, however, declined the offer since he enjoyed his own freedom after long service to the court which now gave him time for his own composition. He assured the Count that if anyone was able to get on with Balakirev in his present state it would be him.<sup>435</sup>

As the former teacher of Rimsky-Korsakov, Balakirev never really accepted his transference of allegiance to the Conservatoire, although he had encouraged it in order to have a 'spy in the enemy camp'. Consequently he was particularly critical of Rimsky-Korsakov's early compositions at the Kapella. Balakirev's disappointment was recorded by Kruglikov:

The *Kheruvimskaya* [Song of the Cherubim] in F major is wonderful and, frankly is his only success to date. In the summer he wrote more of them [sacred pieces]; but they are all unimportant – each of them is simply worse than the next.<sup>436</sup>

As mentioned previously, it was Balakirev who was erratic in what he really wanted from Rimsky-Korsakov. However, the composer persevered and in 1884 Balakirev approved his eight settings of the liturgy (Op. 22) which were published in a collection together with works by Evstafii Azeev: *Collection of musical sacred compositions by Rimsky-Korsakov and Azeev* (Собрание музыкально духовных сочинений Римского-Корсакова и Азеева). These became very popular as seen from Kruglikov's letter to Rimsky-Korsakov, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1884:

The sacred compositions by yourself and Azeev are widely used in Moscow. Church choirs who perform them notify the papers that in such and such a church the new sacred works of Korsakov or Azeev will be sung by such and such a choir. Never before have such notices appeared about some church service or other.<sup>437</sup>

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<sup>434</sup> MML: 335.

<sup>435</sup> MML: 351

<sup>436</sup> Lyapunova, A.S. 1967. *Mily Alekseevich Balakirev: Letopis' zhizni i tvorchestva* (Mily Alekseevich Balakirev: Chronicle of his life and works). Leningrad. Quoted in Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 120.

<sup>437</sup> Zorina, A.P. and Konopleva.I.A. (ed.)1981. *Rimsky-Korsakov. Polnoe sobranie sochinenii: Literaturnye proizvedeniya i perepiska* (Rimsky-Korsakov. Complete collection of compositions: Literary works and correspondence) vols 8a, 8b. Moscow. Quoted in Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 120.



The contribution of Rimsky-Korsakov's liturgical work was clearly underlined by the composer and critic Nikolai Komaneiskii's article in the *Русская музыкальная газета* (Russian Musical Gazette) in 1908:

Сочинения Р. –Корсакова изъ Литургіи не заключаютъ никакого интереса новизны мысли или стилиа, красоты мелодіи и гармоніи, или захватывающаго настроенія. Напротивъ того, сочиненія его, составляющія вторую серію, изданія 1886 г [...] имѣютъ громадное значеніе, т.к. положили основу современному направленію церковной музыки. Всѣ сочиненія этой серіи написаны на мелодіи, заимствованныя изъ нотныхъ церковныхъ книгъ, преимщественно Кіевсквогъ распѣва. Въ нихъ введена обычная старинная музыкальная форма, зарѣвы исполняемые канонархомъ или головщикомъ, присоединеніе прочихъ голосовъ контрапунктически постепенно, или подхватомъ массою. Отдѣльныя партіи прерываются, либо хоровою массою, либо пѣніемъ однимъ голосомъ, solo. Различныя стерени сгущенія и наслоенія голосовыхъ красокъ сообщаютъ этимъ церковнымъ пѣснямъ колоритъ чисто русскаго народнаго хора. Въ особенноти подчеркивается характеръ массоваго простецкаго народнаго пѣнія параллелизмомъ голосовъ, не долускаемымъ теоріей европейской музыки, иногда черзчуръ грубыми м некрасивыми ходами, теріями въ басовомъ голосѣ.<sup>438</sup>

The compositions of Rimsky-Korsakov of the Liturgy do not end with any interesting novel ideas or styles, beautiful melodies and harmonies or gripping moods. On the contrary, his compositions put together as the second series and printed in 1886 [...] are of great significance as they laid down the foundation of the current trend in church music. All the pieces in this series are written on melodies borrowed from church music books, mainly of Kievan chant.<sup>439</sup> They take the usual ancient musical form, the chants are performed by the acting lead kanonarkh or glavshchnik, gradually other voices enter contrapuntally as the chant is taken up by the whole choir. The individual sections are interrupted either by the whole choir or by the singing of a single voice, solo. The various textures and layering of vocal colours give this church singing something of the colour of a Russian folk chorus. In particular the character of folk song is emphasized by voices moving in parallel which doesn't tolerate the crude and ugly movements in thirds in the bass according to European theory.<sup>440</sup>

A good example of this is the arrangement of *Чертог твой* (Thy Bridal Chamber) which was published in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Собрание духовно-музыкальных переложений* (Collection of sacred musical arrangements) in 1866, Op. 22b. This follows a folk-song idiom with a single voice introduction being joined by the other voices, bass doubling and harmony based dominantly on thirds.

<sup>438</sup> Komaneiskii Nikolai 1908. Значеніе Н.А. Римскаго-Корсакова въ русской церковной музыке. (The Significance of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov on Russian Church Music). *Русская музыкальная газета*. Москва, 840.

<sup>439</sup> A regional variant of *znamennyi* chant which developed in the late sixteenth century.

<sup>440</sup> Komaneiskii Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: Transl. Dunlop, Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 121 and J.Nelson.

# Чертог Твой [Киевского роспева]

Медленно. [Adagio.]

Soprano

Alto

Tenor *p solo*

Bass

Cher - tóg Tvoy vǐzh - du, Spá - še moy,  
Чер - тог Твой виж - ду, Спа - се мой,

5 *pp tutti*

и - kra - shén - nǐy, i o - dězh - dŭ  
у - кра - шен - ный, и о - деж - ды

*pp tutti*

и - kra - shén - nǐy, i o - dězh - dŭ  
у - кра - шен - ный, и о - деж - ды

*pp [tutti]*

и - kra - shén - nǐy, i o - dězh - dŭ  
у - кра - шен - ный, и о - деж - ды

9 *cresc.* *p*

не í - mam, da vñi - du v oñ. Pro - sŭe -  
не и - мам, да вни - ду в онь. Про - све -

*cresc.* *p*

не í - mam, da vñi - du v oñ. Pro - sŭe -  
не я - мам, да вни - ду в онь. Про - све -

*cresc.* *p*

не í - mam, da vñi - du v oñ. Pro - sŭe -  
не и - мам, да вни - ду в онь. Про - све -

*p tutti*

Pro - sŭe -  
Про - све -

The comments of Komaneiskii are very significant since it shows that even in liturgical singing Rimsky-Korsakov was considering how to compose music which the ordinary church-goer would find familiar and the church could also provide without the embellishments of a court environment.

It was in the same article that Komaneiskii also noted both Rimsky-Korsakov's and Tchaikovsky's attitude towards censorship. Rimsky-Korsakov's views concerning total censorship is outlined in a letter to him in which he states: *I always remain inclined to firmly oppose whatever censorship and that includes religious music* (Я всегда остаюсь склоннымъ возставать противъ какой-либо цензуры и въ томъ числѣ противъ духовно-музыкальной). The article ends by drawing attention to how they feel about where the 'heavy hand' (*черномора кулаками*) of censorship will lead.

Since Bortniansky's directorship and up to 1883 the Kapella had total censorship of all sacred music, works composed for ceremonial occasions and the musical activities of churches. Following his death, the new directors essentially ensured that it was their compositions that became accepted. Bakhmetev had ensured through an *ukaz* issued in 1869 that only those compositions approved by the Kapella could be used during worship.<sup>441</sup> The Synod's views concerning the director's power, which concurred with those of both musicians and composers was expressed by Prince Odoevsky who saw their primary aim as:

not to safeguard the integrity or quality of such publications, but rather to impose a particular style of church music on as many ecclesiastical establishments as possible, thus strengthening the Kapella's power and income.<sup>442</sup>

However, it was the trial of strength between Tchaikovsky and Bakhmetev concerning a setting of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom that led to change. Since the aim of Tchaikovsky was for a concert performance of the work, his manuscript was sent to the Moscow Office of Sacred Censorship which gave its approval since it adhered to the text of the Holy Synod. Since Bakhmetev had not given the Kapella approval copies of the liturgy were confiscated on the basis that the style was operatic and consequently did not exhibit the spiritual values of the Church. Legal proceedings were instigated by the publishers and Tchaikovsky which led to a Senate ruling in their favour. In future, the publication of sacred works for concert performance no longer required Kapella

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<sup>441</sup>See, for instance, Tchaikovsky's letter to Nadezhda von Meck dated 30<sup>th</sup> April 1878 in Tchaikovsky Modeste. *Op.cit.*: 298.

<sup>442</sup>Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 98.

approval.<sup>443</sup> Whilst Balakirev continued the previous censorship over works intended for a liturgical setting, Rimsky-Korsakov's views remained adamant and were supported by action as Komaneiskii's article indicates:

Когда былъ поднять вопросъ о цензурѣ нотъ со словами духовнаго содержанія установленной тайно духовнымъ вѣдомствомъ, Р. –Корсакова подписался однимъ изъ первыхъ подъ протестомъ поданнымъ композиторами въ Св. Правит. Синодъ.<sup>444</sup>

When the question concerning the censorship of music with words of a religious content arose and with the prescribed regulations of the religious department, which had been made in secret, R.-Korsakov was one of the first to put his signature to protests by composers to the Holy Synod.<sup>445</sup>

#### 4.5. Russian spirituality in Rimsky-Korsakov's composition

From Yastrebtsev's conversations with Rimsky-Korsakov in 1894 and 1895 it is possible to discern interesting facts concerning the composer's background, his reflections on it, and its relevance to religion. In Yastrebtsev's notes for the 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1894 he writes:

I learnt something very interesting – that Rimsky-Korsakov's paternal grandmother was a priest's daughter, whom his grandfather abducted, and his maternal grandmother a simple peasant woman, a serf who belonged to Skaryatin, a landowner of the Maloarkhangelsk District, Orlov Province.

“Without these ‘regenerative influences,’ “ declared Rimsky-Korsakov, “we probably would have degenerated, but now, at least, there's a legitimate justification for my passion for everything pertaining to religious rites and ceremonies, for ‘cassocks’ and the priesthood, for these Christian holy men of today; and finally, for *khorovody*, and *troitskie* and *rusal'nye* songs. So, you see, that's where I inherited my ideas (atavism) and my wholehearted love for everything relating to real, everyday life, to the folk. Therein, most likely, lies the secret and the reason for the appearance of my *Easter Overture* and my *Kupala khorovody*.”<sup>446</sup>

Irrespective of his position in the Kapella Rimsky-Korsakov also wrote secular music in which he used his acquired knowledge of the liturgy.

<sup>443</sup> See Dunlop Carolyn. *Op.cit.*: 98–100 and Tchaikovsky Modeste. *Op.cit.*: 347.

<sup>444</sup> Komaneiskii, Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 837.

<sup>445</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>446</sup> Yastrebtsev.V.V. *Op.cit.*: 80-81.

With respect to his opera's it is an interesting fact that of Gogol's *Dikanka* stories three are seasonal tales, *On the Evening before Ivan Kupala* (Вечер накануне Ивана Купала) know as 'St. John's Eve', *May Night* and *The Night Before Christmas*. Of Gogol's *Dikanka* stories, Rimsky-Korsakov wrote a major opera on the last two and the festival of Kupala is essential to *Mlada*. All three interweave both the Christian and pagan elements. With respect to his operas, in general, he said: "Say what you will, the music aside, my operas are in essence very religious, for in them I'm either worshipping nature or extolling the worship of it."<sup>447</sup> A more detailed examination of his operas reveals the truth of this statement.

### The Maid of Pskov

Already in his first opera Rimsky-Korsakov introduces a znamenny chant-based leitmotif for Ivan the Terrible, which he discusses with Yastrebtsev, "He derived it he said from the singing of the monks in the Tikhvin Monastery of Our Lady and the znamenny chant of the type.



448

This motif from the theme of Ivan the Terrible, and also from the folk tune Slava (in minor)



449

<sup>447</sup> *Ib.*: 124.

<sup>448</sup> *Ib.*: 438

<sup>449</sup> *Ib.*: 438 and *The Maid of Pskov. Piano Score. Op.cit.*: 201.

The theme first appears in Act I at mark 56 when Prince Yuri Tokmakov refers to Olga's father: *Yes. We know not who fathered her* (Вот что...А отца не знаем). In Rimsky-Korsakov's re-orchestrations of the opera it is noticeable that the part of Tsar Ivan is strengthened and theatrical sense developed. As Gerald Abraham notes concerning the leitmotif:

In the First Act, when Tokmakov and Matuta are talking about Olga, the Prince's crucial confession, 'But we don't know her father...', is completely thrown away. The meaning of the Tsar's theme here is not yet apparent to the audience, but the overture has already told them that this theme has *some* tremendous significance; yet played like this on a single clarinet its appearance here might easily pass unnoticed. There is no fear of its passing unnoticed in the final version, played by all the violins tremolo, plus clarinets and cor anglais, intensified by its partial mirror-image in the cellos, supported by the weight of full horn and bassoon harmony and brought up from *pp* in a *crescendo molto*.<sup>450</sup>

Although having been dismissive of Wagner's use of leitmotif in the early 1880's, since to him they appeared as 'military signals', by his definitive re-orchestration of *The Maid of Pskov* between 1881 and 1894 he had already appreciated their value in *The Ring*, for instance.<sup>451</sup>

In 1877 following his extensive studies in counterpoint Rimsky-Korsakov re-wrote numerous sections of the opera. This new version, the second revision, was completed the following year. In Act III this included a short entr'act in the forest with pilgrims singing the ancient 'Hymn of Alexey the Man of God'. In his autobiography it appears that Balakirev suggested this insertion since the action takes place close to the Pyechorsky Monastery and also because it appeared in Filippov's collection who, at that time, had been working with both composers on folk song arrangements.<sup>452</sup> In 1878 this was published as a concert version Op. 20 by Bessel in 1895 and deleted from the final version of Act III.

### May Night

Although the setting was linked to a church holiday, Gogol was not specific and hence gave it a double title *May Night or The Drowned Maiden*. Whilst "May Night" refers to a night after Easter, the second title, "The Drowned Maiden" links the story to ancient beliefs connected with the *rusalka week* (русальная неделя) when the water nymphs,

<sup>450</sup> Abraham Gerald 1968. *Op.cit.*: 58–73.

<sup>451</sup> MML: 240–241.

<sup>452</sup> See MML: 175–180.



try to entice young men to play with them and draw them down into a watery grave.<sup>453</sup> The opera setting was changed to coincide with the traditions associated with the week preceding Trinity (*Троица*). Rimsky-Korsakov was concerned that the music related to the ancient agrarian-based pagan culture was disappearing and so in the opera he directly linked the folklore elements to the events in the Christian calendar.<sup>454</sup>

Act 1 starts with the folk song *А мы просо сеяли* (We have sown the millet), a spring *khorovod*. Whilst looking at the sky, Rimsky-Korsakov quotes Hannah's description of the stars being the window's opened by the angels and shining on them and how God descends to earth to take part in the Easter celebrations:

То не Ангелы ли Божьи вдруг окошки открыли въ свѣтлыхъ домикахъ своихъ и на насъ глядятъ, глядятъ оттуда [...] И съ неба Богъ по немъ на землю предъ свѣтлымъ праздникомъ снисходить.<sup>455</sup>

The angels of God open the windows of their bright homes and look down on us [...] God descends from heaven to the earth and shows his light at our celebration.<sup>456</sup>

Gogol underlines the Christian and pagan association, not used by the composer, by Levko adding:

[...] у Бога есть длинная лестница от неба до самой земли. Ее становят перед светлым воскресением святые архангелы; и как только бог ступит на первую ступень, все нечистые духи полетят стремглав и кучами попадают в пекло, и оттого на Христов праздник ни одного злого духа не бывает на земле.<sup>457</sup>

God has a ladder reaching from heaven right down to earth. The holy archangels put it down before Easter Sunday, and as soon as God steps on the first rung, all the evil spirits fall headlong and sink in heaps down to hell. And that is why at Christ's festival there isn't one evil spirit on the earth.<sup>458</sup>

This concept can be seen to occur in Act III where the wicked step-mother is revealed and dragged down to the bottom of the pond. In the Finale, in a slow passage reminiscent of a church chant, Levko and Hannah pray that God welcomes Pannochka

<sup>453</sup> See, for instance, Пропп В.Я. 1995. *Русские аграрные праздники* (Russian Agrarian Festivals). Санкт-Петербург, Издательство "Азбука", Издательский центр "Терра": 141–142 and Warner Elizabeth. *Op.cit.*: 42–44.  
<sup>454</sup> MML: 207–208.

<sup>455</sup> *May Night. Piano score. Op.cit.*: Act 1, No.3 Дуеть – Duet.

<sup>456</sup> Transl. J. Nelson

<sup>457</sup> Гоголь Н.В. *Op.cit.*: 57.

<sup>458</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 73.

into heaven: Give her God the heavenly kingdom, Give radiance to Pannochka O God  
(Дай тебе, Боже, царство небесное, Дай тебе, Боже, светлая панночка!).<sup>459</sup>

**Ргг**  
**ГАННА.**  
*HANNA.*  
*KANNA.*

*p* Дай те-бѣ, Бо-же, цар-ство не-бес-но-е,  
*E - wi - ge Ru - he, e - wi - ge Se - lig - keit*  
*Que Dieu lui fas - se paix é - ter - nel - le,*

**ЛЕВКО.**  
*LEVKO.*  
*LEVKO.*

*p* Дай те-бѣ, Бо-же, цар-ство не-бес-но-е,  
*E - wi - ge Ru - he, e - wi - ge Se - lig - keit*  
*Que Dieu lui fas - se paix é - ter - nel - le,*

*p* Арпа. *pp trem.*

*p* Дай те-бѣ, Бо-же, свѣт-ла-я пан-ноч-ка!  
*ge - be der Him - mel, lieb - li - ches Fräulein, dir!*  
*Que Dieu lui fas - se paix é - ter - nel - le!*

*p* Дай те-бѣ, Бо-же, свѣт-ла-я пан-ноч-ка!  
*ge - be der Him - mel, Lieb - li - ches Fräulein, dir!*  
*Que Dieu lui fas - se paix é - ter - nel - le!*

**ПИСАРЬ.**  
*SCHREIBER. LE SCRIBE.*

**ГОЛОВА.**  
*ALT. LE MAIRE.*

*p* Вы бр.  
*Aus - i*  
*Oui c'*

**Corno Solo.**  
*p* Арпа. *pp trem.*

<sup>459</sup> May Night. Piano score. Op.cit.: Act 3, No.15 Финаль-Finale at Rгг.





In Russian traditions there is a strange interweaving into the merrymaking of the Shrovetide motifs dealing with the dead. The primitive people believed that with nature coming to life again after winter their dead kinsmen would rise again and that the soul of the departed could commune with the living. However, this could only occur if magic was used. People brought eggs to the cemetery, especially fried eggs which were a symbol of life and rebirth, and the bliny, a representation of the sun, for instance. After tearful lamentations they would eat and drink and be merry in the hope that the departed would do the same. The related festival of *Maslenitsa*, originally to celebrate the vernal equinox, was a week-long carnival. Originally this was held in honour of *Veles* (or *Volos*) a pagan god which was represented by a bear or wood-goblin but also associated with cattle and farming. Although the Church condemned the festivals they also tried to adapt the pagan ceremony to its own purpose. Volos became Saint Vlasiy, who in Russian icons is surrounded by cows and sheep and became the patron saint of cattle.<sup>461</sup> Whilst the journey to the cemetery represented a leave-taking from dead ancestors and forgiveness of sins, it also became customary for people to bring pancakes (*bliny*) to St. Vlasiy's icon during the week of festivities to encourage him to bless them with a good harvest and healthy livestock. The previous traditions, however, persisted and note of them was recorded with distain by the Church.

The week's celebration of *Maslenitsa* ends with the burning of Lady *Maslenitsa*; a straw women in bright-coloured clothes symbolising a women's role as a mother bearing new life. For both Christian and pagan worship the burning of the effigy was seen as a renewal coming through sacrifice and death and takes place on Sunday, Forgiveness Day. To ensure the end of winter and the fertility of the soil the ashes are scattered on the fields.<sup>462</sup>

In his opera Rimsky-Korsakov incorporates many of the traditions related to *Maslenitsa*. Towards the end of the Prologue there is a 'sending off of *maslenitsa*' (*Проводы масленицы*): *Long ago! Like the little eggs! Christ is risen, son of God!* (Далалынь, Далалынь! По янченьку! Христос воскрес, сына божья!) sung to the words *Early in the morning the chickens started to sing of Spring. Goodbye Maslenitsa!* (Раным рано куры запели, про весну обвестили. Прощай, Масленица). Of *Wet-tailed Butter-week, be off to the courtyard* (Масленица-мокрохвостка, поезжай долой со двора!), starting at bar 139, concerning the sending off of *maslenitsa*, Rimsky-Korsakov writes that this

<sup>461</sup> Warner Elizabeth. *Op.cit.*: 20.

<sup>462</sup> For a general description of the traditions see Sokolov Y.M. 1950. *Op.cit.*: 188–189.

is a scoffingly sacrilegious reminder of the Orthodox Mass for the dead. But are not the melodies of the ancient orthodox canticles of ancient pagan origin? Are not the rites and dogmas of like origin? The holidays of Easter, Trinity Sunday, etc., are they not adaptations of Christianity from the pagan sun-cult? And the doctrine of the Trinity? For all this, cf. Afanasyev.<sup>463</sup>

In this way he also wanted to remind the audience of both the pagan and Christian ceremonies carried out in cemeteries and connected to the season.<sup>464</sup>



### The Night Before Christmas

In his introduction to the opera Rimsky-Korsakov talks at length about the significance of Kolyada looking forwards towards summer whilst Ovsen is closer to winter. There are three times in the year when the most furious revelry takes place, at kolyada, at the meeting of spring and the night before Ivan Kupala (*Наибольше неиствия гульбища их бывают три раза въ годъ: на Коляду, при встрѣчѣ весны и въ ночь Ивана Купала*). At winter Kolyada and Ovsen are at their most active, resulting in storms and blizzards defying the approaching heavenly light.<sup>465</sup>

There is also a linking between the Christian and pagan traditions of the season through the suitors for *Солоха*/Soloxa, a widow considered to be a witch, *Чортъ*/ the devil and *Дьякъ Осипъ Никифоровичъ*/ the deacon Osip Nikiforovich whose spiritual allegiances are opposite. Of the roles the name Оксана/Oksana means 'praise God'. The Introduction to Act I Scene 1 is called *Holy evening* (Святый вечерь). In Gogol's introduction he explains how the devil had "[...] one last night left to wander about the wide world and teach good folk to sin. On the morrow, when the first bells rang for matins, he would run with his tail between his legs straight off to his lair"<sup>466</sup> ([...] которому последняя ночь осталась

<sup>463</sup> MML: 237. Here he is referring to Alexander Afanasyev's work *The Slav's Poetic Views of Nature*, published in 1865 (Афанасьев. А. *Поэтические воззрения славян на природу*).

<sup>464</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov. N. 2005. *The Snow Maiden. Vernal Tale. Opera in four acts with prologue. Piano Score*. Sankt Petersburg, Compozitor Publishing House: 81.

<sup>465</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai Andreievich 1894. *Christmas Eve Opera. Vocal Score*. Elibron Classics. Unabridged facsimile of C.G.Röder, Leipzig. Adamant Media Corporation.

<sup>466</sup> Gogol Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 129.

шататься по белому свету и выучивать грехам добрых людей. Завтра же, с первыми колоколами к заутрене, побежит он без оглядки, поджавши хвост, с свою берлогу).<sup>467</sup>

In Act 2 Scene iii the Deacon tries to seduce Soloxa and his singing is a parody which indicates familiarity with Church Slavonic. The style of speech is based on ecclesiastical chants and forms of both znamenny and Kievan chant common in church usage.<sup>468</sup>

90 Andante.  $\text{♩} = 64$ .

Якъ въ пуоты - въ кринъ меж-ду тер-ни-я, сре-ди женъ и-ныхъ лѣ-по-той

Più mosso. Allegro assai.  $\text{♩} = 108$ .

кринъ-ца, же-но бѣ-ло-выи-ца-и. Хо-хо!

На реках Вавилонских\*  
Знаменного распева

By the Rivers of Babylon\*  
Znamenny Chant

Na re - káh va - ví - lón - skih, tá - mo še -  
На ре - ках ва - ви - лон - скихъ, та - мо се -

dó - hom i plá - ka - hom, vñeg - da ро - мѣ -  
до - хомъ и пла - ка - хомъ, вѣг - да ро - мя -

nú - ti nam si - ó - na. Al - li - lú i - ya.  
ну - ти намъ си - о - на. Ал - ли - лу и - я.

91 Andante. (*a piacere*)

Якъ смо-лов-ни-ца къ са-ду пло-до-но-на-я, сре-ди женъ дру-гихъ во-и-ни-и-а

<sup>467</sup> Гоголь Н.В. *Op.cit.*: 96.

<sup>468</sup> Edmunds Catherine. *Op.cit.*: 135.





213 Топоі.

ХОРЪ (на сѣноі).

Вамі.

На воо - то - - - - - иѣ

свѣтъ на - - - - - иѣ

Востъ - ей прав - - - до - - ю о - - - -

рять всѣхъ - міръ. За звѣз - до - - - - ю

шли ца - - ри муд - - - ры - - е свѣ - ту

ис - - - ти - - ны по - - - лю - - - ми - - -

ли - - - - - си. Занавѣс.

#### 6. Pattern for Tone 4 Troparion

A | B

C | End

472

Рожество твое Христе Боже нашъ, На востокѣ свѣтъ засіялъ,  
 возсія мірови свѣтъ разума: Божьей правдою озарилъ весьміръ.  
 въ немъ бо свѣздамъ служащій, За звѣздою шли цари мудрые,

<sup>472</sup> <http://byzscath.org/forums/ubbthreads.php/topics/307866>. (Words and music) 1.6.2012.

свѣздоу оучахусѧ свѣту истины поклонилися.<sup>473</sup>  
 Тебѣ кланатисѧ Солнцу Правды,  
 и Тебе вѣдѣти съ высоты востока:  
 Господи, слава Тебѣ.

Thy Nativity, O Christ our God,  
has shone to the world the light of wisdom;  
for in it those who served the stars  
were taught by a star  
to bow down before Thee, the Sun of Righteousness,  
and to know Thee, the Daybreak from on high.  
O Lord, glory to Thee.<sup>474</sup>

## Sadko

In midst of the Sea King's feast, Tableaux VI, a mysterious elder (Старчище неведомый) appears and smashes Sadko's gusli. In the original idea a 'church' theme was to accompany the appearance of St. Nicholas who interrupts the revelry in the underwater kingdom and saves the sinking ships. Commenting on the tone poem of the same name in 1867 Rimsky-Korsakov added "the appearance of Saint Nicholas was unfortunately left out by me, and the strings of Sadko's goosli had to break by themselves, without the good saint's assistance".<sup>475</sup> Since biblical or church saints were forbidden in opera by the censors, this veiled representation of St. Nicholas, traditionally the patron saint of seamen and fishermen, had to be altered. Musically, the episode is based on a chant from the *moleben* or Prayer Service. This had already been developed as a fugue subtitled "In the Monastery" in the final movement of the Russian Quartet. Later the first three movements were reworked as the *Symphonietta* on Russian Themes, Op.31.<sup>476</sup>

### Moleben to the Most Holy Theotokos Common Chant



477

<sup>473</sup> *Christmas Eve. Piano Score. Op.cit.: 251–253.*

<sup>474</sup> [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Troparion\\_of\\_the\\_Nativity.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Troparion_of_the_Nativity.png). 1.6.2012.

475 MML: 79.

<sup>476</sup> Rakhmanova, Marina. *Op.cit.*: xxxviii.

<sup>477</sup> <http://music.russianorthodox-stl.org/miscellaneous.html>. 18.07.2012.





### The Tale of Tsar Saltan

The Prologue to the opera pictures a typical *posidelki*, which in folk traditions was a group of women spinning together, which forms a part of the courtship ritual.<sup>480</sup> In Act II, the Swan-Bird makes the city of Ledenets appear on the island in Pushkin's original



**The Swan Princess.** Mikhail Vrubel. 1900. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.  
(Portrait of his wife, the soprano Nadezhda Zabela-Vrubel)

text he says “*the church choir praises God*” (Хор церковный бога хвалит)<sup>481</sup> whilst Belsky embellished this as Gvidon is hailed by its inhabitants as its Prince:

Вознесите хвалу вся земля,  
Милость божия нам воссия,

День стократ вожеленный наста,  
Град великий днесь паки возста!<sup>482</sup>

Let us raise all our voices in one,  
Full of praise for the things God has  
done.

For so long we have prayed for rebirth  
Of our strong, noble city on earth.<sup>483</sup>

<sup>479</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nicolai 1984. *Sadko. An Opera in Seven Scenes. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 428.

<sup>480</sup> Hilton Alison 1991. *Op.cit.*: 57.

<sup>481</sup> <http://www.lib.ru/LITRA/PUSHKIN/saltan.txt>. 09–07–2009. Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>482</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 2007. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 133–134

<sup>483</sup> Lyle Neff, private communication, Copyright © 1986, 2008.

This is based on the Russian “Greek” chant in Tone 3 *We Praise Thee, O God* (Тебе Бога хвалим) which as Rakhmanova also points out is “essentially the composer’s paraphrase of his own sacred concerto”.<sup>484</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov also adds the ringing of bells to emphasize the sacred significance of the occasion.<sup>485</sup>

Гвид. Guid. Направляясь к воротам: Auf das Thor zugehend. Das Thor öffnet

Ви - жу я. Ле - бе - дь те - шит - ся мо - я! —  
 Steh mal an, das ver - dan - ken wir dem Schwan!

Fl. *stringendo poco*

**133** отступают в сторону на холм. Впереди всех по красному сукну шествует певчие, потом войско с хоругвями и зна-  
 Anhöhe zurück. Voraus kommen Kirchensänger, über ein Purpurtuch schreitend, dann Krieger mit Fahnen, Standarten,  
 CORO II. (певчие) Kirchensänger.

Воз - не - си - те хва - лу вся зем - ля, Милость бо - жи - я нам вос - си - я, День сто -  
 Lo - ben wir, preisen wir Un - sern Gott, Der uns gnä - dig er - löst von dem Tod, Der den

А.  
 Т.  
 В.

мешали, народ — мужчины и женщины, далее двор в золотых колымагах, бояре  
 с женами, звездочеты, скороходы, путы и глашатаи с длинными трубами.  
 Volk, Männer und Frauen, später Hofstaat in vergoldeten Kaleschen, Bojaren mit ihren  
 S. CORO II. Frauen. Ein Sterndeuter, Schnellläufer und Herolde mit langen Trompeten, **134** CORO I. НАРОД

крат вож - де - лен - ный на - ста, Град ве - ли - нийдвесь па - ки воз - ста! VOLK.  
 Tag der Be - frei - ung ge - sandt; Wo die mäch - ti - ge Stadt neu erstand.

А.  
 Т.  
 В.

<sup>484</sup> Rakhmanova, Marina. *Id.*: xxxix. See also the composer’s comments MML:380 and Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 269–270 with the composers amusing addition concerning censorship “Don’t spread this last [comment] around too widely...or I fear Pobedonostev may forbid my entire opera, and then what?”

<sup>485</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 2007. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 133–134.

Торжественно. [Maestoso.] *(a)*

**Soprano**  
 Те - бѣ Бѣ - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Члѣ - spo - da  
 Те - бѣ Бо - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Го - спо - да

**Alto**  
 Те - бѣ Бѣ - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Члѣ - spo - da  
 Те - бѣ Бо - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Го - спо - да

**Tenor**  
 Те - бѣ Бѣ - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Члѣ - spo - da  
 Те - бѣ Бо - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Го - спо - да

**Bass**  
 Те - бѣ Бѣ - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Члѣ - spo - da  
 Те - бѣ Бо - га хвѣ - ѡмъ, Те - бѣ Го - спо - да

**Soprano**  
 is - po - vě - du - yem,  
 ис - по - ве - ду - емъ,

**Alto**  
 is - po - vě - du - yem,  
 ис - по - ве - ду - емъ,

**Tenor**  
 is - po - vě - du - yem,  
 ис - по - ве - ду - емъ,

**Bass**  
 is - po - vě - du - yem,  
 ис - по - ве - ду - емъ,

**Soprano**  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца

**Alto**  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца

**Tenor**  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца

**Bass**  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца  
 Те - бѣ прѣ - вѣч - на - го От - ца

<sup>486</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *The Complete Sacred Choral Works. Op.cit.: 101–102.*

Similarly the ending to Act II includes an ecclesiastical theme taken from the Orthodox liturgy.

### **The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia**

In a similar way to *Christmas Eve*, this opera is a mixture of Christian and pagan practices. *Kitezh* emphasises the Christian aspects. The theme for the libretto originated in a number of sources, two of the main ones being the legends ‘The Invisible City of Kitezh’ and ‘The Life of Peter, Prince of Murom, and his wife Fevroniya’. The latter was based on the 16<sup>th</sup> century *zhitiye* (hagiography) of St. Fevroniya which is a mixture of Christian and Slavonic mythology. However, Rimsky-Korsakov also appears to have been influenced by the novels *In the Forest* and *On the Hills* by Pavel Ivanovich Melnikov who signed his fiction ‘Andrei Perchersky’. These works appeared as monthly instalments in *The Russian Messenger* (Русский вестник). The first was published in the early 1870’s over six years followed by *On the Hills* between 1875 and 1881.<sup>487</sup>

Apart from dealing with sectarian issues, the books were noted for folklore and the speech of the characters; both narrative and dialogue are at times archaic, at times regional and other times poetic. Orest Miller draws attention to Melnikov’s conscientious study of the Old Believers and also his “[...] many-sided and deep understanding of the life of the Russian people, in general, and particularly their ancient way of life and rituals, together with their devotion and beliefs, in often the absolutely mythical and Christian legends” ([...]многостороннемъ и глубокомъ знаніи народной Русской жизни вообще со всею ея бытовою и обрядовою стариною, съ ея преданіями и повѣртіями, частію еще совершенно мифическими, частію уже христіански легендарными).<sup>488</sup> These novels, which have been described as an “An Odyssey of the Great Russian Schism”, portray stereotypes taken from the Russian epics, *byliny*. However, they concentrate on moral truths, the good and evil that affect the course of people’s lives, a religion in which he believes and trusts. “By emphasizing, *byt*, the lives of everyday [...] people, by myth and religion, Melnikov reaffirms age-old ideas about men in nature and society.”<sup>489</sup> *In the Forest* includes a description of Kitezh:

<sup>487</sup> Hoisington Thomas 1974. Melnikov-Pechersky: Romancer of Provincial and Old Believer Life. *Slavic Review* 33(4): 679 and 688.

<sup>488</sup> Миллер О. 1888. *Русские писатели послѣ Гоголя. Часть III.* (Russian authors since Gogol. Vol. III) С.-Петербургъ, Изданіе Н.Ц.Карбасникова: 78–79.

<sup>489</sup> Hoisington Thomas.H. 1974. *Op.cit.*: 690–693.



The city still exists but it is invisible [...] It is hidden miraculously. With the help of God's order [...] And in the lake Svetliy Yar on a quiet summer evening you can see the reflection in the water of the walls, churches, princes' houses [...] and one can hear the music of Kitezh' bells at night [...].<sup>490</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov was also familiar with the novel since Yastrebtsev notes in his *Reminiscences* for the 27<sup>th</sup> March 1903 that "Nikolai Andreyevich recounted to me the plot of his new opera *The Invisible City of Kitezh* [...] It was drawn in part from Melnikov-Pechersky's well-known novel *In the Forests* and *On the Hills* and in part from *The Legend of St. Fevronia*". He returned to Perchersky's novels again on 22nd July 1905: "Then we strolled in the garden again and talked about Perchersky's *In the Forests*. We are both enchanted with this magnificent, picturesque chronicle of the Zavolzhe".<sup>491</sup> In addition both Act 5 and 6 present the picture of Kitezh as described above. The composer, in his chronicle (*Летопись жизни*) refers to 'Kitezh' as a tale or legend (*сказание*)<sup>492</sup> and also in a letter called it a "dramatized sacred verse adapted for the stage."<sup>493</sup> Petrovsky in his review of the première of the opera refers to the "icon-like" portrayal of the heroine.<sup>494</sup> Fevroniya combines a Christian attitude towards mankind with a natural religion. In Act I when asked by Vsevolod whether she goes to church to pray her answer is

Нѣтъ [...]	No...
а и то вѣдь Богъ ио не пездѣ ли?	But isn't God everywhere?
Ты вотъ мыслишь здѣсь пустое мѣсто,	You may think this is a deserted place.
анъ же нѣтъ: великая здѣсь церковь.	But no: it is a mighty church.
Оглянися умными очами.	Open your eyes and look around!
День и ночь у насъ служба воскресная,	Sunday mass is held day and night here,
днемъ и ночью темьяны да ладоны;	day and night we smell thyme and
	incense.
днемъ сіяетъ намъ солнышко,	The bright sun shines in the day
солнышко ясное,	
ночью звѣзды какъ свѣчки зателятся.	and the stars glow like candles at night.
День и ночь у насъ пѣнье умяльное,	We have lovely songs day and night

<sup>490</sup> en.tourismnn.ru/investmentprojects/muzeyno-turistskiecomplexes/gradkitezh. 21.07.2012. See also the extensive references to the legend of Kitezh in Мельников, П.И. 1955. *В лесах. Книга вторая*. (In the forest. Vol.2) Москва, Государственное издательство художественной: 288–315.

<sup>491</sup> Yastrebtsev, V.V. *Op.cit.*: 328–329 and 366. Zavolzhe the community of Old Believers who lived "beyond the Volga".

<sup>492</sup> See, for instance, Орлова А.А. 1972. *Страницы жизни Н.А. Римского-Корсакова. Летопись жизни и творчества. Выпуск 3*. 1894–1904 (Wanderings in the life of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov. A chronicle of his life and works. Vol.3. 1894–1904). Ленинградское отделение, Издательство „Музыка”: 322.

<sup>493</sup> Rakhmanova, Marina. *Id.*: xxxix. See also Данилевич, Л. 1961. *Последние оперы Н.А. Римского-Корсакова*. (The last operas of N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov) Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 181.

<sup>494</sup> Данилевич, Л. *Op.cit.*: 191.

что на всѣ голоса ликование,	for everything with a voice sings songs of praise:
птицы, звѣри, дыханіе всякое	the birds, the animals, everything that breathes
воспѣвають прекрасенъ Господень свѣтъ.	sings the wonders of God's light.
„Тебѣ слава во вѣкъ, небо свѣтлое,	“Glory to you for ever, you brilliant sky,
Богу Господу чуденъ высокъ престоль!	for you are God, the Lord, a high and mighty throne!
Та же слава тебѣ, земля матушка,	And glory to you, too Mother Earth,
ты для Бога подножіе крѣпкое! <sup>495</sup>	for you are God's sturdy pedestal.” <sup>496</sup>

The supernatural events which occur in the opera find their basis in the *dvoyeveriye*, ‘double faith’; it is the work of God that makes Kitezh invisible but the Slavonic mythological birds Alkonost and Sirin that transform the forest into a magical place and foretell Fevronia’s future. Sirin in ancient jewellery is depicted as half woman and half bird holding a branch, a goddess of life forming a symbolical link between the living and the dead<sup>497</sup>: “*I am the bird Sirin, the bird of joy. And whom I sing to will live eternally*” (Птица Сиринъ я, птица радости. А кому пою, будетъ вѣчно жить)<sup>498</sup>. Alkonost portrays death “*I am the bird of goodness, called Alkernost. Death comes to whom I sing*” (Есмь я птица милости, Алконостъ зовомая. А кому пою, тому смерть прошла).<sup>499</sup> The text was written in an archaic and folkloristic style which was matched by Rimsky-Korsakov in the extensive use of folk ceremonies together with appropriate music. The music, to match this archaic style, resembles *znamenny* chant. However there is only one recognisable sacred piece included in the opera, the Kievan chant melody *Behold the Bridegroom comes* (Се Жених грядет) in the scene where the murdered Prince Vsevolod’s ghost appears to Fevronia in Act IV Scene 1. The original theme was already published in 1886 and would have been familiar to an audience. “Both in Rimsky-Korsakov’s time and today this hymn is sung in Orthodox churches during Holy Week, preceding the feast of the Resurrection.”<sup>500</sup> Its use in the opera is

<sup>495</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N.A. 1906. *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia. Opera Vocal Score. Vocal score*. Unabridged facsimile of M.P.Belaïeff, Leipzig, 1906. USA: Elibron Classics. Adamant Media Corporation.: 35–40.

<sup>496</sup> English translation cd booklet accompanying ORF recording 3-1144-2 YS, 1997, P + C KOCH International GmbH: 87.

<sup>497</sup> See Hilton Alison 1991. *Op.cit.*: 62; Hubbs Joanna. *Op.cit.*: 31–32.

<sup>498</sup> *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia. Opera Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 284 (score) and The 1995 Bregenz Festival Production, Vladimir Fedoseyev ORF recording 3-1144-2 YS, 1997. *Op.cit.*: 201 (cd booklet).

<sup>499</sup> *Ib.*: 270–271 (score) and 195 (cd booklet).

<sup>500</sup> Rakhmanova Marina. *Op.cit.*: xxxix.

appropriate since it precedes Fevronia's and Vsevolod's entrance into the invisible city of Kitezh signifying their entrance into God's eternal kingdom.<sup>501</sup>

ПРИЗРАКЪ.  
Ве - се -

ПРИЗР. лись, - мо - я не - вѣс - та, -

*poco allargando*  
ве - се - лись! По те -

ФЕВР.

ПРИЗР.  
бя же - нихъ при -

<sup>501</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N.A. 1906. *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia*. Opera Vocal Score. Op.cit.: 276.

IV.

Se Zhe - nikh gra - det v po - lu - no - shchi,  
Се Же - них гра - дет в по - лу - но - щи,

V.

i bla - zhen rab, ye - go - zhe o - bria - shchet bda - shcha;  
и бла - жен раб, е - го - же о - бря - шет бдя - ща;,  
i bla - zhen rab, ye - go - zhe o - bria - shchet bda - shcha;  
и бла - жен раб, е - го - же о - бря - шет бдя - ща;,  
i bla - zhen rab, ye - go - zhe o - bria - shchet bda - shcha;  
и бла - жен раб, е - го - же о - бря - шет бдя - ща;,  
i bla - zhen rab, ye - go - zhe o - bria - shchet bda - shcha;  
и бла - жен раб, е - го - же о - бря - шет бдя - ща;,

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## Russian Easter Overture

The *Easter Sunday Overture* was written in 1887-88 and premièred in St. Petersburg in late December 1888. Of this Rimsky-Korsakov wrote:

The rather lengthy, slow introduction of the Easter Sunday Overture on the theme ‘Let God Arise!’, alternating with the ecclesiastical theme ‘An Angel Cried,’ appeared to me, in its beginning, as it were, the ancient Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the resurrection of Christ. The gloomy colours of the *Andante lugubre* seemed to depict the holy sepulchre that had shone with ineffable light at the moment of the resurrection – in the transition to the Allegro of the Overture. The beginning of the Allegro, “Let them also that hate Him flee before Him,” led to the holiday mood of the Orthodox church service on Christ’s matins; the solemn trumpet voice of the Archangel was replaced by a tonal reproduction of the joyous, dance-like tolling of the bells, alternating with an evocation of the sexton’s

<sup>502</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *The Complete Sacred Choral Works*. Op.cit.: 75.



rapid reading and now with the conventional chant of the priest's reading the glad tidings of the Evangel. The *obikhod* theme, "Christ is arisen" which forms a sort of subsidiary part of the Overture, appeared amid the trumpet-blasts and bell tolling, constituting also a triumphant coda. In this Overture were thus combined reminiscences of the ancient prophecy, of the Gospel narrative, and also a general picture of the Easter service with its "pagan merry-making". The capering and leaping of the Biblical King David before the ark, do they not give expression to a mood of the same order as the mood of the idol-worshippers' dance? Surely the Russian Orthodox chime is instrumental dance-music of the church, is it not? And do not the weaving beards of the priests and sextons clad in white vestments and surplices, and intoning "Beautiful Easter" in the tempo of Allegro vivo, etc., transport the imagination to pagan times? And all these Easter loaves and twists and glowing tapers – how far a cry from the philosophic and socialistic teaching of Christ! This legendary and heathen side of the holiday, this transition from the gloomy and mysterious evening of Passion Saturday to the unbridled pagan-religious merry-making on the morn of Easter Sunday, is what I was eager to reproduce in my Overture...In any event, in order to appreciate my Overture even ever so slightly, it is necessary that the hearer should have attended Easter morning service at least once and, at that, not in a domestic chapel, but in a cathedral thronged with people from every walk of life, with several priests conducting the cathedral service – something that many intellectual Russian hearers, let alone hearers of the confessions, quite lack nowadays. As for myself, I had gained my impressions in childhood, passed near the Tikhvin Monastery itself.<sup>503</sup>

The programme compiled by composer contains scriptal texts from both the Old and New Testaments.<sup>504</sup>

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<sup>503</sup> MML, 294–296.

<sup>504</sup> Russian text: [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/d/df/TMSLP12682-Russian\\_Easter\\_Overture\\_Orchestra\\_Score.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/d/df/TMSLP12682-Russian_Easter_Overture_Orchestra_Score.pdf). 23-07-2012; English text: Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolay. *La Grande*

*Pâque Russe. Overture for Orchestra, Op.36*. London, Ernst Eulenburg Ltd.

## ПРОГРАММА.

Да воскреснетъ Бѣхъ, и расточатся вразѣ Бѣгѣ, и да бѣжатъ ѿ лица Бѣгѣ ненавидящии Бѣго. Якоже исчезаетъ дымъ, да исчезнутъ: яко таетъ воскъ ѿ лица Огня, тако да погибнутъ грѣшницы ѿ лица Бѣжѣ. Псаломъ Давида 33.

И минувшей субботѣ, Марія Магдалина и Марія Іаковлева и Саломія купивша ароматы, да приидеши помажутъ Ииса. И сѣлѣ завтра во единѣ ѿ субботѣхъ приидеша на гробъ, воздѣхшѣ солнцу. И глаголаху къ себѣ: что ѿвалитъ намъ камень ѿ двери гроба; И воззрѣвши, видѣша, яко ѿвалена бѣ камень: бѣ во великѣ сѣлѣ. И вышедше во гробъ, видѣша юношѣхъ сѣдѣщихъ въ десныхъ, ѿдѣла на во одеждѣхъ бѣлыхъ: и оумасашася. Онѣ же глагола имъ: не оумасайтеся. Ииса ищите Назарянина распятаго: когдѣ. Евангеліе ѿ Марка, гл. 16.

И облетѣла благодатная вѣсть весь міръ; и побѣжали отъ лица Его ненавидящіе Его, исчезая, яко исчезаетъ дымъ.

„Христосъ воскресъ изъ мертвыхъ!“ поютъ Ангельскіе сонмы на небесахъ съ Херувимами и Серафимами.

„Христосъ воскресъ изъ мертвыхъ!“, поютъ священнослужители въ православныхъ храмахъ, при дымѣ кадильномъ, при сіяніи безчисленныхъ свѣчей и звонѣ колокольномъ.

## PROGRAMME

“ Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered : let them also that hate him flee before him.

“ As smoke is driven away, so drive them away : as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.”—*Psalm 68.*

“ And when the Sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him.

“ And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun.

“ And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre ?

“ And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away : for it was very great.

“ And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment : and they were affrighted.

“ And he said unto them, Be not affrighted : Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified : he is risen.”—*St. Mark's Gospel, xvi, 1-6.*

The joyous news spread all over the universe and those who hated him fled before him and disappeared as smoke.

“ Resurrexit ” sang the choirs of angels in heaven, to the sound of the trumpets of the archangels and to the noise of the wings of the seraphim.

“ Resurrexit ” sang the priests in the temples in the midst of clouds of incense and of the light of innumerable candles and the sound of triumphant bells.

The Overture starts with the main text of the festal service, the sticheron *Let God Arise* (Да воскреснет Бог).<sup>505</sup>

**Ouverture**  
„La grande Pâque Russe.“  
Lento mystico. М.М. ♩ = 44. N. Rimsky-Korsakow, Op. 36. (1883.)

3 Flauti. I, II, III. (poi Fl. piccolo)  
2 Oboi.  
2 Clarinetti in C.  
2 Fagotti.

Paschal Stichera  
Tone 5

Let God a-rise, let His e-ne-mies be scat-tered.

506

As the composer mentions the Russian “Greek” chant Festal Hymn to the Mother of God Ангел вопияше (The Angel Cried Out) alternates with the sticheron and appears first as a violincello solo two bars after A.

<sup>505</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/Russian\\_Festival\\_Overture,\\_Op.36\\_\(Rimsky-Korsakov,\\_Nikolay\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Russian_Festival_Overture,_Op.36_(Rimsky-Korsakov,_Nikolay)), Leipzig: M.P.Belaieff, 1890: 3. 23–07–2012.

<sup>506</sup> [anaphorapress.com/music/wp-content/uploads/2008/03/paschal-stichera.pdf](http://anaphorapress.com/music/wp-content/uploads/2008/03/paschal-stichera.pdf). 29–06–2012.

Violoncello Solo

Violoncelli

pizz.

pp

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Умеренно.

Soprano 1

Ап - gel vo - pi - yá - she Bla - go -  
 Ап - гелъ во - пи - я - ше Бла - го -

Soprano 2

Ап - gel vo - pi - yá - she Bla - go -  
 Ап - гелъ во - пи - я - ше Бла - го -

Alto

Ап - gel vo - pi - yá - she Bla - go -  
 Ап - гелъ во - пи - я - ше Бла - го -

6

да - псу: chi - sta - ya Dé - vo, rá - duy - sít! I  
 дат - псу: чи - ста - я Дѣ - во, ра - дуй - ся! И

да - псу: chi - sta - ya Dé - vo, rá - duy - sít! I  
 дат - псу: чи - ста - я Дѣ - во, ра - дуй - ся! И

да - псу: chi - sta - ya Dé - vo, rá - duy - sít! I  
 дат - псу: чи - ста - я Дѣ - во, ра - дуй - ся! И

12

ра - ki te - kú: rá - duy - sít! Tvoj Sm vos -  
 па - ки те - ку: ра - дуй - ся! Твой Смыъ нос -

ра - ki te - kú: rá - duy - sít! Tvoj Sm vos -  
 па - ки те - ку: ра - дуй - ся! Твой Смыъ нос -

ра - ki te - kú: rá - duy - sít! Tvoj Sm vos -  
 па - ки те - ку: ра - дуй - ся! Твой Смыъ нос -

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<sup>507</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/Russian\\_Festival\\_Overture,\\_Op.36\\_\(Rimsky-Korsakov,\\_Nikolay\)](http://imslp.org/wiki/Russian_Festival_Overture,_Op.36_(Rimsky-Korsakov,_Nikolay)), Leipzig: M.P.Belaieff, 1890: 3. 23-07-2012: 3.

<sup>508</sup> Morosan Vladimir (Ed.) 1991. *Op.cit.*: 467.



At M the trombone solo is interpreted as corresponding to the point in the service where the Gospel according to St. John 1: 1–17 is read.<sup>509</sup>

**RECIT.**  
**M** **Maestoso.**  $\text{1/2} = 76.$   
 Trombone II Solo  
 a piena voce  
 6 Violoncelli div. a 3.  
 pp colla parte.  
 2 C. Bassi  
 pp

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The service ends with the proclamation of the resurrection. This is highlighted as the znamenny chant troparion *Christ is risen from the dead* (Христосъ воскресе изъ мертвыхъ) which is clearly heard in the brass six bars after V.

Campanelli.  
 mp  
 dimin.  
 smorz.  
 dimin.  
 smorz.

511

<sup>509</sup> Rakhmanova Marina. *Op.cit.*: xxxix.

<sup>510</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolay. *La Grande Pâque Russe. Overture for Orchestra, Op. 36. Op.cit.*: 42.

<sup>511</sup> <http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/e/ea/IMSLP32586-PMLP26401-Rimsky-Op36FSbel.pdf>: 74–75



### Moleben to the Most Holy Theotokos Common Chant



515

#### 4.6. Summary

There can be no doubt that Rimsky-Korsakov was convinced of the continuing influence of pre-Christianity beliefs, rituals and customs in the everyday life of the ordinary people (*narod*). Irrespective of the church's continuing struggle to establish one true faith, to eradicate the pagan customs, to banish the performers, the *skomorokhi*, they were too ingrained in the culture of the people to be expunged. And as such they became an integral part of the operas of the composer's fairy tales, *bylinas* and sacred legends. However, he also recognised how folk music had found its way into the religious music of the church. The church was there to serve the ordinary man and strengthen his faith not there to serve the Tsar and the upper classes of society. Consequently the music of the church should serve the majority.

According to Rakhmanova, the opinion of the authorities on sacred music development see Rimsky-Korsakov as having initiated "the beginning of an entire new direction". This new style involved a new approach to choral texture involving multi-layered voices, diatonic counterpoint, parallel voice leading, doublings of octaves and open fifths. Through the studies of Razumovsky and Smolensky quoted previously the interest of the composers was drawn to the ancient chants many of which were secular in nature. Rimsky-Korsakov in his continuing need to understand and be proficient in new undertakings had discussions with Razumovsky shortly after his appointment to the Kapella. The *Letopis* entry for 22<sup>nd</sup> May shows how he was working on the *Obikhod* according to Razumovsky's examples whilst in Moscow for the coronation of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup>.<sup>516</sup> With respect to the music of the church, particular attention was drawn to Rimsky-Korsakov's ability to blend folk and sacral music.<sup>517</sup> This matches with his own views:

<sup>515</sup> [http://music.russianorthodox-stl.org/music/miscellaneous/MolebenT/Moleben\\_Theotokos\\_Refr\\_CC\\_Un\\_102108.pdf](http://music.russianorthodox-stl.org/music/miscellaneous/MolebenT/Moleben_Theotokos_Refr_CC_Un_102108.pdf). 19-07-2012.

<sup>516</sup> Орлова А.А., Римский-Корсаков.В.Н. 1971. *Страницы жизни Н.А.Римского-Корсакова. Летопись жизни и творчества. Выпуск 2. Op.cit.: 217.*

<sup>517</sup> Rakhmanova, Marina. *Op.cit.: xxxix*. See also Morosan Vladimir 1986. *Op.cit.: 97, 217.*

Русское церковное пение - как народная песнь льется широкой, вольной струей из народной груди, и чем оно вольнее, тем полнее говорит сердце. Напевы у нас одинаковые с греками, но русский народ иначе поет их, потому что положил их в свою русскую душу. Кто хочет послушать, как эта душа сказывается, тому надо слушать пение в благоустроенном монастыре. Там услышит он, каким широким, вольным потоком выливается праздничный ирмос из русской груди, какой торжественной поэмой вышевается догматик, слагается стихира с канонархом, каким одушевлением радости проникнут канон Пасхи или Рождества Христова

Russian Orthodox singing – like a folk song, flows in an expansive, free stream from the national bosom, and the freer it is, the more abundantly it speaks to the heart. Our melodies are analogous to those of the Greeks, but the Russians sing them differently, because they have put their Russian soul into them. Whoever wants to hear how this soul is manifested needs to do so in a good monastery [...] there he will hear how the festive Eirmos flows from the Russian bosom in a sweeping free current, with what uplifting poetry the dogmatic is sung, how sticheras blend with the canonarch, with what ecstasy is imbued the Easter or Christmas canon [...] Quite a noble matter, this singing.<sup>518</sup>

Again referring to Komaneiskii's article:

Онъ сказалъ новое слово и указалъ новое направлѣніе, и на авторитетное слово художника откликнулось творчество его учениковъ и послѣдователей. Онъ бросилъ здоровое зерно на родную плодотворную почву и надъ могилою художника зазеленѣть сочная нива, заблагоухаютъ внешніе дни пробуждающагося расцвѣта рус. церков. музыки.<sup>519</sup>

He spoke a new language and indicated a new direction and his students and those who followed him responded to his authoritative word. He threw a strong seed on his native earth to bear fruit and the grave of the artist began to turn into a luscious green field and for Russian church music a new spring day awoke and flowered.<sup>520</sup>

However, it was Antonin Preobrazhensky the musicologist and pedagogue, who worked in the Moscow Synodal School and then in the Petersburg Court Singing Chapel, who summed up Rimsky-Korsakov's contribution, which has also been shown in the preceding text:

There is no doubt that we can draw a lot from Rimsky-Korsakov [in the area of church music]. One only has to think how much he himself drew for his operas from actual

<sup>518</sup> Rakhmanova Marina 1994. *Dukhovnaia muzyka. Muzykal'naia akademiia* 2: 52–53. Quoted in Dolskaya Olga 2004. *Russian Liturgical Choral Aesthetics: Its Past in Tradition and Present in Ruins*. <http://www.russian-inok.org/page.php?page=english2&dir=english&month=0404>. 24–07–2012.

<sup>519</sup> Komaneiskii Nikolai. *Op.cit.*: 841.

<sup>520</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.



church chants as well as from the closely related melodies of sacred verses [...] in order to acknowledge how close to his heart was the sphere of the people's world-view and mysticism.<sup>521</sup>

In her summary of the 19<sup>th</sup> century liturgical music, however, it is Dolskaya who places Rimsky-Korsakov's work in perspective:

It is in Rimsky-Korsakov's works that we encounter those awe-inspiring parallelisms that remain part of clergy singing throughout the centuries (still attempted today), and settled as a major trademark of the Synodal School style of the late nineteenth century [...] here we encounter features [...] all of which will come to maturation in the works of Kastalsky, Chesnokov and Rachmaninov.<sup>522</sup>

In addition to his developments of the chants and musical innovation Rimsky-Korsakov was instrumental in rewriting the regulations applicable to the Music School of the Imperial Court, establishing a programme and examinations for instrumental and precentor's classes and making marked improvements in the welfare of the students. For this purpose as he said to Yastrebtsev: "My years at the Chapel developed in me a propensity for brilliant orchestration."<sup>523</sup> During this time he also compiled his *Practical Manual of Harmony*. As a man dedicated to truth and artistic freedom, throughout his life he questioned the illogical censorship imposed by both the state and also the church and any sense of monopoly. It is also important to remember that Rimsky-Korsakov completed and revised the score of Mussorgsky's unfinished *Хованщина* (*Khovanshchina*) which concerns the rebellion of the Old Believers against Peter the Great's church reformation. This will be dealt with in greater detail later.

However, in discussing his sacred music with Yastrebtsev Rimsky-Korsakov summed up his own opinion when he remarked that his "sacred" music in his secular works was much better than that he composed for the church.<sup>524</sup>

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<sup>521</sup> Rakhmanova Marina. *Op. cit.*: xl.

<sup>522</sup> Dolskaya Olga. *Op. cit.*

<sup>523</sup> Yastrebtsev V.V.. *Op.cit.*: 363.

<sup>524</sup> *Ib.*: 207.

## 5. Russian identity and its relation to folklore and folk music

The premiere of Glinka's *A Life for the Tsar* in 1836 came at an interesting period when the Russian intelligentsia was questioning the concept of national identity. This opera is considered to be the first to have a musical unity and a clear nationalistic and historic libretto instead of being a musical entertainment interspersed with folk-songs. However, it was the considerations concerning the necessity for organised music teaching in an academy similar to the Russian Academy, together with differences of opinion concerning the significance of folk music that led eventually to a conflict in the 1860's between Anton Rubinstein and Mily Balakirev, an ideological dispute, which would colour Russian musical development for the next half century.

In 1861 Rubinstein publically condemned the state of music in Russia. His main critic was Mily Balakirev together with his group of musical amateurs, the *Kuchka*. Balakirev mistrusted conventional and formally organised academic education. He believed the musician should have artistic freedom and remain ignorant of accepted rules governing harmonisation and counterpoint which killed imagination, inspiration and the soul of the musician. The *Kuchka* were united in their belief that national heritage resided in the folklore and folk-songs of the nation and these could be used and refined into an intellectual art-form suitable for the stage.

The strengths and weaknesses of Balakirev's application can be seen from the output of 'his' composers. Their greatest success was in vocal music. Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, with its historical background, and Rimsky-Korsakov's use of folklore and fairy-tales in his operas can be considered original contributions to the field of Russian opera. The following examines the importance of folk-music in Russian society in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the use to which it was put by Rimsky-Korsakov.

### 5.1. The uncertain path of folk music in Russia

Following the introduction of Christianity into Russia in the 10<sup>th</sup> century, the Church increasingly viewed the oral poetry of the masses with hostility, considering it as an expression of the "unclean" heathen past. Linked to this were the many songs, tales, games, and ceremonies which had their roots in pre-Christian heathen cults, myths and magic. Anything that went against the teachings and regulations of the Church were outlawed.<sup>525</sup>

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<sup>525</sup> See, for instance, *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800. Vol.1. Op.cit.*: 38–39.

The early leaning in Russia towards the culture and religion of the Byzantine East led to the church having a greater hold on society than in Western Europe. The Orthodox Church had strict regulations concerning their churches; music was to be that of unaccompanied singing and the only art that of the iconostasis. The Church was also opposed to folk music since much of it was based on pagan rites and customs. This eventually led to an official abolition of the national minstrelsy, the *skomorokhi*, in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century by Tsar Alexei Mikhaylovich.<sup>526</sup> In the West, Gregorian chant went into decline as harmony and counterpoint developed, however, the Orthodox equivalent, *znamenny* chant, existed without a counterpart in secular music. Although the Patriarch of Moscow, Nikon's, reforms in 1653, aimed at, amongst others, a reform of rituals and a modernisation of music, a lack of instrumental art-music led to a stagnation in musical development in comparison to Western Europe.<sup>527</sup>

Irrespective of the earlier repression by the Church, roving musicians and peasant performers persevered. The singers performed a variety of popular folk-songs, mythical and historical ballads and licentious songs to accompaniments on domestic instruments such as the *gusli*, *gudok* and *arfa*. They played a significant role in society in the upkeep and spread of folk music and folklore traditions.

The Ukraine in particular was noted for its music. The Kiev-Mohyla Academy, one of the oldest academic and theological schools among Orthodox Christian and East European countries, already given the status of an Academy in 1658 and subsequently recognised by Tsar Ivan V in 1694, was noted for its singing. This was also supplemented by the establishment of the Hlukhiv School of Singing established in 1738 to train singers for the Imperial Court Choir in St. Petersburg. Both Bortniansky and Maksym Berezovsky are thought to have studied there.<sup>528</sup> It was already in the 17<sup>th</sup> century that people began to formulate manuscript collections of religious songs, which were called "psalms" and "canticles". Gradually secular songs found their way into these collections.<sup>529</sup>

### First Collections

One of the first records concerning folk music is that of the Englishmen Richard James who went to Moscow in 1618 as chaplain to Sir Dudley Digges. During a visit to Archangel in 1619 – 20 he wrote down six Russian folksongs dealing with the *Time of*

<sup>526</sup> The role of the *skomorokhi* has been discussed in section 4.2. See *Ib.*: 117–121.

<sup>527</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>528</sup> See, for instance, Magocsi Paul. *Op.cit.*: 237 and 302; Ritzarev Marina 2006. *Op.cit.*: 70, 105.

<sup>529</sup> Sokolov Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 45.

*Troubles*.<sup>530</sup> However it was not until the next century that interest in the folk customs and songs started to develop.

In the second half of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, irrespective of Church attitudes, the middle and upper classes developed an appetite for peasant choral dances and songs. In fact, contests were held between troupes of landowners' singers and musicians. In 1759 Grigory Nikolaevich Teplov produced a songbook, *Intervals of Repose from Labour* (Между делом безделье), which he collected from these contests.<sup>531</sup> Catherine II was motivated by the Enlightenment and realised that the establishment of a cultural legacy was necessary for a national identity to develop. Following the founding of the *Russian Academy* in 1757, the next step was to ensure that the native Russian language became fully established and in everyday use, also in publications. This was a part of Catherine's policy in developing an awareness of cultural heritage as a significant contribution to identity. And it was through the music, folklore and folksongs that she raised the aristocracy's awareness of the richness of peasant culture. This led to an interest in the collecting of folk music and their transcriptions. The first of these, as previously mentioned, was Trutovsky's collection that appeared in 1776.<sup>532</sup> This was followed by *A Collection of Russian Folk Songs with their melodies, set to music by Ivan Prach* (Собрание русских народных песен с их голосами. На музыку положил Иван Прач) in 1790, compiled by Lvov.<sup>533</sup> There also began to appear "songbooks" without notes, with only written texts but with an indication of the tune to which the texts were to be sung. These collections formed the initial pillars for the use of folk songs in Russian art music of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Some light songbooks also appeared in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century intended for the city bourgeoisie, the minor officials, the merchant class and also for the literate peasantry – *Collection of Various Songs* (Собрание разных песен), Parts 1 – 4 (1770 – 1774), Mikhail Dmitrievich Chulkov. This was republished in 1776 and in 1780 – 81 it appeared in an edition by N.I. Novikov *A New and Complete Collection of Russian*

<sup>530</sup> See Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 55;

[http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/files/docs/russian/slavonic\\_studies.pdf](http://www.mod-langs.ox.ac.uk/files/docs/russian/slavonic_studies.pdf). Ref is also made to: Simoni, P. K., 1907. *Velikorusskie pesni, zapisannye v 1619—20 gg. dlja Ričarda Džemca na krajnem severe Moskovskogo tsarstva*, St. Petersburg. James's manuscripts were deposited in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

<sup>531</sup> See Findeizen Nikolai 2008. *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800. Volume 2.* *Op.cit.*: 214–221 and ; Ritzarev Marina 2006. *Op.cit.*: 47–52.

<sup>532</sup> See, for instance, *ib.*: 234–250.

<sup>533</sup> *Ib.*: 251–252. See also, Seaman Gerald 1967. *History of Russian Music Vol. I. From its Origins to Dargomyzhsky*. New York and Washington, Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers: 90–92. For a discussion on the stylistic elements of this collection see Vassiliadis Evangeline 1977. *Overture and Symphony in Eighteenth-Century Russia*. New York University Ph.D thesis: 68–78.

*Songs* (six parts).<sup>534</sup> Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and into the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries a number of songbooks appeared. These contain a very great number of songs which had been taken down from the lips of country and city singers, traditional songs of the peasantry, the bourgeoisie and soldiers, for instance.<sup>535</sup>

Pyotr Vasilevich Kireevsky, together with his brother Ivan Vasilevich, was one of the outstanding representatives of Slavophilism. They believed that the Russian peasants had preserved much of the old, pre-Petrine Russian culture in their social forms, especially in the peasant communal structure. Pyotr had an enthusiasm for collecting folksongs which he started to do in 1831. This was only published between 1860 and 1879 due in part to Kireevsky's minute care in preparing the texts for print and also the excessive censorship of Nicholas I<sup>st</sup>.<sup>536</sup> The latter wanted to ensure that folklore also was in the spirit of the official doctrine "Orthodoxy, autocracy, nationalism". Chaadaev's view of Russia was extremely negative:

There are no charming remembrances, no graceful images in the people's memory; our national tradition is devoid of any powerful teaching. Cast a look upon the many centuries in our past, upon the expanse of the soil we inhabit, and you will find no endearing reminiscence, no venerable memorial, to speak to you powerfully of the past, and to reproduce it for you in a colourful manner. We live only in the narrowest of presents, without past and without future, in the midst of a flat calm.<sup>537</sup>

Kireevsky and others saw in the traditional songs of the people the refutation of Chaadaev's thesis.

It was on this extensive interest in folklore and music that the Russian composers of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century were able to capitalise. Balakirev had a fond love of folk music which he harmonised. Rimsky-Korsakov's own collection of *One Hundred Russian Folksongs*, Op. 24, 1875–1876 was published by Bessel and has a preface written by the composer dated November 1877. Subsequently Rimsky-Korsakov edited and harmonised 40 songs collected by Filippov which received official approval for publication by the publishers Jurgenson (founded in 1861) on June 2 (14) 1882.<sup>538</sup> Jurgenson had also commissioned an arrangement of fifty folk-songs from Tchaikovsky

<sup>534</sup> Seaman *Ib.*: 87.

<sup>535</sup> See Swan Alfred 1943. The Nature of Russian Folk-Song. *The Musical Quarterly* 29 (4): 498–503.

<sup>536</sup> Миллер. В. О. и Сперанский М. Н. 1911. *Пѣсни собранныя П. В. Кирѣевскимъ* (Songs collected by P. V. Kireevsky). Москва, Печатня А. И. Снегиревой: XX, XXIV and XLIII.  
<http://dlib.rsl.ru/viewer/01004003658#?page=1>. 03–01–2013.

<sup>537</sup> Chaadayev Peter Yakovlevich 1969. *Op.cit.*: 36.

<sup>538</sup> MML: 163–166 and n12 and 13. See also Римский-Корсаков. Н. А. 1977. *Сто Русских Народных Песен* (One Hundred Russian Folksongs). Москва, Издательство «Музыка».

in 1868. For this he used Konstantin Petrovich Villebois' (1817 – 1882) collection of 100 Russian folk-songs from 1860 and Balakirev's which had appeared in 1866.<sup>539</sup>

## 5.2. Russian folk music and reminiscences of identity in Rimsky-Korsakov's operas

There is a general impression that since the Russian song reflects the soul of the people and the harsh climate, it is melancholy. However, this is a broad generalisation and a close examination shows that this applies more specifically to the slow songs. The *khorovods* are in general lively and humorous in character as are many other celebratory, non-dance related songs.<sup>540</sup>

There are many ways of classifying Russian folk-songs. The songs were traditional or peasant songs and can be divided between ritual and non-ritual events. The rituals were normally linked to the working of the land and seasons which form two fundamental cycles – spring and autumn. These *calendar songs* are the oldest songs in Russian folklore, which have a pagan cultural background; when people worshipped the sun, *Yarilo*. After Christianity in the 10<sup>th</sup> century there was a blending of the pagan and Christian cultures leading to a duality of religion, the so-called *dvoyeveriye*. Although the ruling classes demanded adherence to Christian doctrine they in turn had to adapt to the traditions linked to an agrarian-based pagan traditions. In particular, the old agrarian heathen festivals had to be combined with the Christian holidays, and vice-versa. For the peasant community the ceremonies were important since they were linked to 'productive magic' giving fertility, wealth and love.<sup>541</sup>

Other ritual songs are linked to family events, births, weddings and death. The non-ritual songs form the largest group and include non-agricultural work songs, *bylinas* or historic and epic songs and various forms of lyrical song. Although particularly making the case for the Ukraine in "*On Little Russian songs*" (О малороссийских песнях), Gogol wrote:

Я не распространяюсь о важности народных песен. Это народная история, живая, яркая, исполненная красок, истины, обнажающая всю жизнь народа.<sup>542</sup>

<sup>539</sup> Brown David 1992. *Tchaikovsky Volume 1 The Early Years (1840–1874)*. London, Gollancz Paperbacks: 160–161.

<sup>540</sup> These aspects of Russian song are outlined in depth in the introductory chapter of Ralston's *The Songs of the Russian People*.

<sup>541</sup> Prohkorov Vadim 2002. *Russian Folk-songs. Music Genres and History*. Lanham, Maryland and London, The Scarecrow Press Inc: 3, 17–18.

<sup>542</sup> Гоголь. Н. В. 1952. *О литературе. Избранные статьи и письма* (On literature. Selected articles and letters). Москва, Государственное Издательство Художественной Литературы: 46.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of folksongs. This is a history of the people, their liveliness, colour, performance beauty, truths, making bare the whole life of the people.<sup>543</sup>

According to Prokhorov, the development of folk-song can be divided into three periods. The earliest songs, which are pre-14<sup>th</sup> century, are characterised by simple music and poetry and generally limited to two to four tones. As pointed out by Swann, at this time there was an interaction between folk song and chant.<sup>544</sup>

*A pattern of the 1<sup>st</sup> echos (rutvó)* Palchikov, Peasant Songs, № 109

*A pattern of the 5<sup>th</sup> echos (ossóka)* Palchikov, Peasant Songs, № 31

*A pattern of the 6<sup>th</sup> echos (perevolóka)* Rimsky-Korsakov, Dance of the Buffoons

*Fragment from a hirmos (8<sup>th</sup> echos) Nativty of the Bk Mary* Liadov, 30 Folksongs, Glorification of the Married Man

*A pattern of the 6<sup>th</sup> echos (podtyát)* Melgunov, Folk Song from Kaluga Province

*Fragment from the same hirmos as above* Melgunov, Music of the Horn-Pipers

*Beginning of the Great Prokeimenon for Quinquagesima Sunday* Liadov, Roundelay from the Province of Yaroslav

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*A Semik Song*  
Moderato

I - yo, i - yo, be - ryo - zín' - ka, za - vi -

vay - sya, be - ryo - z - ka, za - vi - vay - sya, kud - rya - va.

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<sup>543</sup> Tansl. J. Nelson.

<sup>544</sup> Swann Alfred 1940. The Znamenny Chant of the Russian Church—Part II. *The Musical Quarterly*, 26 (3), 365–366.

<sup>545</sup> *Ib.*: 366.



Between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century the narrative influenced the musical and poetic phraseology. At the same time the syllabic structure and rhythm began to influence the melodies, which were now based on six or seven tones. The Ioanian, Mixolydian and Aolian modes are commonly found in Russian folk-music. Pentatonic and whole-tone scales continued to be used. Chordal harmony was rare, however, the rural environment led to counter-voice polyphony where one group would start whilst a second group would perhaps introduce variants; a third group might ornament the original melody. These various forms of folk-song were used extensively by the 19<sup>th</sup> century composers and helped to establish a Russian national sound.<sup>547</sup>

A Ringing Bell

Largo

548

The third development occurred as a result of the social changes which were occurring in Russia in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries where folk and the professional arts interacted. Peter the Great's reforms led to a greater interest in secular music and influences from Western culture. At the same time there was a rapid urbanisation. Urban songs, although often having a traditional peasant song base, had a more developed harmony. The earliest form of urban song was the *kant* having a chordal harmony and sung a cappella. This was the predecessor to the Russian *romans*. As Findeizen notes these were created essentially by unknown composers responding to the demands of everyday life. In this respect the melody, rhythms and moods of the songs followed the fashion of the day.<sup>549</sup> The lyrics were generally based on poems by recognised authors such as Alexander Pushkin. Perhaps one of the best known of this genre is *Kalinka*.

<sup>546</sup> Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 4. Note: Semik was an ancient Slavic fertility festival celebrated at the beginning of June.

<sup>547</sup> See, for instance, Swann Alfred 1943. The Nature of Russian Folk-Song. *The Musical Quarterly*, 29 (4), 498–501 and 508–513; Vernadsky Nina. *Op.cit.*: 94–99; Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 5–11.

<sup>548</sup> Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 8.

<sup>549</sup> Findeizen Nikolai 2008. *History of Music in Russia from Antiquity to 1800. Vol.2. The Eighteenth Century*. Ed. and annotated by Miloš Velimirović and Claudia R.Jensen. Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana University Press:



### 5.2.1 Ritual or Calendar Songs

#### Christmas and New Year and *Christmas Eve*

*Syvatki* was celebrated at the time of the winter solstice when people went from house to house singing songs called *kolyadas* or *kolyadkas*. This was not sung solo but by a group of young people who walked from house to house asking permission from the host to sing a *kolyada*. In the song they praised the host and hostess and wished them success for which they were rewarded with food or special traditional biscuits. It can refer to a song or to a living person, “a *koljada* was born on Christmas Eve”.<sup>550</sup>

*Koljada* has come  
On Christmas Eve.  
Give us a cow,  
A head full of butter!  
And may God give to the man  
In this house  
To him thick rye,  
Plentiful rye.<sup>551</sup>

Although the Church tried to stamp out paganism by prohibitions and organising their own celebrations to encompass the full Christmas cycle from Christmas Eve to Epiphany it can be seen from an Imperial decree in 1648 giving a sketch of Christmas holiday ceremonies in Moscow that both pagan and Christian traditions became entwined: “ [ ...] along the streets and byways, on Christmas Eve many people have invoked Kaleda and Usen, and on the eve before the Epiphany of Our Lord they have invoked the Plough.”<sup>552</sup> In many *kolyadka*’s there is seen an obvious adaption of Christian legends and myths to the requirements of agrarian magic “And behind that plough is the Lord himself.”<sup>553</sup> Many of the New Year and Christmas ceremonies also had a fortune-telling significance looking towards a future harvest, wealth, fertility, and marriage. One of these traditions is described in Chapter Five, stanza viii of Puskin’s *Eugene Onegin*.

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132–133. Popova discusses the characteristics of the *romans* in: Попова.Т. 1964. *Русское народное музыкальное творчество. Том второй*. (Russian Folk-Music Works. Vol.2.) Москва, Издательство Музыка: 36–40.

<sup>550</sup>Reeder Roberta (Transl. and Ed.) 1975. *Russian Folk Lyrics*. Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania University Press: 3; Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 187.

<sup>551</sup>Reeder.R. *Op.cit.*: 85.

<sup>552</sup>Sokolov. Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 182.

<sup>553</sup>Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 193.

Татьяна любопытным взором  
 На воск потопленный глядит:  
 Он чудно вылитым узором  
 Ей что-то чудное гласит.<sup>554</sup>

Tatyana looks with pulses racing  
 at sunken wax inside a bowl:  
 beyond a doubt, its wondrous tracing  
 fortells for her some wondrous role.<sup>555</sup>

This tradition was accompanied by special songs called *podblyudnayas*, fortune-telling songs. At the end of each line the word слава (*slava*-glory) is sung. Perhaps one of the most well-known of this type of song is *Slava* (Glory) “Roll a shining pearl on a velvet cloth” which foretells marriage<sup>556</sup>:



This was used by Mussorgsky in *Boris Godunov*, Rimsky-Korsakov in *The Tsar's Bride* and Tchaikovsky in *Mazeppa* but with “Glory” referring to the Tsar.

Sokolov notes that in Russian folklore considerably fewer of the *kolyadka*'s are preserved than in the Ukraine.<sup>557</sup>

For *Christmas Eve* Rimsky-Korsakov wanted to stay close to Gogol's original taken from the *Dikanka* stories and consequently undertook to write the libretto himself. Due to his interest in pagan folklore and its link to folk-life he wanted also to emphasise its role in village life. With respect to folklore he joined Gogol's tale to the mythical figures of Kolyada, the God of Winter, and Ovsen, representing Spring, both being linked to the sun and the winter solstice. The winter solstice, *svyatki*, in the Slavic calendar is the first

<sup>554</sup> <http://www.rvb.ru/pushkin/01text/04onegin/01onegin/0836.htm?start=0&length=all>.

<sup>555</sup> Pushkin Alexander 1977. *Eugene Onegin*. *Op.cit.*: 136.

<sup>556</sup> Prohkorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 24.

<sup>557</sup> Sokolov Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 184.

holiday of the year, as “winter turns to frost, peasant to holidays” is a common saying.<sup>558</sup> This celebration marks the end of winter’s domination and the turn towards spring. In addition to emphasising the Christian festival Gogol relates how the night before Christmas is the time when the devil has “one last night to wander about the wide world and teach good people to sin”.<sup>559</sup> The linking of the Devil and the witch Solokha to Kolyada and Ovsen was achieved through the use of several *kolyada*’s in the opera. The ritual of groups of young people going from door to door singing carols and related *kolyadka*’s is clearly portrayed. The composer wanted to highlight the myths and rituals associated with the festival but also the Christian aspects consequently, he gave his opera a sub-title ‘*byl’-kolyadka*’ (a *kolyadka* came to life).<sup>560</sup>

The Overture of Rimsky-Korsakov’s opera evokes a feeling of a dark, cold, snowy night with the snow sparkling in the light of the moon. The set is a village street in Dikanka. The time of year is obvious since Scene 1 is set with Solokha sitting on the roof of her house with Chort, the devil, on another singing a *kolyada* together *Kolyada was born/On the eve of Christmas* (Уродилась Коляда. /Наканунѣ Рождества). It can be assumed that this was composed by Rimsky-Korsakov since it does not appear in any of the recognised collections. The severe winter conditions are clearly pictured in Rimsky-Korsakov’s orchestration of Scene 2 between Panas and Chub with the swirling wind in the strings (*allegro assai*). Irrespective of the conditions Chub encourages Panas to brave the elements and come to the Deacon’s party where there will be drink and eat jam *No, we’ll walk to the Deacon’s for a drinking bout, there will be jam for us at the Deacon’s* (Нѣтъ, пойдемъ мы дяку на кутью, Варенуха будетъ намъ у дяка), mark 24, sung to the Ukrainian dance Ой-рудуду, рудуду **no. 202**\*<sup>561</sup>. This is a Ukrainian folk-dance to which the composer made some minor modifications whilst maintaining the rhythm. In Gogol’s original the author develops the infatuation Vakula has for Oksana, Chub’s daughter, however, Rimsky-Korsakov is keen to continue setting the scene of the village traditional celebrations, which Oksana is interested to join. She is waiting for the arrival of the village girls with whom she wants to spend Christmas Eve. Her encounter with Vakula Act I Scene 2 is interrupted by the girls, Scene 3, singing a *kolyada* addressed to Oksana *A red elder stands in the meadow. Holy evening*. (На лугу красна калина стоить. Святый вечеръ) **no. 194**, (mark 59 – *колядка дивчатъ*). The

<sup>558</sup> Prohkorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 18.

<sup>559</sup> Gogol Nikolai 1998. *The Collected Tales of Nicholas Gogol*. Transl. Richard Pevear and Larissa Volokhansky. London, Granta Books: 20.

<sup>560</sup> MML: 381.

\* The scores used are listed in Appendix 7.

<sup>561</sup> Бачинская Н. 1962. *Народные песни в творчестве русских композиторов* (Folk-songs in the works of Russian composers). Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 126. (\* Numbers in bold refer to song number in this collection.)

scene ends with Oksana and the girls teasing Vakula about getting boots like the Tsaritsa's to a typical Ukrainian *gopak* dance.

At the beginning of Act II Solokha and the Devil are warming themselves by the fire and sing the *kolyada* with which they started Act I. They also refer to the short dark day of Ovsen'. Whilst in Act I they sang of preventing Oksana and Vakula forming a union in Act II they want to prevent the union of the sun and winter, Kolyada and Ovsen wishing that *Koyada doesn't ride/Ovsen doesn't go for a walk* (Колядѣ бы не ѣзжать/Овсеню бы не гулять), mark 80. When Golova arrives to visit Solokha, to find shelter from the bad weather, he enters and greets her saying *Greetings my sweet Solokha* (Здравствуй, милая Солоха), mark 82, to the tune of the Ukrainian lyrical folk-song, **no. 217**, *I am walking to a girl* (Як пішов я до дівчини). The later entrance of Chub, mark 99, is also to a Ukrainian lyrical song melody *Гей, чумаче, чумаче*, **no. 207** which he sings whilst playing a bandura, a folk instrument, which is imitated by pizzicato in the orchestra strings. Scene 4 takes place in the village street. Vakula has brought the sacks containing Solokha's suitors in hiding, into the street. The young people of the village together with Oksana come down the street initially singing a Ukrainian *kolyada*, *Колядаю, колядаю* **no. 192**, mark 115, wishing the host good health and continuing with *Oh Christ sow generously this evening* (Ой, сів Христос вечеряти) **no. 193**, which emphasises the agrarian view of the season, to the words *The moon and dawn moved in the sky* (Ходить мѣсяць съ зарею по небу). Later a further Ukrainian *kolyada* is introduced, mark 116, *Whose house, the house of a gentleman?* (Чи дома дома панъ господарь?) **no. 195**. Panas also joins in the fun playing a goat in another *kolyada*, *This goat recently came from Moscow with a long plait* (А эта коза не давно з Москви з довгими косьми) **no. 191**, 8 bars before mark 125 (in tempo) Гогого, коза, with slight alterations to the original words.

Act III starts in the hut of Patsuk where he is sitting on the floor and eating *vareniki* (dumplings) which magically jump from the bowl via a dish of smetana into his mouth. This is represented by staccato figures in the violins and flutes of the orchestra jumping to a high register.<sup>562</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov included this section in the libretto due to the importance of eating in the traditional celebrations of Christmas. Originally this had been omitted by Yakov Petrovich Polonsky when he initially wrote the libretto for Serov and subsequently used by Tchaikovsky for his opera based on the same story, *Cheriviki*.<sup>563</sup>

<sup>562</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov. *Christmas Eve score*. *Op.cit.*: 177.

<sup>563</sup> See, for instance, Brown David 1992. *Tchaikovsky*. Vol.2. *Op.cit.*: 306 and 314–318.

The interlude, scene 6, “The games and dances of the stars” which pictures Vakula’s ride on the devil’s back to St.Petersburg includes four Slavic dances, a *mazurka*, a *march*, a *khorovod* and a *czardas*. This is followed by the Devils *kolyada* sung to the same tune and words of Solokha’s and the Devil’s opening *kolyada* in Act I. Making a lot of noise with various kitchen utensils the devils try to prevent the arrival of Kolyada and meeting Ovsen on Christmas Day and in their *kolyada* sing that they will pull down the beautiful sun and hope that winter will not stop.

Following the meeting with the Tsaritsa, Scene 7 contains a ballet sequence showing the triumphal procession of Kolyada and Ovsen, the end of winter and the devils reign, and the coming of spring. The chorus continues the *kolyada* sung by the devils but now calling the young people to celebrate. In Oksana’s recitative and aria, Act IV, Scene 2, she sings of how difficult it will be to find another suitor like Vakula, *It is unlikely to catch another who is like my Vakula* (Вряд ли есть другой такой парубокъ, чтобы былъ какъ Вакула мой), but at the same time celebrates the death of winter and looks forward to the Spring; this is a combination of two Ukrainian Spring folk-songs, mark 223, *Fly arrow* (Летіла стріла) **no. 187** followed by *Come out, come out, dear Ivan* (Вийди, вийди, Іваньку) **no. 185**.

223  
*dolce*

Вряд ли есть другой та-кой па-ру-бокъ,

(Quartetto solo)

*pp legato assai*

что-бы былъ пригожъ какъ Ва-ку-ла мой, Что-бы, такъ какъ онъ, ба-до-валъ ме-ня,

*p*



264

*rit f*

Чтоб жа-зды мо-ля да до-блы, Что-бы такъ какъ-онъ ба-до-блы мо-ня,

*sempre legato*

Чтобъ жи-ть и искъ вы-по-силь, Ахъ жи-ть бы-да

*pp*

ль до брыдъ мо-лодъ-ночь и но-лес-ко-ня, де-при-вет-ли-на. Во-ро-тись, ку-нись,

ты до-ной скорй, то-ба бла-па-го по-до-би-да а.

*У-сиде, sempre.*

ТОРИ, КТО

564

## 187. ЛЕТИЛА СТІЛА

Скоро

Ле-ті-ла стрі-ла да-ві-нець се-ла.

Ой, ра-но, ра-но, ланкі-нець се-ла.

Рубец, бі

## 185. ВІЙДИ, ВІЙДИ, ІВАНЬКУ

Скоро

Вий-ди, вий-ди, і-вань-ку,

за-світ-вай нам вес-ну, ку, зі-му, ва-ди,

не-спі-ва-ди, не-спі-до-жи-да-ди.

Рубец, і

565

Since Vakula will only relate his adventures to the Dikanka tales storyteller, on Oksana's lead, the opera ends by saying this tale will be told in the future accompanied by several Slavic folk instruments: *Play on banduras, trumpets and oboes and on the*

<sup>564</sup> *Ib.*: 263–264.

<sup>565</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 116–117.

*night before Christmas sing kolyadas* (Скрипачей и бандуристовъ, трубачей и зурначей, И про ночь предъ Рождествомъ Быль колядку запоем).<sup>566</sup>

In this opera Rimsky-Korsakov followed almost exactly the traditions of the celebration of Christmas. It was a time when both Christian and pagan celebrations coincided and even today the same songs and festival themes are prevalent in Russian society. At a time when the nation was searching for a 'true' identity it is not surprising that both Gogol and Rimsky-Korsakov wanted to emphasise the everyday traditions irrespective of their origins. In keeping close to Gogol's original text it is of note that not only all the ten folk songs recorded by Bachinskaya are of Ukrainian origin but also half of them are *kolyadas* appropriate to the season portrayed. Rimsky-Korsakov essentially maintained the lyrics in their original form. In addition the importance of food and drink at this season is prevalent throughout the opera.

### ***Maslenitsa (Shrovetide) and The Snow Maiden***

The Church found that many of the spring traditions were celebrated during the Lent season. Since they were unable to abolish them they were incorporated into the week preceding Lent. Merrymaking was not allowed in the seven week period before Easter. *Maslenitsa* is celebrated in the last week before Lent, but has pagan origins as the farewell to winter and a worship of the sun and sun gods. It is a carnival with plenty of gluttony and drunkenness, singing and dancing and a celebration of recently married couples. All this is linked to the agrarian-based pagan mind. The peasant community looks towards satisfaction though a good harvest and the associated folk-songs encourage marriage and fertility, both in the family and among the domestic animals. Consequently many of the songs also have a central eroticism.<sup>567</sup> The ceremonial aspects of *maslenitsa* are directed towards the return of the sun but the return of both it and the birds will only occur through games and symbols, the baking of pancakes and the *bliny* as representations of the sun and the dancing of round dances, *khorovals*, for instance.<sup>568</sup> There are many folk-songs to mark the beginning of spring. After a long winter people believed that by singing spring songs, *vesnyankas*, this would encourage it to come quicker. The Ukrainian song *Come out, come out, dear Ivan, and sing to us vesnyanka* (Вийди, вийди, Іваньку, заспівай нам веснянку) mentioned previously was used by Rimsky-Korsakov at the end of *Christmas Eve*.

<sup>566</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov. *Christmas Eve score*. *Op.cit.*: 289–290.

<sup>567</sup> Sokolov. Y. M. *Op.cit.*: 187–192.

<sup>568</sup> Prohkorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 28–29.





*The Snow Maiden*, composed in 1880–81 by Rimsky-Korsakov, concentrates on this period of *maslenitsa*. It was adapted from Ostrovsky's verse-drama and is based on folklore stretching from *maslenitsa*, representing the end to winter, through to midsummer, *kupala*, when the sun-god *Yarilo* becomes dominant. Snegurochka is the off-spring of Grandfather Frost and Beautiful Spring, a maiden of snow and ice. Her parents keep her away from the sun, which would melt her as would human feelings of love. When she is united in love with Mizgir the sun's rays strike her and she melts away freeing the Tsar's lands from the grip of winter.<sup>571</sup> This sacrifice of the Snow Maiden follows folk customs and Rimsky-Korsakov clearly links the opera to the appropriate seasonal calendar songs and *khorovods*. "By linking the passage of the seasons to the human experience of love, moreover, Ostrovsky points the link between procreative sexuality and the ever-turning wheel of nature".<sup>572</sup> It is also interesting to note that in *The Snow Maiden* Rimsky-Korsakov reflects back on the theme of authority used earlier in *May Night*; this is seen by comparing the music associated with Ded Moroz, bar 76, of the Prologue with that of Pan Golova Act I, Scene 7, Trio, at HH.

Голова. LE MAIRE.  
DER ÄLTESTE.

ОСЯТЬ - е ОВО - е ВЪДЪ ДОЛ - ЖНА ПО - ЧИ - ТАТЬ, ЧТО САМЪ ПАНЪ ГО - ЛО - ВА ОТ - ЛИ -  
 Eh - re und Glück doch es rech - nen dir an, dass der Äl - te - ste selbst sich dir -  
 prends - tu donc pas que tu dois être heu - reu - se quand moi, moi, le mai - re, je

*p* Tromboni e Corni.

ЧА ОТЬ ТО - БИ, О - ТО ВСЯХЪ ОТЬ ДИВЧАТЬ ОТ - ДЪ - ЛЯ - ЕСТЬ ОД - НУ; А ВЪДЪ ПАНЪ ГО - ЛО - ВА ВЪСЯХЪ ВА -  
 huldvoll be - zeigt, un - ter al - len den Dir - nen den Vor - zug dir giebt, denn der Äl - te - ste ist doch der -  
 tof - fre la main, que tu sois pré - fé - rée en - tre tou - tes par moi, car le mai - re est, ma foi, le pre -

573

<sup>571</sup> See opera outline: Taruskin Richard 1992. *The Snow Maiden*, The. *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. Ed. Stanley Sadie. London, The Macmillan Press Limited. Vol.4: 428–430.

<sup>572</sup> Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 188.

<sup>573</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *May Night Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: Act I, Scene 7, Trio, at HH.

подкрадусь, подползу я туманам. Падде -

ревнейдыможьзавивается, в одну сторону -

80

pp legato

574

In *The Snow Maiden* Rimsky-Korsakov made the most extensive use of folk-songs from his own anthology than in any other opera.

Rimsky-Korsakov's libretto follows Ostrovsky's original tale. The Prologue abounds with folk songs appropriate for the time of year. A recitative and aria by *Spring* (Весна) is followed by *The song and dance of the birds* (Песня и пляска птиц), which is composed of two folk-songs, the first *Bell ring in Evlashev village* (Звон колокол во Евлашеве-селе) **no. 103**, a wedding song, which is found in a modified form in the orchestra played by the oboes and clarinets at *The birds have gathered* (Сбирались птицы), bars 22–35 and later again at bars 135–147 (mark 19 and 25 respectively, orchestral score).

<sup>574</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, N. *The Snow Maiden*. Piano Score. Op.cit.: 43.

19

Fl. p.  
Fl.  
Ob.  
C. ingl.  
Clar. az.  
Fag.  
Cor.  
Triang.  
Cassa.  
Sopr.  
Viol.  
V-le.  
V-c.

Оби-ра-лись пти - цы, оби-ра-лись  
Ka-men die Vö - gel, ka-men die

19P

пѣв - чи ста-да-ми, ста-да - ми. Са-ди-лись пти - цы, са-ди-лись пѣв - чи ра-да-ми, ра-  
Sän - ger schwarmweis, schwarm - weis. Sassen die Vö - gel, sassen die Sän - ger reith - weis,

575

The second *Орел воевода* (Eagle voivode) used unaltered, is the *bylina* “About birds” (О птицах), **no. 128** at bar 64. Later on the chorus sing three folk-songs connected with the ‘sending off of *maslenitsa*’ (Проводы масленицы):

<sup>575</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/The\\_Snow\\_Maiden\\_\(opera\)\\_Rimsky\\_Korsakov,\\_Nikolay](http://imslp.org/wiki/The_Snow_Maiden_(opera)_Rimsky_Korsakov,_Nikolay). 05-09-2011: 23.

- *Long ago! Like the little eggs! (Далалынь, далалынь! По яиченьёу! Христос воскрес, сына божья!)* **no. 5**, to the words *Early the chickens will sing around spring. Goodbye, goodbye, Maslenitsa!* (Раным-рано куры запели, про весну обвестили. Прощай, прощай, Масленица)
- *We're waiting for maslenitsa* (А мы масленицу дождаем) **no. 4** at bar 99, to the words *With joy we meet you* (Веселенько тебя встречать) and
- *Beyond the river a light shines* (Калёда, малёда) **no. 1** at bars 153 and again at 195 where the chorus sing *we sing vesniyankas* (запоем веснянки). However, this starts with *With joy...beside us the mountains flow, beginning to play in the gully* (Веселенько...У нас с гор потоки, заиграй овражки) which is equivalent to the sentiment of the folksong.

For the first the chorus sing about the chickens beginning to sing as spring starts, the second about being happy when meeting and being together and the last about streams forming and carts moving as winter recedes.

As mentioned previously, *Wet-tailed Butter-week, be off to the courtyard* (Масленица мокрохвостка, поезжай долой со двора), starting at bar 139, concerning the sending off of *maslenitsa*, Rimsky-Korsakov noted that this “is a scoffingly sacrilegious reminder of the Orthodox Mass for the dead.”<sup>576</sup>

The prelude to Act I uses two similar shepherd folk tunes in the orchestration; the first on the French horn, **no. 88**, and the second on the oboe, **no. 90** (mark 86 orchestral score), which is carried through into the clarinet solo just prior to *Lel's* entry.<sup>577</sup>

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<sup>576</sup> MML: 237.

<sup>577</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/The\\_Snow\\_Maiden\\_\(opera\)\\_Rimsky\\_Korsakov,\\_Nikolay](http://imslp.org/wiki/The_Snow_Maiden_(opera)_Rimsky_Korsakov,_Nikolay). 05–09–2011: 104.



ДѢЙСТВІЕ ПЕРВОЕ.  
ВСТУПЛЕНИЕ.

ERSTER AUZUG.  
EINLEITUNG.

86 Allegro moderato, pastorale.  $\text{♩} = 100$ .

Flauto piccolo.  
Flauti  
I.  
II.  
Oboi  
I.  
II.  
Clarineti in B.  
Fagotti  
I. II.  
Corna in F.  
III. IV.  
Trombe in B.  
Tromboni  
e  
Tuba  
Timpani  
Triangolo  
I.  
Violini  
II.  
Viola  
Violoncelli  
Contrabassi  
Ob. I.  
Ob. II.  
Clar.  
Fag.  
Tr-bni I. II.  
Tr-bni III.  
V.-c. e C-b.

In Bachinskaya's classification these are called instrumental shepherd folk-tunes (*Пастуший наигрыш. Инструментальные наигрыши*). The second tune is carried through to his first solo following the duet with Snegurochka. The wedding ceremony scene between Kupala and Mizgir (*Свадебный обряд*), gives Rimsky-Korsakov exceptional possibilities to exploit typical the wedding folk-songs and traditions of *maslenitsa*. The scene is already set by the clarinets introducing the folk-song, *What a small river, how fast* (Как за речкою, [как] за быстрою) sung by Mizgir later to the words *Between you maidens are you not hiding the beautiful Kupava?* (Красавицы-

девицы, между вами не прячется ль красавица Купава?) **no. 107**, a wedding song, which is no.100 in the composer's own anthology. However, following the introduction Kupala sings a sad protracted song about parting from her friends *Darling, darling girls* (Голубушки, голубушки девицы) **no. 108a**. This is heard clearly in the accompanying oboe solo. The original words are later, just prior to mark 116 (orchestral score), sung by the chorus *The peahen's light doesn't go into the courtyard* (То не пава свет по двору ходит). This continues as the *khorovod*, *In the field the linden tree stands high...* (Ай, во поле липонька...) **no. 15** which is a Russian round dance originally noted in the Lvov-Prach collection, which looks forward to *semik* traditions.

Просторная поляна в лесу; справа и слева сплошной лес стеной; перед лесом по обе стороны небольшие кусты. Вдали, меж кустами, видны богатые пастбища. Вечерняя звезда догорает. Молодые берегеди ходят круги, один круг ближе к зрителям, другой поодаль. Девушки и парни в венках. Старик и старуха кучками сидят под кустами и угощаются брагой и пряниками. В первом кругу ходит Кунава; в средние второго круга Лель и Светушечка; Мизгирь, не принимая никакого участия в играх, то показывается между народом, то уходит в лес. Бобыль плачет под волынку. Бобылька и несколько соседей сидят кругом и зыт ни-во. Царь со святой надлея смотрит на играющих.

С. Девушки  
Ай, во по-ле, ай, во по-ле, ай, во по-ло  
Т. Парни  
В.  
ли-пень-ка, ай, во по-ло ли-пень-ка. Ай! Ай!  
Под ли-по-ю,  
с 4075 к

578

<sup>578</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, N. *The Snow Maiden*. Piano Score. Op.cit.: 246.







Folk-songs and dances are in abundance in Act III which is set in a forest clearing and is a folk celebration in the presence of the Tsar. It opens with a reminder of the linden tree *khorovod*. Snegurochka's adopted father Bobil' dances and sings a *khorovod* about the beaver bathing Купался бобер, **no. 71**, no.16 in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection, with minor alterations. The *Dance of the Skomorokhi* is based on a folk tune from Stakhovich's collection **no. 78**, *Well, bow down Vanja* (Уж ты, Ванка, пригнись). Lel's third song starts with a reminder of his second tune solo from Act I. The Finale of the opera in Act VI is a reminder of the pagan festival. The sun-god, *Yarilo*, appears and the chorus start to sing a Spring *khorovod* signifying the end of winter. The spring *khorovods* were linked to the sowing of crops in April and May and the first crop was generally millet. Consequently the *khorovod* sung starting at bar 123 (vocal score), *А мы просо сеяли* (We have sown the millet) is very appropriate. With the sun appearing Snegurochka melts and disappears. The ending is a hymn of praise to the power of the god *Yarilo*.

In *The Snow Maiden* Rimsky-Korsakov concentrated on the spring pagan traditions, saying farewell to winter, the welcoming of spring and the agriculturally-linked expectations. In addition, the marriage theme, an essential part of total procreation, is central. All the folk songs used were chosen to be linked to the time of the year.<sup>580</sup>

### ***Semik and May Night***

Due to the associated 'magical' agrarian customs, the period following Easter became a religious battleground. Rusaliae (Undine Week) was one, in particular, which the Russian Church strongly objected to. In the seven weeks following Easter, the young people of the village made merry, performed choral dances, played games, and sang songs. But the merrymaking increased in intensity as Trinity Day approached. The week preceding it, the seventh after Easter, was called *Rusalia* week. The Rusaliae known later as Trinity Week was the time of the spring holiday, the holiday of the young vegetation. However it also had a strong association with the dead. The derivation of the word is from the Latin spring holiday, rosalia, dies rosarum (days of roses) from which also comes Rusalka, the female water nymphs found throughout European folklore. This is also called 'Green Christmas'.<sup>581</sup>

<sup>580</sup> There is an excellent discussion about maslenitsa and the associated songs and traditions in: Попова.Т. 1955. *Русское народное музыкальное творчество. Выпуск первый*. (Russian Folk-Music Works. Vol.1.) Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 56–65.

<sup>581</sup> See for instance: *Ib.*: 70–75; Sokolov Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 192–195; Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 233–236; Hubbs Joanna. *Op.cit.*: 71–74.



**The Mermaids.** Ivan Kramskoi. 1871. The Tretyakov Gallery, Moscow, Russia.

*Semik* was celebrated the seventh week after the full moon of Spring and later the seventh week after Easter. The week of celebration was called *semitetskaya* or *rusalnaya* – the time when the *rusalkas* appeared. In tradition these were young women who had died or drowned before marriage. In Russian folklore the period is known as *Семитская неделя* (*semitetskaya week*) when the *rusalki* surface and lure young men with their singing and the associated songs are known as *русальные песни* (*rusalka songs*). During *semik* houses and yards are decorated with birch trees. Young women go to the woods and decorate birch trees with ribbons and weave garlands which they throw into the lakes or rivers to see if they have a good future ahead – if they float all is well otherwise they will experience misfortune. There are dances associated with these traditions.<sup>582</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov used these songs in *The Snow Maiden*, *In the field a Linden tree* (Ай, во поле липонька)<sup>583</sup>:



<sup>582</sup> See, for instance, Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 233–234; Reeder Roberta. *Op.cit.*: 7; Sokolov Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 192–195.

<sup>583</sup> Prohkorov, Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 42–43.

Lado and Lada, are also frequently mentioned in these songs, the sun-god, and the goddess of spring and of love, respectively. Lado is also mentioned as the god of marriage and happiness, to whom those about to marry offered sacrifices and Lada the equivalent goddess. In Russian folk-songs, *lado* and *lada* are used, respectively, for lover, bridegroom, husband, and for mistress, bride, wife, but *lad* also means harmony.<sup>584</sup>

Again Rimsky-Korsakov returned to Gogol's Dikanka stories for his libretto source. For *May Night* the composer's aim was to preserve as much as possible of the direct speech in Gogol's original. He was already attracted to the story not only because of his interest in folk music but also due to Gogol's extensive inclusion of folk music. He used several typical folk story elements which involved the supernatural, the 'witch' stepmother and the *utoplennitsy* or water spirits, *rusalki*. Pushkin reviewing the second volume of Dikanka stories said that Gogol's Ukrainians were "a dancing and singing tribe".<sup>585</sup> The story involves the conflict between the young people and the old conservative 'aristocratic' elements of the village, a theme which could be exploited in the music. The words of the main young characters, Hanna and Levko, were altered to ensure rhythmic prose and romantic music whilst the words of the older, representatives of authority, represented by Golova, were in the original colloquial Ukrainian and used fast recitative-like music and ceremonious forms.<sup>586</sup> The majority of the choruses sung by the young Cossacks and the village women are based on popular Ukrainian spring folk-songs and love *khorovods*.

The opening number is the Ukrainian spring *khorovod*, *We have sown the millet* (А мы просо сеяли), **no. 189**, which the boys and girls are playing near Hanna's house. A second chorus joins in with the round-dance *But we will trample it, O, Did Lado* (А мы просо вытопчем! Ой, Дидь Ладо) followed by the refrain *And with what will you trample it?* (А чѣмъ бы вамъ вытоптать?) which Rimsky-Korsakov adapted from the original "And we worked the land" (А мы землю наняли), **no. 37**, and "Oh we cut clean" (А мы сечу чистили), **no. 37B**. Both of these are Russian folk *khorovods*. For the first of these Rimsky-Korsakov altered the first bar. These are all both agricultural as well as love *khorovods* in which two groups sing facing each other with one group offering a girl for ransom. Previously brides were always seized or purchased.<sup>587</sup>

<sup>584</sup> Ralston William. *Op.cit.*: 105, 236–238.

<sup>585</sup> Boyanowska Edyta 2007. *Nikolai Gogol. Between Ukrainian and Russian Nationalism*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, Harvard University Press: 60.

<sup>586</sup> Edmunds Catherine. *Op.cit.*: 68–69.

<sup>587</sup> See Prohkorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 36. and Попова.Т. 1955. *Op.cit.*: 63.

Levko approaches Hanna's house with a bandura, a Ukrainian stringed instrument, and serenades her with a Ukrainian lyrical folk-song *The sun is low, soon it will be evening* (Солнышко низко, вечеръ ужъ близко), Act I no.2, **no. 214**, which is as it is in Gogol's original. Levko relates the folktale to Hanna how a wicked stepmother, a witch, had driven her step-daughter Pannochka from home and in despair she had drowned herself. However, Pannochka had become the queen of the rusalki living in the lake. To avoid being caught the step-mother had then turned herself into a rusalka. In order to get their revenge, if the rusalki encounter a human at night they force him to try to guess which of the rusalki is the step-mother. This story concurs with many of the superstitions related to the rusalki. The girls of the village return and sing a Trinity song (*Троицкая песня*) which is traditional to the *rusalka week* period *Garlands I bind, bunches I wind throughout Christmas* (Завью вѣнки на всѣ святки), **no. 186**, Act 1 no.5 to which they also dance. This is also a Ukrainian folk-song and a ritual traditionally performed during the *rusalka week*. The words reflect on the tradition of throwing the garlands into the water and floating to the blue sea bringing a husband and happiness.

**186. ЗАВ'Ю ВІНКИ**

Рубец, 50  
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This is interrupted by a drunken Kalenik who tries to dance a traditional Ukrainian dance the *gopak*, Act 1 no.6. Rimsky-Korsakov ends the scene with a rousing chorus led by Levko *Did you hear me, aren't our heads strong?* (Хлопцы, слышали ли вы? Наши ль головы не крѣпки?) with bells which he has written in a style reminiscent of riding Cossacks.

The introduction to Act II uses the Russian musical devise often used for the aristocracy; the melody is a court polacca or polonaise. Golova and his sister-in-law Svoyachenitsa consider themselves to be the village 'aristocracy'. After the polacca another Ukrainian lyrical folk-song is heard to Golova's words, **no. 211**, *How soon do you think you will put the wine on the table?* (Скороль думаете вы вашу винницу

<sup>588</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 116.

поставить?); the original is *Oh, when was that delightful time of freedom* (Ой, колись була роскіш воля). Svoyachenitsa immediately questions whether the distiller is going to live off them *And all the time you are here do you intend to live in our village?* (И все время, свать, на селѣ у нас проживете вы?) to the tune of another Ukrainian folk-song *Oh neigh, neigh* (Ой, заржи, заржи) **no. 209**. In this case Rimsky-Korsakov reversed the first two bars of the folk tune.

(Внутренность хаты Голови; справа дверь въ чуланъ, слева дверь на улицу; поздній вечеръ. Голови, винокуръ и оловчанина.)  
*(Das Innere des Häuschens des Jellisten; rechts eine Thüre in die Kammer, links eine Thüre in's Freie. Spät Abends. Der Jelliste, der Brenner und die Schwoägerin.)*  
 (Intérieur de la maison du Maître. À droite, une porte donnant sur la rue; soirée avancée. Le Maître, le distilla-  
 teur et la belle sœur causent.)

**A. ГОЛОВА. LE MAIRE.**  
**DER ABELTESTE.**

Око-роль ду - ма - е - те вы — ва - шу вин - ни - цу по - ста - вить?  
*Sagt, wann denkt Ge - rat - ler ihr fer - tig mit dem Bau zu wer - den?*  
 Di - tes - moi, ne pen - sez - vous pas à fi - nir bien - tôt la ca - ve?

вѣ - ту о - сонь, аль ви - мой, — вы ку - рить ви - но нач - не - те?  
*Wollt ihr Wil - ter o - der Herbst mit dem Bren - nen ihr be - gin - nen?*  
 C'est au - tom - ne ou c'est hi - ver, je sup - po - se qu'on dis - til - le?

**СВОЯЧЕНИЦА. LA BELLE SŒUR.**  
**SCHWÄGERIN.**

И все вре-мя, свать, на се-лѣ у насъ про-жи-ве-те вы?  
*Und die gan - ze Zeit bleibt Ge - rat - ler, ihr hier im Dorf bei uns?*  
 Et, mon cher pa - rent, vous de - meu - re - rez tout le temps i - ci?

**ВИНОКУРЪ. LE DISTILLATEUR.**  
**BRENNER.**

Про жи - ву; А къ Покро - ву, Богъ дастъ, можетъ, я за - куримъ. На По -  
*Al - ler - dings; und so Gott will, wird im Herbst man wohl be - gin - nen. Zu Mi -*  
 Oui vrai - ment; Dieu nous ai - dant, il se peut que l'on dis - til - le en oc -

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211. ОЙ, КОЛІСЬ БУЛА РОСКІШ, ВОЛЯ

Не скоро

Ой, ко-ли-сь бу-ла рос-кіш, во-ля,  
а те-п-ер-сь - ка не-во-лень-ка.

Рубен, 78

209. ОН, ЗАРЖИ, ЗАРЖИ

Не скоро

Ой, зар-жи, зар-жи, во-ро-ня ко-лю,  
на кру-ту го-ру і ду-чи. Ой га-дай, га-дай,  
сер-це дів-чи-но, скі-дан-ня го-ту - ю - чи.

Рубен, 137

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The theme in the orchestra for the Marziale in Act II, Scene 1, no.11, mark S, is, in essence, the Ukrainian lyrical folk-song *Maksim, the bald cossak* (Максим козак залізник), **no. 208**. Act III starts with the interlude *Ukrainian night* (Українська ніч) which sets the scene for the bewitching May night with the perils of the *rusalki*. To keep himself awake Levko sings what one may assume to be a Ukrainian folk-song to the accompaniment of the bandura, mark G, *Oh moon, shining moon, bright moon* (Ой ти мѣсяць, светель мѣсяць, Свѣтелх мѣсяць, мѣсяць ясный), since this is taken almost directly from Gogol's original<sup>591</sup> but altered for improved musical diction. To enhance the magical effect Pannochka, whose mysterious supernatural state is reflected by an accompaniment on two harps in constant glissando and her high register, mark H, appears at the window of the house, during Levko's song. Rimsky-Korsakov follows her appearance with the expected folk traditions concerning the *rusalki*, mark L, as they sing *We entice young men with our singing* (Заманивать молодца пѣньемъ). In a sad reminiscence of the love and laughter they once enjoyed and what may have happened if they had not drowned the *rusalki* dance a *khorovod* and weave traditional garlands as the girls in Act I *Sometimes at midnight at the glade by the lake* (Ой полуночної порой на лужайкѣ озерной), mark W. This is not a folk-song noted in Bachinskaya's analysis and appears to have been written specifically by the composer for this scene. To catch the evil step-mother hiding amongst them the *rusalki* play a folk-game, *voron*, where one player plays a raven trying to steal chicks away from their mother.

There is a triumphal ending to the opera where Levko through the intervention of Pannochka gets his bride Hanna to the sound of two traditional Ukrainian Spring songs sung by the village girls and Levko's Cossack friends: *Dust get out of the way* (Порохъ, порошок родорогъ) **no. 188**, the original being *Marinka my girl* (Маринка, моя дівка), mark Bbb, and *Holy week, green Christmas!* (Свята недѣя, зелені святки!), which in the original is *I will marry the rabbit* (Як зажену зайця) **no. 190**. The opera ends with a

<sup>590</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 130–131.

<sup>591</sup> Gogol Nikolai 1984. *Op.cit.*: 75.

triumphal chorus which is in the tradition of a greeting to the sun ‘*slava*’, Finale, no.15, mark Sss, referring back to pagan sun-worship but which is also a traditional marriage theme.

Gogol wrote a very Ukrainian story incorporating the fairy tales of the *rusalki*. He refers to traditional customs and songs in his text. Rimsky-Korsakov closely followed Gogol’s text but extended it to add tension to the scene between the *rusalki* and Levko, for instance in Act III. The games and the traditions portrayed are in keeping with the Russian and Ukrainian calendar incorporating facets of both paganism and Christianity. Of the ten folk songs identified by Bachinskaya and used by the composer directly, eight are of Ukrainian origin. Rimsky-Korsakov emphasises his view of the opera:

The very action of the opera I connected with Trinity or *Rusalnaya* week, called the Green Christmas; and even Gogol’s drowned women I have turned into nymphs. In this way I managed to connect, with the subject, the ceremonial side of folk-life which gives expression to the survivals from ancient paganism.<sup>592</sup>

### ***Kupala and Mlada***

Kupala Day (Feast of St. John the Baptist) is celebrated on the 23/24<sup>th</sup> June and relates to the summer solstice. This has been considered to be based on the pagan *Kupala* fertility rites which were later incorporated into the Orthodox Church and celebrated on St. John’s Day. The Russian festival combines Ivan (John — the Baptist) and *Kupala* which is derived from *kupat’* – to bathe. *Kupala* predates Christianity and was the goddess of herbs, marriage rites and midsummer and combined Christian traditions and folklore. The ancient customs involve the significance of water in fertility and bathing for purification. Bonfires are built by the water’s edge and unmarried women make garlands, wear them and then throw them in the water to see what their fortune will be in marriage.<sup>593</sup>

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<sup>592</sup> MML: 208.

<sup>593</sup> See Попова Т. 1955. *Op.cit.*: 76–78; Sokolov Y.M. *Op.cit.*: 105–107.





**Night on the Eve of Ivan Kupala.** Henryk Siemiradzki. 1880's. Lvov Picture Gallery, Lvov, Ukraine.

The opening of *Mlada* resembles *May Night* with girls weaving garlands for the forthcoming midsummer holiday, *Kupala*. It is Act II which can be considered significant for its nationalistic and folk element. The Act opens with a scene showing men and women from various parts of the Slavic and foreign lands, from Novgorod together with Varangians, Lithuanians and Hindu gypsies. Scene 5 is a series of national dances ending in Scene 6 "*Kolo*" with a wedding song partly based on the second half of the folksong *There isn't a wind* (Не было ветру) **no. 112**, from Balakirev's collection, no.1, in which couples kiss each other after each stanza. This song continues through to the end of the act which ends with the girls traditionally throwing their garlands onto the waters of the lake to predict their future happiness. Act III introduces amongst the evil spirits the sorcerer Kashchey to which Rimsky-Korsakov returned later.

In this opera the composer emphasises the Russian origins of the festival of *Kupala* in both song and action. With the introduction of Kashchei he introduces a pivotal character from Russian folklore that not only is immortal but is also known for abducting heroines.

### **Other seasonal folksongs**

There are many songs based on work rhythms during reaping in which a single voice sings a few lines followed by the workers. The beginning of the harvest is called *зажинки* (zazhinki) and the appropriate songs are *zazhinochnayas* and the end of the harvest is called *дожинки* (dozhinki) and the songs called *dozhinokhnayas*. The songs portray two aspects, the heavy work of reaping, *My white hands ache from working* (Болят мои белы рученьки со работушки) and praise for the master and mistress and presentation of a decorated sheaf *Health and wealth to your ladyship...Doubtless you know why we come to you bearing a sheaf as we always do* (Здравствуй матушка

барыня!...Вот мы пришли к твоей милости, сноп принесли разукрашенный). This is the Chorus and Dance of the Peasants, Act I, Scene 1, no.2 of *Eugene Onegin* sung for Madame Larina which is representative of this form.<sup>594</sup> Since there were few clear connections between the ancient pagan customs and those introduced by the Orthodox Church during the late summer and autumn period, these songs did not hold the same attraction for Rimsky-Korsakov.

### 5.2.2 Lyrical or non-ritual songs

#### *Khorovods and pliasovye pesni*

Propp in his introductory essay “The Russian Folk Lyric”<sup>595</sup> draws attention to the Russian understanding of the world which includes various social rituals and collective events. Here it extends from individual feelings to collective ones. The round dances, *khorovods*, mentioned previously connected to the agricultural cycle are typical. However, there are also various games many to do with finding or catching a bride and consequently these are happy and spirited. It was an important part of village life, holidays and relaxation. Consequently it is not surprising that Rimsky-Korsakov used *khorovods* eleven times in his operas related to some collective activity in *The Maid of Pskov*, *May Night*, *The Snow Maiden* and *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*.

Prokhorov defines the lyric songs as follow:

Lyric songs differ from the other genres of Russian folklore, such as *bylinas* (epic songs), in that they are not bound by the rules of a plot (though they always describe a certain situation). What they portray is rooted in the performers present, not in his or her past. Also, lyric songs poeticize reality – what cannot be poeticized, cannot become the subject matter – and as a means of expression, they use allegoric images, not direct statements.

Subsequently, lyric songs are extremely rich in poetic imagery, common to all their genre and thematic groups. This usage of poetic imagery created a stable poetic system with a number of established conventions, easily recognizable by listeners.<sup>596</sup>

A separate dance-form of the lyrical songs is the *плясовые песни* (piasovye pesni) which became a recognised form in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. They differ from the *khorovods* in having a more complex rhythmic structure. Bachinskaya in her analysis of Russian folksongs give these a separate, specific designation. In *The Snow Maiden* Rimsky-Korsakov used both forms, in Act II in the scene between Kupava, Snegurochka and Mizgir and in Act III in the first scene:

<sup>594</sup> Tchaikovsky P. 1993. *Eugene Onegin. Vocal Score*. London, Elite Edition 190, Richard Schauer: 18–23.

<sup>595</sup> Reeder Roberta. *Op.cit.*: 1–2.

<sup>596</sup> Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 48.

[illegible]

Act II – Khorovod in female choir

The image shows a page from a musical score, likely for a Russian opera or song cycle. It features two systems of music. The first system has a vocal line with lyrics in Russian and a piano accompaniment. The second system is titled "Побывал (вместе с прототипом песни)" and includes a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment. The score is written in Russian and includes a page number "130" at the top.

Act III – pliasovye pesni

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### Protracted songs

Protracted songs, *протяжная* (protyazhanaya), are the most beautiful Russian songs. They are characterised by a slow tempo and long extended phrases, rhythmic flexibility and ambiguity of tonal structure. This song type developed in the 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. It is, in general, an expression of sorrowful emotion which can be associated with family life, a young women yearning for home or a husband but also include songs about the drudgery of everyday life, serfdom, and being a long way from home, such as the soldiers songs and barge-haulers songs.<sup>599</sup> The feeling of the *protyazhanaya* is described by Chekhov in *The Steppe*:

<sup>598</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, N. *The Snow Maiden*. Piano Score. *Op.cit.*: 251.

<sup>599</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1993. *Musorgsky. Eight Essays and an Epilogue*. Princeton, Princeton University Press: 38–49; Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 72; Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 30–42; Swan Alfred 1973. *Op.cit.*: 24.

While Yegorushka was watching their sleeping faces he suddenly heard a soft singing; somewhere at a distance a woman was singing, and it was difficult to tell where and in what direction. The song was subdued, dreary and melancholy, like a dirge, and hardly audible, and seemed to come first from the right, then from the left, then from above, and then from underground, as though an unseen spirit were hovering over the steppe and singing...as he listened he began to fancy that the grass was singing; in its song, withered and half-dead, it was without words, but plaintively and passionately, urging that it was not to blame, that the sun was burning it for no fault of its own; it urged that it ardently longed to live, that it was young and might have been beautiful but for the heat and the drought; it was guiltless, but yet it prayed forgiveness and protested that it was in anguish, sad and sorry for itself. [...].<sup>600</sup>

This genre of song was used quite extensively by other members of the *Kuchka*. Balakirev, during his studies on folksong in the summer of 1860, paid particular attention to this form and incorporated it into his Second Overture on Russian Themes (1864). Borodin used the form in both his 1<sup>st</sup> Symphony (1866) and also in the first movement of the Second (1869 – 1876).<sup>601</sup> It can also be heard in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov* in the opening sequence as well as the Fool's ending to the opera *Flow, flow, O bitter tears, weep, O Christian soul* ( Лейтесь, лейтесь, слезы горькие, плачь, плачь, душа православная).<sup>602</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov, however, relied on this form infrequently. It can be heard in Act II of *The Snow Maiden*, Kupava's song mentioned previously. In *The Tsar's Bride* Act I Scene 4 Lyubasha sings a traditional Russian wedding protracted song, *protyazhanaya*, unaccompanied *Mother dear, quickly, adorn your beloved child* (Снаряжай скорей, матушка родимая), mark 64.

### Children's songs

The aim of these is either to calm or amuse. Propp outlined the aim as to produce a peaceful and lulling atmosphere where the words are not important and the picture offered is the child's view of the world.<sup>603</sup> At the start of Act I of *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* Rimsky-Korsakov uses a typical cradle song: *Баюшки, баюшки! Спи, царевич наш, усни, Угоном тебя возьми!* (Hushabye, hushabye, sleep, tsarevich, fall asleep, rest yourself in slumber deep).<sup>604</sup> The melody of this lullaby the composer took from that which their nurse Avdotya Larionova used to sing to his own children.<sup>605</sup> Rimsky-

<sup>600</sup> Chekhov, A. *The Steppe*. <http://www.online-literature.com/donne/1249/>. 01–09–2010.

<sup>601</sup> Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 65–70.

<sup>602</sup> Mussorgsky M. 2008. *Boris Godunov. Piano Score*. Saint-Petersburg, Compozitor Publishing House: 450–451.

<sup>603</sup> Reeder Roberta. *Op.cit.*: 31.

<sup>604</sup> Neff Lyle. English words, private communication.

<sup>605</sup> MML: 381.



Korsakov also used a lullaby in *Boyarina Vera Sheloga* (Боярыня Вера Шелого), mark 19.<sup>606</sup>

### 5.3. Folksong relevance in Rimsky-Korsakov's other operas

Of Rimsky-Korsakov's other operas, they essentially fall into three categories, historically-based operas, fairy-tales and folk-epics.

#### 5.3.1 *Bylinas* and other historically-based operas

Most Russian epics originate in the period from the 10<sup>th</sup> through to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The term '*bylina*', which came into use in the 1830's, comes from the past tense of the Russian verb "to be" or something that was. These monumental poetical works featuring epic figures are akin to the Greek *Iliad*, the German *Nibelungen* and the Nordic sagas. As Sokolov explains:

The significance of the *byliny* in the history of Russian national culture is exceedingly great. In these ancient songs are very clearly and fully reflected the most diverse aspects of the historical and everyday life of the Russian people; they appear as wonderful landmarks of the original folk art [...].

Not without reason have the Russian *byliny* attracted the attention [...] of great poets, musicians and artists, giving them stimuli for their creative work.<sup>607</sup>

The *bylinas* were performed in recitative form and in this way have similarities to the *protyazhanaya*. They are basically divided into three groups: mythical epics, the Kievan or Vladimir cycle and the Novgorod cycle.<sup>608</sup> The mythical are not linked to any particular historical period but often centre on supernatural events and shamanism. Kievan Rus existed from the middle of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the invasion of the Tartars in 1240. The Grand Prince Vladimir 1<sup>st</sup> reigned from 978–1015 and around him are the heroes called *bogatyr*'. The Novgorod cycle centres on the *gusli* player Sadko and the merchant Vasily Buslayev.

#### *Sadko*

With the opera *Sadko* Rimsky-Korsakov looked to using both a very Russian medium, the *bylina*, as well as the musical style with which the *bylina* were sung. The recitative was not a conversational style but one based "on a sort of conversationally regulated

<sup>606</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *Boyarinya Vera Sheloga. Opera Vocal Score*. Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation: 17.

<sup>607</sup> Sokolov Y. *Op.cit.*: 291–92.

<sup>608</sup> Bailey James and Ivanova Tatyana (Transl.) 1999. *An Anthology of Russian Folk Epics*. New York and London, M.E.Sharpe: xx.

narration of parlando singing”.<sup>609</sup> He based this on the well-known style of Ryabinin who was known at the time to be one of the best epic-song singers and performed in St.Petersburg and Moscow in 1893 and 1894.<sup>610</sup> This ‘recitative’ runs throughout the opera. Gerald Abraham called it not only his “best opera” but the one in which he is “most completely and exuberantly himself and most profoundly Russian” and it is “Russian in every fibre”.<sup>611</sup> In his autobiography Rimsky-Korsakov says that “[...] I had scanned and used as a basis many bylinas, songs, etc” and that the folk scene he evoked in Scene IV pictured a variety of people including “wandering pilgrims, merry Andrews, soothsayers, gay women and so on [...]”. The setting and the musical characteristics give the opera it’s historical and national character.<sup>612</sup> Irrespective of this very Russian background Rimsky-Korsakov makes little use of folk music. There have been four known songs identified and these are associated with the two scenes depicting Novgorod life, Scenes 1 and 4. The recitative and aria of Sadko in Scene I *If I possessed the splendid riches you display* (Кабы была у меня золота казна) is loosely based on the *bylina* *As in the city of Kiev* (Как во городе стольно-киевском), Rimsky-Korsakov collection no.1, **no. 130**. Towards the end of the scene the popular entertainers, *skomorokhi*, sing and dance to entertain the merchants. They make fun of Sadko, *Once in fair Novgorod there lived a fool* (В Новгороде великом жил-был дурень) which is based on *As the ant on the lush green grass* (Как по травке, по муравке), **no. 63**, from Rimsky-Korsakov’s own collection no.26 comparing the ‘insignificant’ Sadko to the greatness of Novgorod.

Scene 4 is the port of Novgorod on Lake Ilmen with its bustle of life and songs with a nationalistic flavour such as those by the Viking, Hindu and Venetian traders. At the start of the scene a group of pilgrims chant from a book of prophecy how good and bad battle to eternity *These are not two wild tigers you see* (Не два зверято собиралися); the tune is a spiritual verse given to Rimsky-Korsakov by the then Minister of the Imperial Court, Filippov, *Verses from the Dove Book* (Стих о голубиной книге), *Why is the flower on the shore the mother of flowers?* (Почему плакну-травы травам мати?) **no. 138**. As Sadko sets sail at the end of the scene he sings the *bylina*, *Let us all first praise the sky* (Высота ли, высота поднебесная) taking the words directly from the Nightingale Song, *Nightingale Budimirovich* (Соловей Будимирович), Rimsky-Korsakov’s collection no.3, **no. 133** but with some alterations to the original tune.

<sup>609</sup> Leonard Richard 1968. *A History of Russian Music*. USA, Minerva Press: 163.

<sup>610</sup> Bailey James and Ivanova Tatyana. *Op.cit.*: xxxvi.

<sup>611</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai. *Sadko An Opera in Seven Scenes. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 16.

<sup>612</sup> MML: 353, 365.



### *The Maid of Pskov and The Tsar's Bride*

For both *The Maid of Pskov* and *The Tsar's Bride* Rimsky-Korsakov turned to Lev Alexandrovich Mey's plays. Both plays centre on the reign of Ivan the Terrible. The driving theme of *The Tsar's Bride*, published in 1849, shows a conflict of love and jealousy. The play was a resounding success and the "audiences were delighted by the play's fresh and natural language, as well as its authentic atmosphere, which distinguished it sharply from the pseudo-historical melodramas of the preceding decade." Ten years later in 1859 *The Maid of Pskov* showed the tsar as both as a stern autocrat and loving father. However, the play also projected the independent nature of the citizens of Pskov and, it is not surprising that the censors banned it shortly after its première.<sup>613</sup> The composer also used Mey for *Servilia*. Both Rimsky-Korsakov and Tchaikovsky in their historical operas focus on the reign of Ivan the Terrible.

As a result of the expansionist policies of Novgorod and Pskov westwards, Ivan the Terrible/Иван Грозный destroyed the cities. There are a number of different views of Ivan as a ruler and it was in the 19<sup>th</sup> century that a change occurred. Early in the century the folklore image of the Tsar was, in general, positive; the Tsar being a friend to the common people (*narod*), and an enemy of the boyars. However following the publication in 1860 of the letters of the former Governor Paul Yakushina, the popular view changed. Irrespective of this, folktales published in 1874 by N.Aristov stressed the high regard the monarchy and particularly Ivan the Terrible had amongst the common people since he embodied the features which were the popular view of the Tsar.<sup>614</sup>

At the time of the composition of both *The Maid of Pskov* and *Boris Godunov* not only were Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky very close, but both were attracted to the Purgold sisters. In mid-September 1871 Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov shared a furnished room in Zarembo's house on Panteleymonvskaya Street. At the time Rimsky-Korsakov orchestrated and finished *The Maid of Pskov*, whilst Mussorgsky composed and orchestrated the Polish act on *Boris Godunov* and the scene "Near Kromy". Of this time Rimsky-Korsakov wrote "That autumn and winter the two of us accomplished a good deal, with constant exchange of ideas and plans."<sup>615</sup> Borodin writing to his wife in early November outlines the mutual influence:

<sup>613</sup> [http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/mei\\_lev.html](http://www.tchaikovsky-research.net/en/people/mei_lev.html). 07–10–2011.

<sup>614</sup> Perrie Maureen 1987. *The Image of Ivan the Terrible in Russian Folklore*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 10.

<sup>615</sup> MML: 123.

Modest has perfected the recitative and declamatory side of Korsinka; he, for his part, has eliminated Modest's tendency to uncouth originality, has smoothed out all his harmonic roughness, his fanciful orchestration, his illogical structuring of musical forms - in a word, has made Modest's pieces incomparably more musical.<sup>616</sup>

The influence of *Boris Godunov* can be felt in the opera. Both operas have notable crowd scenes and the tolling of the bells. *The Maid of Pskov* features the free assembly of Pskov, the *veche* assembled by the tolling of bells. The bell is significant since it was a symbol of republic sovereignty and independence. In terms of folk-music there are catching games and *khorovods*. *The Maid of Pskov* opens in the garden of Prince Yuri Tokmanov, the Tsar's viceroy and bailiff in Pskov with young girls playing a *goryelka*, a Russian catching-game. Both Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky include the elderly wet-nurses Vlasyevna (*The Maid of Pskov*) and Ksenia's nanny (*Boris Godunov*) who relate folk stories. Vlasyevna in conversation with Perfil'yevna, referring to the girls, sings *That's youth for you, as flighty as a songbird* (Вот молодость-то резвая, что зяблик), mark 25; the accompaniment in the orchestra is a folksong from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection no.23 essentially unaltered, *Even sleep doesn't lower my head* (Не сон мою головушку клонит) **no. 166**. The chorus refrain *A slip of a girl, I went raspberry picking* (По малину я ходила молода) is in a Russian folk idiom. Mussorgsky had already given Rimsky-Korsakov the words to two of the girl's choruses early in 1871.<sup>617</sup> This is followed by the Song of Mikhail Tucha *Разкукуйся ты, кукушечка* (Let me hear your call, my sweet cuckoo), mark 39, which is also in a folk idiom and will be analysed later. The duet with Olga which follows, mark 41, includes the folksong *Already you, my field, clean field* (Уж ты, поле мое, поле чистое) from Balakirev's collection, no. 27, **no. 177** to Olga's words *Yes, stay, my own beloved* (Да, останься, милый мой).

The finale to Act I Scene 2 with the tolling of the bells is very similar to that used in *Boris Godunov* in the Prologue Scene 2 and also Act IV Scene 2. Also the address given by Prince Tokmakov to the crowds is in a similar style to Godunov after his coronation. Throughout this address to the crowd there are reminiscences of Boris, his hallucination in Act II, the "clock" scene, mark 77, and Act IV Boris' farewell to his son, just prior to mark.76. Following this address, mark 88, Mikhael Andreevich Tucha leads his followers off to the words: *Ruling citizens of Pskov, gather within your courtyards!* (Государи псковичи, собирайтесь на дворы!). This is in fact a *khorovod* song: As

<sup>616</sup> Brown. David 2002. *Mussorgsky His Life and Work*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 205.

<sup>617</sup> Орлова А.А. и Пекелис М.С. (Составитель) 1970. *Модест Петрович Мусоргский. Литературное Наследие* (Modest Petrovich Mussorgsky. Literal heritage). Москва. Музыка: 207, 212–221.

*under the wood* (Как под лесом, под лесочком) **no. 31** which is from Balakirev's collection. This returns in Act III Scene 2 as the song with which Tucha and his fellows launch a surprise attack on the Tsar's encampment since this continues his original line of active resistance to the Tsar *Or, is there nowhere we can to lay down our unruly lives for Pskov?* (Али негде, негде нам сложить буйны головы за Псков?), mark 193.

It is also interesting to note that of the six folk tunes in *Boris Godunov* noted by Bachinskaya, five can be attributed directly or indirectly to Rimsky-Korsakov.

*The Tsar's Bride* looks back to Ivan the Terrible, his oprichnik and their destructive effect on the lives of private individuals. Due to the existing censorship at the time Ivan only appears in a silent role, however, the role of Grigory Griaznoy, would have reminded the audience of Tsar Ivan's name, *Grozny*. The ceremonial marriage folksong *Slava* (Glory) was used extensively to depict the Tsar. As mentioned previously it is heard in the coronation scene in Mussorgsky's *Boris Godunov*, but also in Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*. Rimsky-Korsakov uses the *Slava* theme in *The Tsar's Bride* whenever the Tsar dominates an action; during the banquet of Act I, scene 3, mark 40, a toast is drunk to the Tsar, at the start of Act II, scene 3 Marfa sees two people in the street one of which is identified as Griaznoy, whilst the other only by his 'leitmotif', the *Slava* theme, mark 112. This theme later appears in the introduction to Act III, mark 142, and in the arioso of Saburova in Scene 3 describing the royal apartments when referring directly to the Tsar *The Tsar is coming, the Tsar is coming!* (Царь, царь идет), mark 159. In this last use the use of *Slava* has a double meaning since it also refers to the Tsar's choice of a bride and marriage.

Folk music is used sparingly. Bachinskaya only identifies the *Slava*-theme since this is a known folksong. Following on from the *Slava* toast in Act I Scene 3 there is a *Dance with chorus "The heady hops"* (Пляска в хором "Яр хмель»). Bachinskaya does not include this; presumably Rimsky-Korsakov composed this in a folk manner to fit the historical portrayal of the scene. As mentioned previously Lyubasha sings a traditional Russian wedding protracted song, *prot'yazhnaya*, unaccompanied in Act I Scene 4, mark 64. The introduction to Act III Scene 4 is also clearly in folk dance mode as is the choir accompaniment at mark 170, *Be happy, dear Ivan Sergeyevich* (Будь здоров, Иван свет Сергеевич).

### 5.3.2 Operas based on works by Pushkin.

Later in his life Rimsky-Korsakov turned to Pushkin and this resulted in the operas *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* and *The Golden Cockerel*. Both were used for political comment which has been discussed previously (see 3.6.7).

#### *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*

Stasov suggested *The Tale of Tsar Saltan, of his Son the Renowned and Mighty Bogatyr Prince Guidon Saltanovich, and of the Beautiful Swan Princess* to Rimsky-Korsakov as a fitting tribute for the centenary of Pushkin's birth in 1899. Each act is introduced by a trumpet fanfare, a *присказка/prizkazka*, which in Rimsky-Korsakov's description has the "meaning of a call or invitation to hear and see the act [...]" This is a device quite original and suitable for a fairy-tale".<sup>618</sup> The opera is noted for its extensive use of folk melodies which abound, being made up of lullabies, children songs, a jester and an old storyteller telling a *сказка/skazka* (a tale). The tale involved multiple characters and repetitive actions, three sisters, three bee stings. The figures are humorous and the music revolves around more modern folk idioms, in particular, children's songs, lullabies and urbanised songs and urban fairs and carnivals.

#### Prologue

The Prologue shows the three sisters occupied in a *posidelki*, which, as mentioned previously, in folk traditions was a group of women spinning together, with the matchmaker Babarikha to one side. The older two sisters are worried about the effect of weaving on their hands whilst Babarikha encourage them not to work so hard. There is pizzicato on the strings in the orchestra reminiscent of a balalaika. The eldest sister chides the youngest for being so slow with the housework, *Don't just dawdle there, you fool* (А ты, дурочка, не жди), 15 bars after mark 7, is very similar to the dance folksong *How did you walk Vanya* (Как ходил-гулял Ванюша), **no. 65** and justify their laziness, mark 8, *We two sisters have the beauty* (Всем, сестра, с тобой мы взяли) to the wedding song *Hey, what is the girl making?* (Эх, что девушке сделалось) from the composer's own collection, no.83, **no. 126**, heard as a theme in the orchestra but also with some variation in the vocal line, which hints at their hopes. Having heard in secret what each sister would do on becoming Tsaritsa, Tsar Saltan chooses the youngest and addresses the elder two *You her dear sisters* (Вы ж, голубушки-сестрицы), mark 16, whilst the orchestra plays a variation of *Oh, what is a good lad called* (Уж как звали молодца) **no. 43**, and also in the introduction to Act I at marks 27 and 32. This

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<sup>618</sup> MML: 381.

*khorovod* tune is found in both the Lvov-Prach and Rimsky-Korsakov's collection, no. 44.

## Act I

The Tsaritsa Militrisa is waiting for news from her husband after telling him of the birth of his son. Her message, however, has been replaced by the sisters with one telling him that the baby is a monster

"Родила царица в ночь	"Your Tsaritsa, sire, last night
Не то сына, не то дочь;	Was delivered of a fright –
Не мышонка, не лягушку,	Neither son nor daughter, nor
А неведому зверюшку". <sup>619</sup>	Have we seen its like before." <sup>620</sup>

The Act opens to the nursemaids singing the lullaby *Hushabye, hushabye!* (Баюшки, баюшки!) in the background, which was the lullaby Rimsky-Korsakov's nurse Avdotya Larionovna used to sing to his own children **no. 14**. This lullaby appears three times in the act at marks 36, 51 and 62. The eldest sister tries to get her sister to eat *Queen and sister, I persuade you, You must eat what we have made you* (Кушай, милая сестрица, ныне матушка царица!), mark 41, which is similar in form and rhythm to *Как ходил-гулял Ванюша no. 65*, used in the Prologue, whilst the nursemaids try to console the Tsaritsa with the above-mentioned lullaby. Whilst the use of the same folk melody is aggressive in the Prologue, here the mood is consoling; however, the re-use of the same tune underlines the irony.

Повариха. (soprano) Bäckerin. in tempo 41

Ском. Ском. Почтительно кланяется. Кушай, милая сестрица.  
 Sich ehrfurchts voll verbeugend.. Bist du Schwesterleingelassen,

Тетушке Поварихе до земли чело ломлю.  
 Der Frau Oberhofbäckerin leg ich mich zu Füßen.

*poco rit.* in tempo

621

<sup>619</sup> Пушкин Александр Сергеевич. *Сказка о царе Салтане*. lib.ru/LITRA/PUSHKIN/saltan.txt 6 25 май 2000. 09–07–2009.

<sup>620</sup> Pushkin A. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*. (transl. Louis Zelikoff). <http://home.freeuk.com/russica4/books/salt/saltan.html>. 9.7.2009, p.3.

<sup>621</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan. Opera. Vocal Score*. Op.cit.: 42.

Младшей сестре.  
Zur Jüngsten.  
А ты, дурочка, не  
Närrchen, dieses gilt nicht

А. Б.  
Ст. С.  
М. Б. жди, — — — — —  
Сер. С. dir, — — — — —

Сложи ручки неси ли!  
Sitzenstso müssig hier.

622

## 65. КАК ХОДИЛ-ГУЛЯЛ ВАНЮША

Allegro

Как хо дил-гу-лял Ва-ню-ша, как хо дил-гу-лял Ва-ню-ша  
вдоль да по у-ли-це, вдоль да по ши-ро-кой

Львов — Прач, 108

623

At mark 64 the first few bars of a dance theme is heard repeated in the orchestra, *The hare, dancing* (Зайнька попляши) **no. 28** which can be found in Rimsky-Korsakov's own collection, no. 66. The messenger arrives bringing the Tsar's angry reply to the news of the birth and pleading for his life in a broken tipsy manner, *Sov'reign mother* (Государыня моя), mark 72, approximately to bars 2 and 3 of the lyrical folksong *In the forest it was thick* (Во лесах было во дремучих) **no. 145**. Finally the scribes arrive and read the Tsar's command that the Tsaritsa Militrisa and her son Guidon be put in a barrel and thrown into the ocean. She reacts in horror singing *Though a maiden's life may be full of strife* (В девках сижено, горе мыкано), mark 83, which ironically has some similarity to the wedding song *A duckling was bathing in the sea* (На море утушка купалася) **no. 111** found in both Tchaikovsky's and Rimsky-Korsakov's collections, nos. 23 and 89, respectfully.

<sup>622</sup> *Ib.*: 12.

<sup>623</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 42.



88 Mil. Sitzt in schweren Sinnen versunken.  
Мил. Сидит в тяжелом раздумьи.  
Larghetto. ♩ = 54.

В де-вках си-же-но, Го-ре мы-да-но; За - мужь вы - да-но, в дво - е  
In der Mädchenzeit hat sich 'Herzleid, In dem E - hestand zwie - fach

при - бы-ло. Го-сударь ты мой, мужь возлюбленный! Ты за что, прочто покарал жену;  
Weh - ich fand. O Ge-bie-ter meth, Du geliebter Mann, Was verstößt dich, Dein getreues Weib.

стес-но: ро-со

624

## 111. НА МОРЕ УТУШКА КУПАЛАСЯ

Moderato

На мо-ре у-туш-ка ку-па-ла-ся,  
на мо-ре се-ра-я по-ло-ска-ла-ся,  
ся, по-ло-ска-ла-ся.

[Чайковский, 23]  
Римский-Корсаков, 89

625

## Act III

In Pushkin's original on which the libretto is based Guidon returns to his palace to find a squirrel cracking nuts *Sat that wonder-squirrel singing: Through the garden there she goes* (И с присвисточкой поет При честном при всем народе: Во саду ли, в огороде).<sup>626</sup> This is a direct quote of the folksong from the Lvov-Prach collection, and well-known in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, **no. 54**, which Rimsky-Korsakov then adapted and initially introduces it at mark 153, Scene 1. Guidon, who wants to see his father, is turned into a bumblebee with the help of the magic swan. The entr'acte begins with the famous 'Flight of the Bumblebee'. On arrival at Tmutarakan the sailors tell of the wonders of their travels to Buyan. At mark 178 as the sailor tells of the squirrel, the orchestra accompaniment again makes reference to the folksong **no. 54**. The Tsar is

<sup>624</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N. *The Tale of Tsar Saltan. Opera. Vocal Score. Op.cit.:* 90.

<sup>625</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.:* 69.

<sup>626</sup> Пушкин Александр. *Op.cit.*



enticed to see the wonders on the island where Mitriska and Guidon are living. Irrespective of the elder sisters' and Babarika's protests the Tsar decides to visit the island *If only I can live* (Ну, коль только жив я буду) **no. 43**, mark 179, which is also the tune played in the orchestra to accompany the Tsar in the Prologue and later repeated *I must marvel at this wonder* (Подивиться надо чуду), mark 182.

#### Act IV

The Introduction to the final scene, taken directly from Pushkin, depicts The Three Wonders (три чуда) of the island Ledenets. The orchestral introduction to final scene, when the first few bars from mark 216 and later at 218 are simplified, can be seen, in modified form, to include the squirrel leitmotif of the folktune *Did the maiden walk in the garden or the vegetable garden* (Во саду ли, в огороде девица гуляла) **no. 54**, already used in the previous act. This is sung again later by the chorus of maidens with the word *не* (not) emphasising that the squirrel is now in the palace, mark 244. Following the Old Grandfather's refrain at mark 262 the main characters sing *But the ale one sips* (Славный был бы мёд) and repeated mark 266 at *You know, the tale's a lie* (Знайте, в сказке ложь) which is found in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection no.98 and in Bachinskaya **no. 124** as a wedding song, which concurs with the closing wedding festivities: *But who indeed is as great as us* (Уж и кто ж у нас большой-набольший). As with all fairytales the cast finish with *Now we have told our story well; now there is no more to tell* (Ну, теперь уж сказка вся, дальше сказывать нельзя!).

#### *The Golden Cockerel*

The opera was called an *опера-небылица в лицах*, a dramatised fable and described by Rosa Newmarch as "the purely human nature of Pushkin's Golden Cock-that instructive tragic-comedy of the unhappy consequences following upon mortal passions and weaknesses – permits us to place the plot in any region and in any period".<sup>627</sup> Previously the composer clearly separated musically the folklore and fantastic aspects of his operas, however, here they were totally interwoven to show, as the title indicates, that everything is unreal. A number of folk-songs are used throughout the opera in a satirical way.

The muted trumpet fanfare which opens the opera serves in many ways similarly to that used in *The Tale of Tsar Saltan* drawing the attention of the audience to the stage. This is later identified as the Golden Cockerel's cry. There are three folk-songs, one in each

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<sup>627</sup> Newmarch Rosa. *Op.cit.*: 325–26.

act. The dance *To be sure you little grey-blue cock* (Уж ты, сизенький петун) from Balakirev's collection no.35, **no. 79** is discernable in Act I sung by Amelfa to the words *I long for Turkish beans* (Скушай хоть стручков турецких), bar 531. In Act II the Queen of Shemakhan makes Tsar Dodon sing her a love-song, bar 577, *I will love you forever and try not to forget* (Буду век тебя любить, постараюсь не забыть) the melody of which is the children's game *Siskin, siskin, where have you been* (Чижик, чижик, где ты был) **no. 180**. The wedding procession, Act III, is to a popular song at the time *The moon shines brightly* (Светит месяц) **no. 77**. The theme in the orchestra in essence mimics the theme of the song.

### 5.3.3 Other operas based on folklore and folk music

#### *Kashchei the Immortal*

The opera is called an autumnal fairy-tale and is based on a number of tales involving the evil sorcerer Kashchei who keeps the Princess Unearthly-Beauty (*Царевна Ненаглядная Краса*) prisoner until she can be rescued by a Prince Charming (*Иван-корольевич*). The chorus as the snowstorm begins at the end of Tableaux 1, mark 33, sings to a typical Russian folk dance motif *White flurries, snowstorm, cover the pines and larches* (Вьюга белая, метель, опуши сосну и ель).

#### *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*

The libretto was from a number of sources, the two main ones being the legends 'The Invisible City of Kitezh' and 'The Life of Peter, Prince of Murom, and his wife Fevroniya'. As mentioned previously the latter was based on the 16<sup>th</sup> century *zhitiye* (hagiography) of St. Fevroniya which is a mixture of Christian elements and Slavonic mythology. There was also a significant input from Melnikov's novels *In the Forest* and *On the Hills*. The text was written in an archaic and folkloristic style which was matched by Rimsky-Korsakov in an extensive use of folk ceremonies together with appropriate music.

There are, however, only two directly quoted folk-songs, the verses of the beggars in Act II, mark 91, *You kind benefactors* (Кормильцы вы милостные) which is from the Funeral Verse (*Стих поминальный*) **no. 139**, a spiritual verse, which was transcribed by Rimsky-Korsakov from the performances of the folk singer Tvorty Filippov. With the Tartar attack on Kitezh the historical folksong *On Tartar captivity* (Про татарский полон), **no. 134 and 134a**, is used in Acts II and III extensively and acts in some ways as a Tartar leitmotif. In Act II **no. 134** appears at mark 126, Burunday *You won't find*

*such a beauty in the steppes* (Такой красы въ степи не будетъ) and again at 128, *Great Kitezh is said to be glorious* (А славень бають Большой Китежъ !). In between these he and the Tartars jointly sing *We will not find their royal city this way* (Ихъ стольный городъ не найти намъ) to the variation **no. 134a**. The Tartar chorus return to **no.134** six bars after mark 135 [...] *we will raise your powerful cities* [...] грады крѣпкіе съ землей сравнимъ). The two folksongs return in Act III, scene 1 both when the prince's huntsman Poyarok tells of the attack of the Tartars on Little Kitezh and when relating the message sent with him *We shall destroy the royal city* (Разоримъ тла мы стольный градъ), eight bars after mark 151, this is to **no. 134a**. When the boy/page, at 14 bars after mark 162, tells how the Tartars on horseback ride towards them *We'll be crushed by the Tartar hordes* (Мчатся комони ордынские) this is to **no. 134**. The opening to Act III, scene 2 is an orchestral interlude representing the battle of Kerzhenets and from mark 193 to the end of the there are frequent references to **no. 134**. Later when again referring to Great Kitezh appearing, Bedyay and Burunday use **no.134a** for [...] *we will cut your head off* [...] тебѣ съ плечъ голову отрубимъ) at five bars before 209. Later in the scene there are frequent references to **no. 134** wherever the Tartars refer to what they will do in Kitezh marks 212, 213 and later when Bedyay and Burunday start fighting over Fevroniia at 216 and 217 and when the Tartars fall asleep at 219.

From this analysis it is possible to see that Rimsky-Korsakov used folksong **no. 134** as representing the Tartars whilst any of their references to the city of Kitezh are to **no. 134a**.

#### 5.4. Folk music in Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic works

Of Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonies the first, which had its première in December 1865 and was revised in 1884, has direct references to folk music. In the allegro section of the first movement reference is made to the folksong *Вниз по матушке, по Волге* (Down the mother Volga), **no. 144B** starting at mark F on the clarinet and continuing in the violins. This dominant phrase appears throughout the whole movement. The second folksong used is in the second movement which is entitled *On the theme "Tartar captivity"* (На тему песни "Татарский полон")<sup>628</sup> **no. 134b**, no 10 in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection but written by Balakirev. It appears first in the bassoon already at bar 5 together with violas, cellos and basses and finally clearly stated seven bars after G as a solo for the flute and oboe.

<sup>628</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov. N. 1891. *Première Symphonie E moll pour orchestre*. Leipzig. W.Bessel & Co: 42.

During the spring 1866 Rimsky-Korsakov, perhaps influenced by Balakirev's Symphonic Poem *Russia*, decided to write an overture on Russian themes for which he chose *Слава/Slava* (Glory), **no. 3**, *At father's gate* (У ворот батюшкиных), **no. 41**, and *Ivan has a big coat on* (На Иванушке чапан), **no. 110**, for the *Overture on Russian Themes* Op.28 (Увертюра на русские темы). The first version was written 1866 and later re-orchestrated in 1879-1880. The Overture is dominated by the *Slava*-theme (A) beginning with the horns already at bar 3 and gradually developed through the orchestra.<sup>629</sup>

**Ouverture.**

Andante. M. M. ♩ = 69. N. Rimsky - Korsakov, Op.28. 1880.

2 Flauti (Flauto piccolo)  
2 Oboi.  
2 Clarinetti in A.  
2 Fagotti.  
I. II.  
4 Corni in F.  
III. IV.  
2 Trombe in B.  
I. II.  
3 Tromboni.  
III.  
Timpani.  
Tamburino.  
Arpa. (Non obbligato)  
Violini I.  
Violini II.  
Viole.  
Violoncelli.  
Contrabasso.

Andante. M. M. ♩ = 69.  
Verlag und Druck der Rieder'schen Offizin in Leipzig.  
13

<sup>629</sup> [http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/e/ea/IMSLP19972-PMLP46720-Rimsky\\_Op28\\_fs.pdf](http://petrucci.mus.auth.gr/imglnks/usimg/e/ea/IMSLP19972-PMLP46720-Rimsky_Op28_fs.pdf): 2. 08-01-2013.

This is returned to at the *Andante* section bar 378 in the oboes developing to a *Maestoso* section for full orchestra, bar 432. The *У ворот батюшкиных* (B) folksong first appears at bar 88, *Allegretto* in the first violins and continued in the wind bar 104.<sup>630</sup>

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14453

The *Allegretto* reappears at bar 190 and at bar 194 the song reappears on a solo flute. At bar 142 the third folk tune *На Иванушке чапан* (C) is introduced as an oboe solo

<sup>630</sup> Римский-Корсаков.Н. 1990. *Русская симфоническая музыка.12. Произведения для оркестра.* Москва, «Музыка»: 113.





and reappears in the clarinets at bar 241 leading eventually to *pizzicato* in the strings bar 255. At bar 269 there is a recapitulation of B in the strings followed at bar 323 by a return to C. This then leads back to A. The *Slava* theme is also used to join folk tunes C and B, for instance, at bar 187 initially in the strings and then continued in the wind. In many respects this is reminiscent of the *Promenade* section of Mussorgsky's *Pictures at an Exhibition* which he composed in 1874.

The *Sinfonietta on Russian Themes in A minor, Op. 31*. (Синфоньетта на русские темы) was originally composed in the summer of 1879 as a string quartet and then reworked by the composer for the orchestra in the summer 1880 and 1884. "Its separate movements bore the titles: (I) In the field; (II) At the Charivari; (III) In the *Khorovod* (round dance and song); (IV) Near the cloister. The last movement [...] did not go into the Sinfonietta [...]"<sup>632</sup>

The first movement comprises two folksongs *A mist clouded the field* (Во поле туман затуманился), **no. 146** taken from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection, no. 12, and *As the tsarevna is in the city* (Как во городе царевна), **no. 30**, which is a *khorovod*. The first mentioned dominates the movement, it being introduced in the violins in bar 3 and the movement ending with its reiteration by a solo oboe. Folksong **no. 30** appears for the first time as a horn solo at bar 70 with minor variations to the repeat section of the song and continues through to bar 106. It reappears at bar 260 as an oboe solo with the clarinet trying to continue up to bar 281, however folksong **no. 146** again dominates. At bar 364 the second tune reappears in the oboes, clarinets and violins again for a short span.

The second movement revolves around three folksongs, the main one being *In the small garden* (Как по садику, садику) from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection no.79, **no. 32**, a *khorovod*, which again is introduced as horn solo at bar 24 and taken up by the strings, bar 36. The second folksong starts at bar 89 in the 2<sup>nd</sup> violins and clarinets, **no. 104**, again from the composer's own collection, no.75, *A green pear sways in the garden* (Зелена груша в саду шатается). This is a wedding song. Here only the second phrase of the song is quoted. This is short-lived and the first song returns already at bar 107. The last song, again a wedding song, is *Are you my dawn* (Ты, заря ль моя заря), **no. 122**, Rimsky-Korsakov no. 90 after Stakhovich. This is introduced as a cello solo at bar 161 together with violas but only lasts for eight bars before it modulates back to the dominant folksong.

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<sup>632</sup> MML: 217.



Rimsky-Korsakov uses the same pattern for the Scherzo-Finale, three folksongs are used. The dominant tune is already introduced at bar 5 by the first violins, *I have a drunk husband* (У меня ли муж водопьяница) which recurs throughout the movement and on which it ends. This was originally in the Lvov-Prach collection and in Rimsky-Korsakov's no.68, Bachinskaia **no. 45**, a *khorovod*. The second folksong is introduced in the first violins at bar 44 and continued in the wind at bar 52. This is *The birch has thick leaves* (А и густо на берёзе листьё), no. 51 in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection, **no. 6**, which is a calendar song. The first song is reintroduced pianissimo at bar 61. The oboe at bar 99 reintroduces the second tune. The final folksong is introduced by the trombones at bar 276 *No thank you Father Superior* (Не спасибо игумну тому), a *khorovod* which again originates in the Lvov-Prach collection and no.70 of the composer's collection, **no. 34**. This only continues in the violins but already at bar 306 the main theme begins again to dominate.

As the name implies, folksongs were used in the *Fantasy on Two Russian Themes for violin and orchestra*, Op.33, composed in 1887-88, as well as in the *Piano Concerto in C-sharp minor*, Op.30, 1882-83. The *Fantasy* uses one theme from the Balakirev collection no.7 *Boring night* (Надоели ночи, надоскучили), **no. 163**, 23 bars after mark E, *Theme russe, lento*.

## 7.

## ПРОТЯЖНАЯ.

Из исторической губернии Сеченовского уезда.

*Larghetto. M.M. ♩ = 104.*

Голос.

На - до - б - ли во - чи. на - до - сву - чи

*Larghetto. M.M. ♩ = 104.*

Фортепиано.

ли. на - до - сву - чи - ли. да на - до - сву - чи - ли.

1138

633

**Theme russe.**

*Lento.*

*mf cantabile*

*pp*

*Lento.*

634

However, Rimsky-Korsakov already in the opening bars uses a section of the folksong as a musical narrative which is taken up by the solo violin.<sup>635</sup>

<sup>633</sup> [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/7/71/IMSLP03555-Balakirev\\_-\\_Collection\\_of\\_Popular\\_Russian\\_Songs:18.20-09-2011](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/7/71/IMSLP03555-Balakirev_-_Collection_of_Popular_Russian_Songs:18.20-09-2011).

<sup>634</sup> <http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/1/15/IMSLP221050-SIBLEY1802.15840.de79-39087009419823piano.pdf:8.20-09-2011>.

<sup>635</sup> *Ib.*: 3.

## Fantaisie de Concert.

Introduction.  
Allegro moderato. N. Rimsky-Korsakow, Op. 33

Violino.

Piano.

*Allegro moderato.*

*p* *m.d.* *pp* *cresc.*

The second tune, a dance, **no. 80**, is from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection no. 37, after Lvov-Prach, *A young girl walked along the forest path* (Ходила младёшенка по борочку) appears at mark H *allegretto grazioso*. *Boring Night* is also the folksong on which the *Four variations and a Fughetta*, Op.14, for women's choir and piano or harmonium was based.

The Piano Concerto is monothematic and is based on the folksong *Gather, dear children* (Собирайтесь-ка, братцы-ребятушки), **no. 174**, from Balakirev's collection. The folksong is clearly heard as a bassoon solo beginning at the *Adagio*, bar 5 and continues as a clarinet solo four bars after mark A. Both passages are the main folksong without a repeat. This is then followed by the tunes initial phrase in the violas. The viola phrase is then repeated twice as a flute solo four bars and ten bars after B. The bassoon returns at one bar after C repeating the main folksong as in the introduction. Following this the song goes through numerous transformations.

Apart from the operas, folksongs were used in two works for orchestra and choir. The first of these, written in 1874, was *Four Variations and a Fughetta on the Theme of a Russian Song*, Op.14, for women's choir. This was based on the folksong *Boring night*, **no. 163**, from Balakirev's collection. The second work was *Dubinushka* Op.62, based on a folksong of the same name. The first version was composed in 1905 and a second version with choral parts in 1906.

In addition to these Rimsky-Korsakov published a *Collection of 100 Russian Folksongs*, Op. 24, in 1875–76 and between 1875–1882 a further *Forty Folksongs*.

### **5.5. Rimsky-Korsakov's use of folklore, history and folk music**

As a part of the Balakirev circle Rimsky-Korsakov accepted that folk-song and folk traditions were an essential part of the Russian national heritage. In opposition to Rubinstein's view that national music would establish itself only through sound musical education, the *Kuchka* view was that national identity would establish itself through the 'national' audience recognising and associating with what they saw and heard. It is in this respect that the views of the *Kuchka* aligned themselves with those of the realist art movement, the *Peredvizhniki* with their opposition to the Imperial Academy of Arts. This view of the significance of folk heritage pervades Rimsky-Korsakov's works; the majority of his operas were based on known fairy or folk tales and significant historical times and events. As a result of this association the composer was able to attract the attention of leading Russian artists who had similar interests. If one examines the operas of Rimsky-Korsakov it is immediately noticeable that there is a concentration on the folk-songs and traditions associated with the early part of the year from Christmas through to midsummer. Ukrainian music plays a significant role.

Musically Rimsky-Korsakov's use of folk music can be broken down into a number of types. In *May Night* the song *Garlands I bind, bunches I wind* (Зав'ю вінки, та на святки) is used without alteration and in the right context for the time of year. The composer also used an extension of a simple tone folk melody which is either modified or re-created in such a way that the original is retained as an expressive nuance. An example of this is the folk-song *Nightingale Budimirovich* (Соловей Будимирович) in the Finale to Scene 4 of *Sadko* which uses the folksong words unaltered.

Вы - со - та ли, вы - со - та под - не -  
Из - за мо - ря, мо - ря

бе - сна - я, глу - бо - та, глу - бо - та о - ки -  
си - не - го, из глу - хо - мор - я зе -

ян - мо - ре; ши - ро - ко раз - до - лье по всей зем - ли, глу - бо -  
ле - но - го, от слав - на - го го - ро - да Ле - ден - ца; от то -

ки о - му - ты дне - про - ски - е.  
- го - де ца - ря ве - дь за - мор - ско - го

636

Судно (Sail)

Allegro non troppo 12/10

Та, мы, со-та под не-бес-на-я, глы-бо-та, глы-бо-та О-ке-ан-мо-ре.

Let us all praise the sky and the o - pen air, then we'll all praise the o - cean that's wait-ing

1st Chorus

Allegro non troppo 12/10

637

<sup>636</sup> Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 83.

<sup>637</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nicolai 1984. *Sadko. An Opera in Seven Scenes. Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 308.

It was characteristic of Rimsky-Korsakov to also create melodies, which were rounded and developed into a stylish recitative based on a copied tonality of the original.

Sadko's recitative in Scene 1 is essentially a combination of nos. 1 and 2 from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection<sup>638</sup> *As in the city of Kiev* (Как во городе стольно-киевском) and *About the Volga and Mikul* (О Волге и Микуле).

Another development is a more complex combination of a number of pieces, which then formed a completely new independent folk-sounding melody. The song of Mikhail Tucha *Let me hear your call, my sweet cuckoo* (Разкукуйся ты, кукушечка) in *The Maid of Pskov* incorporates sections from five folksongs. It can be traced from *As under the wood* (Как под лесом, под лесочком), no. 22, *Live, live Kurilka* (Жив, жив Курилка), no. 43 and *In the centre of the town stood* (Середь города стояла), no. 58 from Rimsky-Korsakov's collection<sup>639</sup> and also the *Protyazhnaya* no. 21 *Blow, blow bad weather* (Подуй, подуй, непогодушка) and no. 27 *Certainly you are my field* (Уж ты поле, мое) from Balakirev's collection.<sup>640</sup>

In *Sadko* Duda's song in Scene 1, *The Minstrels Song and Dance, Once there lived in Novgorod a foolish fellow* (В Новгороде великом жил-был дурень) is a new adaption from *As the ant on the lush green grass* (Как по травке, по муравке) and the folk-song *Whether to the garden or to the kitchen garden* (Во саду ли, в огороде):

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<sup>638</sup> Римский-Корсаков. Н.А. 1977. *Op. cit.*

<sup>639</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>640</sup> [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/7/71/IMSLP03555-Balakirev\\_-\\_Collection\\_of\\_Popular\\_Russian\\_Songs](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/7/71/IMSLP03555-Balakirev_-_Collection_of_Popular_Russian_Songs): 43 and 54. 20–09–2011.



**Moderato**

67

В Но - ве - го . ро - де ве . ли - ком жил - был ду - рень,  
жил - был ба - бин; знал он ду - рень, знал он ба - бин  
во гус - ли и . гра - ти, во гус - ли и . гра - ти

**Allegretto**

1. Как по травке, по муравке, по ла . зо . ре . вым цве . точ . кам  
бе . жит лё . говь . кий де . тин . ка, он не в шу . бе, не в каф . та . не,  
в по - лу - шёл - ко - вом ха - ла - те.  
[Для повторения]  
2. Под по - ло - ю не . сет гус . ли,  
[Для окончания]  
„Я при - шёл в го . сти, Пет - ру . ша!“

**Allegretto**

Во са - ду ли, во - го - ро - де де вуш . ка гу -  
ля - ла, о - на рос - том не ве - лич . ка,  
бе - ла, круг - ло - лич . ка.

641

<sup>641</sup> Евсеев С.В. 1970. *Римский-Корсаков и русская народная песня* (Rimsky-Korsakov and Russian folk music). Москва, Издательство «Музыка»: 126; Бачинская Н. *Op.cit.*: 37, 41, tunes 54a, 63.



The most complex was a creative re-shaping of folk-songs into a totally original composition with variations in repeat sections which retained its folk characteristics and as such would be familiar to the audience. An example being the following sung by the *skomorokhi* in *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*



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It is also important to note that Rimsky-Korsakov's knowledge of folk music enabled him to write many songs and dances used in his operas in the rhythm, metre and style of known folk music such as *Sometimes at midnight* (Ой полуночной порой), from Act III of *May Night*, mark W.

### 5.6. Rimsky-Korsakov's dedication to folk heritage

When considering Rimsky-Korsakov's dedication to the driving principle of folk heritage as a means towards identity it is essential to consider him in the light of his fellow composers at the time. The following table shows that Rimsky-Korsakov not only dominated the scene but also that he was the composer that kept alive the ideals of the *Kuchka*:

<sup>642</sup> Евсеев С.В. *Op.cit.*: 126.

**TABLE 1. Folk music use by major 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian composers**

	Operas	Symphonic	Others	TOTAL
<i>Kuchka</i>				
Rimsky-Korsakov	71	15	1	87
Mussorgsky	27	1		
(Sorochinskaya 14)				28
Balakirev		9		9
Cui	-	-		-
Borodin		1	1	2
<i>Others</i>				
Glinka	3	3	5	11
Dargomyzhsky	7	3		10
Arensky	6	5	3	14
Serov	13			13
Glazunov		4	1	5
Tchaikovsky	18	24*	3	45

\* The Snow Maiden – 13

When one studies Rimsky-Korsakov's use of folk music it is very extensive. Of the 217 folk songs identified by Bachinskaya the composer used seventy one different ones. The largest number of repeats, eight, were in *Kitezh* where the Tartar music acts as a *leitmotif* and dominates the folk music use. Also when considering his contemporary's use of folk music it was to the Rimsky-Korsakov arrangements that they mostly turned to as can be seen from Table 2 where a comparison is given with Balakirev's collection.

**TABLE 2. Use made of Rimsky-Korsakov's and Balakirev's folksong collections by major 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian composers.**

	Rimsky-Korsakov	Balakirev
Arensky	4	1
Mussorgsky	8	3
Tchaikovsky	10	8
Serov	1	2
Gerchaninov	11	1
Stravinsky	4	-

The extensive use of his arrangements by his pupils is understandable since their works were composed shortly after being under his tutelage and, in Mussorgsky's case, when the two composers were living together. The interesting use is that of Tchaikovsky who

was a pupil of the non-folk faction of Rubinstein. It was, however, at the time when there was a close relationship between himself and both Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov.<sup>643</sup>

Prior to the collections of Balakirev and Rimsky-Korsakov the ‘standard’ was that of Lvov and Prach. It was from the latter that the folksongs used, for instance, by Paskevich in his opera *Fevey*, with a libretto by Catherine II, and Yevstigney Ipatyevich Fomin in *The Coachman at the Relay Station* (Ямщики на подставе) are found. Of the composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century it was, however, Rimsky-Korsakov who valued this earlier collection and used it as a source for folksongs in both his operas *The Snow Maiden* and *The Tale of Tsar Saltan*. The only other composer using the Lvov-Prach collection extensively was Serov.

It is also essential to note that for Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas based on Gogol’s stories, for authenticity, he used the extensive collection of Rubets. This collection: *Collection of Ukrainian folksongs. Compiled by A. Rubets. St. Petersburg, A. Cherkeso* (Сборник украинских народных песен) was reviewed by Cui in the St. Petersburg Bulletin on 12 November 1870.<sup>644</sup>

### 5.7. Summary

Folk music, customs, folklore and history are essential factors in establishing the identity of a nation. Rimsky-Korsakov, of all the significant Russian composers of the 19<sup>th</sup> century recognised this. In this respect he was able to appreciate the broader picture, realising the limitations of the *Kuchka*’s views concerning national music based on folk music.

At the beginning of his musical life Rimsky-Korsakov together with his fellow *Kuchka* composers was convinced that a national identity through music would be established through the inherent folklore and folk music of the country. He understood the significance in everyday life of both the ancient pagan traditions built around the agrarian calendar, the songs and games aimed at breaking the power of winter, and the sun’s meaning to both procreation for the family, community life as well as in the field. But in this he accepted the merging of the traditions of both these pagan traditions and the Russian Orthodox Church festivals. The operas of *Christmas Eve*, *The Snow Maiden*, *May Night* and *Mlada* all clearly emphasise the games, songs and traditions for

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<sup>643</sup> A detailed analysis of Russian composers use of Balakirev’s and Rimsky-Korsakov’s arrangements of folk songs is given in Appendix.8.

<sup>644</sup> Cambell Stuart. *Op.cit.*: 199–200.

the times of year portrayed. A nation also associates with historical fact and fiction. The *bylinas*, the epics, can be considered as distorted aspects of ancient history, however, they also encompass important facts concerning the customs, religious beliefs, forms of government and treatment of women. They also concentrate on crucial aspects of the development of a nation's identity and, as such, equivalent epics are found, for instance, in Greece, Germany, France, England and Finland. In *Sadko*, Rimsky-Korsakov concentrates on the intermingling of fact and fiction rather than folk music itself. On the other hand in *The Maid of Pskov* and *The Tsar's Bride*, the significance of Pskov and Novgorod in Russian history linked to Ivan the Terrible is highlighted. With *Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia*, the composer is in the borderland between fact and fiction and introduces the importance of dual religion, *dvoeverie*, which impinges on Russian life even today.

Pushkin, Gogol and Ostrovsky were established authors already during Rimsky-Korsakov's formative years. Their satire and humour earned them respect within all levels of society and consequently it is not surprising that the composer used their works as the basis for librettos for a number of operas. As has already been shown the use of Pushkin and Gogol were specifically used as an outlet for political comment. However, the fairytales the author's wrote became a part of the folk heritage of the country. Rimsky-Korsakov also showed that folk music could be used more widely, as art music, as shown by his use of it in orchestral music. It is significant to note that he used the recognised folk music extensively, using the wide and varying traditions and forms to the maximum and where existing appropriate melodies were not found he composed himself in the idiom.

However, to also achieve the recognition on the international stage that 'Russian' music was unique and differed from that of Western Europe it was essential to present it in a musically cultured form. Consequently he continually revised and improved his earlier works as his musical abilities developed. As is apparent from the above, throughout his life Rimsky-Korsakov was committed to the use of Russian and, where appropriate, Ukrainian folksong, folklore and Russian history and because of the essential need of this in establishing an identity he went out of his way to ensure that not only his own compositions but also those of his fellow composers met the musical criterion of the European circles. This commitment to national identity through indigenous music used correctly was taken up not only by the Russian composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century but also by the future generation, such as Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and Stravinsky. Rimsky-Korsakov also realised the significance of national music and language as a

political tool. Even at the time when he became disillusioned with the political developments within Russia it was to folk music that he turned to emphasise his discontent.

## 6. Controversy concerning Rimsky-Korsakov's musical contribution

Of the Russian composers of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, the two who have been most visible in the literature and on the stage have been Tchaikovsky and Mussorgsky. In this thesis Tchaikovsky is not been discussed apart from brief mentions concerning his contacts with Rimsky-Korsakov and the *Kuchka* and some reference to his use of folk music. His music was considered by his peers and audiences as European which is not surprising in view of his training as one of the first students of the Conservatoire. Mussorgsky's reputation in the West is mainly based on his opera *Boris Godunov* and a number of his song cycles such as *Songs and Dances of Death* (Песни и пляски смерти). Recently there has been much controversy concerning the value of the subsequent orchestrations carried out by Rimsky-Korsakov on both these and his unfinished opera *Khovanshchina*. This was initially as a result of the work carried out by the musicologist Pavel Lamm in the late 1920's and later that of the composer Dmitri Shostakovich. Similarly Borodin's reputation is based on *Prince Igor* and his orchestral suite *In the Steppes of Central Asia* (В средней Азии); the contribution of Rimsky-Korsakov to the composer's reputation has recently been questioned, again partially based on Lamm. Many students of the composer and Stravinsky, in particular, publicly distanced themselves from their mentor. However, it is easy in hindsight to place new interpretations on what might have been. In this respect it is important to look at these aspects of Rimsky-Korsakov's influence in the context of the time.

There are many areas associated with Russian music where Rimsky-Korsakov had a lasting influence. For his pedagogical work he formulated his own view concerning the basic principles of harmony and orchestration which form the basis of teaching still in many conservatories throughout the world. The subject matter and use of historical, folklore and literary masterpieces as well as the incorporation of folk melodies in these works as well as his own gave Russian music a 'sound' which made it different to that of the West. Finally, as a result of his own search for harmonies with which he could differentiate the magical world from the everyday he extended the whole tone scales introduced by Liszt and Glinka to the octatonic scale. These concepts were extensively used by subsequent Russian composers and, in particular, extended by Scriabin and Stravinsky.

### 6.1 Developments in harmony

To understand Rimsky-Korsakov's development in the use of harmony and musical form, which he applied to his compositions throughout his life, one need only look briefly at *The Maid of Pskov*. The first version of this opera was written during the formative period of the *Kuchka* at the end of the 1860's under the influence of Balakirev and Stasov. Consequently it used folk music extensively both in the original form as well as imitation. In an avoidance of Western harmony the *Kuchka* extensively used the whole tone scale to indicate the fantastic and sinister, major-third key relationships and minor seventh or half-diminished seventh chords. All of these are prevalent in *The Maid of Pskov*. Another notable feature of the opera is the avoidance of Western opera forms based on solo arias, trios, quartets and grand finales. As his own musical abilities developed Rimsky-Korsakov realised the limitations of his initial works. At the beginning of the 1890's he worked on his final version of *The Maid of Pskov* which he found was full of "barbaric dissonances".<sup>645</sup> He re-orchestrated the whole score and added new scenes giving the work greater symmetry and harmonic direction; "these may be roughly subsumed under the headings: change of key, change of harmony, change of additions to texture".<sup>646</sup> As Abraham points out the characterisation of the principles is enhanced as shown in the following example applied to Tsar Ivan:

1st version (1872)

Ob. I *pp*

Fl. I *p*

Slowly

Hn. III, *pp*

TSAR IVAN (IV 8ve bassa)

*f* *p*

O - su - dar! Vse o - su - da - ri mī, i o - su - dar ve - li - kiy Pskov i Nov - go - rod. [A]

Vn. I

Vn. II

Va. *pp*

Vc. *pp*

D.B., +Timp. *p*

<sup>645</sup> MML: 313.

<sup>646</sup> Abraham Gerald 1968. *Op.cit.*: 70.



3rd version (1892)

Moderato e maestoso

Ob. I  
E.H. *p*  
Fl. I  
Bsn. I  
B. Cl.  
Hn. II  
Hn. III  
Hn. IV *ppp*  
TSAR IVAN  
O - su - dar! Vse o - su - da - ri mŭ, i o - su -  
Vn. I *p*  
Vn. II (div.) *pp*  
Vc., D.B. *pizz.*  
Va. (div.) *sfp*  
(Timp.) *pp*

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As mentioned previously, however, “the bloom of ‘Russianness’ has been brushed off.”

In discussions with Yastrebtsev Rimsky-Korsakov pays tribute to Liszt and how the characterisation of Olga in *The Maid of Pskov* and Pimen’s tale about the Tsarevich Dmitri in Mussorgsky’s *Boris* were both influenced by the oratorio *St. Elizabeth*.<sup>648</sup>

<sup>647</sup> *Ib.*: 68.

<sup>648</sup> Yastrebtsev. V.V. *Op.cit.*: 292.

**Einleitung.**

Componirt von Franz Liszt.

Andante moderato.

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II

доч. въ, въ - ды до - ту, ма - до - ску - чилъ те - ром враг - ный,

Владимиръ

ра - ды до - ту, ма - до - ску - чилъ

III

Ольга (В отеческ.)

сердце

Со - колъ мой, при - го - жай, ма - мой мой! При -

Вл.

твоемъ враг - ный, иг - ры ним - ни - о да скажи.

О.

твоемъ враг - ный, иг - ры ним - ни - о да скажи.

А.

до - жи!

110

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Comparison between the flute introduction to *Die Legende von der Heiligen Elisabeth* and Olga's characterisation in *The Maid of Pskov*.

<sup>649</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/Die\\_Legende\\_von\\_der\\_Heiligen\\_Elisabeth,\\_S.2\\_\(Liszt,\\_Franz\).](http://imslp.org/wiki/Die_Legende_von_der_Heiligen_Elisabeth,_S.2_(Liszt,_Franz).) 10–10–2012.

<sup>650</sup> Римский-Корсаков Н 1981. *Псковитянка. Опера в 3 действиях. Клавир.* (The Maid of Pskov. Opera in 3 Acts. Piano [score]). *Op.cit.*: 22.

The Russian-style that became established was as a result of Rimsky-Korsakov's own development from a 'dilettante' through to a polished composer whilst retaining a Russianness through his use of folk culture. Frolova-Walker indicates that Rimsky-Korsakov became disillusioned with the Russian style towards the end of his life quoting a letter to his wife in 1891 saying that it lacked a "life and soul"<sup>651</sup> however, here he is merely commenting on the new school and Glazunov, in particular. It is also incorrect to say that he only returned to a Russian style for his last opera when there were six operas before *The Golden Cockerel*, all of which were based on Russian themes and in which he developed his views on religion, politics and his music. It was *The Tsar's Bride* that represented a break from the old *Kuchka* ideologies. This was a number opera also involving a number of ensembles such as towards the end of Act III Scene 1. Although the opera revolves around complex love relationships it remained Russian in nature with the 'slava' theme, the only recognised folk-song, indicating the presence of the tsar underlined by the character and name of Grigory Gryaznoy, the dance and chorus of Act I Scene 3, Lyubasha's *prottyazhanaya* in Act I Scene 4 and the setting. Whilst commenting to Yastrebtsev in May 1900 that *The Tsar's Bride* would "have a greater importance in the history of Russian music that it is thought to have today by musicians, who are bewildered by its old-fashioned form" he later, when pressed to give an opinion on which is better *The Tsar's Bride* or *The Snow Maiden* "he declared that he is not going to give an opinion on this subject, that this is his secret (!) but that I should not think that his opinion is simple."<sup>652</sup>

## 6.2 From the whole tone to the octatonic scale

From a musical historical perspective the starting point for Rimsky-Korsakov was the whole tone scale which had already been used by Glinka and Dargomyzhsky. The significance did not only concern the rotation of thirds but in Russian music the symmetry of these relations became explicit in a way not used in Western music. There can be little doubt that Rimsky-Korsakov and the *Kuchka* were aware of Glinka's works and particularly the use the whole tone scale in *Ruslan and Lyudmila* as central for the leitmotif of Chernomor which can clearly be seen in the abduction of Lyudmila in Act I in the trombones:

<sup>651</sup> Frolova-Walker Marina. *Op.cit.*: 202.

<sup>652</sup> Yastrebtsev.V.V. *Op.cit.*: 264.



In fact, Glinka already introduces it in the Overture at mark.4.<sup>654</sup> His aim was to differentiate the magical elements of the story from the main action. In this he set a precedent for the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian composers who followed him.

When one considers tonal development it is important to assess whether a composer has used a sequence by design or accident. In this respect when considering the atonality of Schönberg and Stravinsky, for instance, it is already possible to find a clear and repeated use of an atonal structure. Bach's occasional use in *Prelude No. 20 in A minor* from Book II of the Well-Tempered Clavier in bars 2, 5 and 8, for instance, should be considered 'accidental'.

#### PRAELUDIUM XX.



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<sup>653</sup> [http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/3/34/IMSLP28468-PMLP09011-Glinka\\_Ruslan\\_Act1\\_No3.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/3/34/IMSLP28468-PMLP09011-Glinka_Ruslan_Act1_No3.pdf): 177. 23-08-2012.

<sup>654</sup> See Glinka Mikhail *Ruslan and Lyudmila Score*.

[erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/9/95/IMSLP28465-PMLP09011-Glinka\\_Ruslan\\_Overture.pdf](http://erato.uvt.nl/files/imglnks/usimg/9/95/IMSLP28465-PMLP09011-Glinka_Ruslan_Overture.pdf): 14-15. 23.08.2012. See also Brown David 1974. *Mikhail Glinka. A Biographical and Critical Study*. London, Oxford University Press: 205, 213.

<sup>655</sup> <http://japanese.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/4/47/IMSLP02197-BWV0889.pdf>. 24-08-2012.

In a similar vein, as Taruskin points out, a descending whole tone scale can be found in, amongst other of Schubert's works, in the *Finale* of his *Octet Op.166, D 803*.<sup>656</sup> This was written eight years prior to *Ruslan*. However, the significance of Schubert's work which was continued by Liszt was the interest in new harmonic paths and in the third relationships in both the major and minor, in particular. "Beginning in the work of Schubert and his contemporaries, such circles of thirds offered composers an alternative course of harmonic navigation that bypassed the circle of fifths."<sup>657</sup>

Liszt's approach to tonal organization naturally affects the harmonic language of the composition—the Fantasy and Fugue is charged with the constant presence of the diminished-seventh chord and augmented triad, sonorities either compatible with or derived from the whole-tone scale. The super-abundance of these harmonies is significant, as is their free, progressive use – a use which, to say the least, does not often observe traditional rules of dissonance treatment.<sup>658</sup>

Liszt's use of the whole tone scale is also outlined in Lajos Bárdos's comprehensive analysis of 'Ferenc Liszt, the Innovator' where he gives examples taken from a number of works, the most explicit being from the *Troisième année, Sursum corda* of 1877 and the *Via Crucis, Station X* of 1878.<sup>659</sup>

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<sup>656</sup> Taruskin Richard 1985. Chernomor to Kashchei: Harmonic Sorcery; Or, Stravinsky's "Angle". *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 38 (1): 85–86.

<sup>657</sup> *Ib.*: 80.

<sup>658</sup> Todd Larry 1981. Liszt, Fantasy and Fugue for Organ on "Ad nos, ad salutarem undam". *19<sup>th</sup> Century Music*, IV: 260.

<sup>659</sup> Bárdos Lajos 1975. Ferenc Liszt, the Innovator. *Studia Musicologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, T. 17, Fasc. 1/4: 9.



The image displays a musical score for piano, consisting of three systems of music. The first system is marked 'legato' and features a complex, flowing melody in the right hand with triplets and sixteenth notes, and a more rhythmic accompaniment in the left hand. The second system continues this style with similar melodic and harmonic patterns. The third system is marked 'perdendo' and shows a more dramatic, descending melodic line in the right hand, with a corresponding accompaniment in the left hand. The score is in a key with three flats (E-flat major or C minor) and a 3/4 time signature.

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What perhaps characterises Russian music is the third relationships and the particular use of minor thirds as a mirroring devise. However, it was perhaps Liszt who had the greatest influence on Rimsky-Korsakov's interest in the third relationships. It was Liszt who used minor thirds in symmetrical rotations and his *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* is perhaps the composition which explores many possibilities. This was originally written in 1848–49 but only published in 1854 in its revised form. In it, for instance, it is possible to find perhaps one of the first examples of the octatonic scale.

<sup>660</sup> [http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b3/IMSLP15705-Liszt\\_-\\_S53\\_Via\\_Crusis.pdf](http://conquest.imsip.info/files/imglnks/usimg/b/b3/IMSLP15705-Liszt_-_S53_Via_Crusis.pdf): 26. 25–08–2012.







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*À Monsieur Mili Balakirev.*



N. HUMSKY - KOSAKOW,  
OP. 5, (1907-1908)

Moderato assai. (H. R. 1197)

Flauto piccolo.

2 Flauti

2 Oboi.

2 Clarinetti.

2 Fagotti.

4 Corni in F.

2 Trombe.

3 Tromboni.

1 Tuba.

Timpani in Des. As.

Fiatti.

Cassa.

Tamburi.

Arpe.

Violini I.

Violini II.

Viola.

Violoncelli.

Contrabbassi.

Moderato assai. (H. R. 1197) *pp*

Esiguità de l'ediz.: 1895

ff. *dissonanze* 5. *Musica*

Fl.

Ob.

Clar.

Fag.

Cori.

Timpi.

Cassa.

Violini I.

Violini II.

Viola.

Violoncelli.

Contrabbassi.

Clar.

Fag.

Cori.

Violini I.

Violini II.

Viola.

Violoncelli.

Contrabbassi.

pp

1895

664

And to Yastrebtsev in April 1893 he is quoted as saying:

Before you write the analysis of *Sadko*...take a look at Liszt's *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne*; the use of B-flat major after D-flat major and C major after E major is

<sup>663</sup> Liszt Franz *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* : symphonische Dichtung no. 1 für grosses Orchester. Op.cit.: 3-4.

<sup>664</sup> <http://javanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/2/2f/IMSLP48431-PMLP46469-SadkoOp05v3FSjur.pdf>: 3-4.  
26-08-2012.

obviously Lisztian. What's more, the typical harmonies on pages 14, 20, 27–28, and 41–42 of *Sadko* are likewise Lisztian, from his brilliant *Mephisto Waltz*.<sup>665</sup>

Although not directly mentioning Liszt's modulation by a minor third it is important to note that Rimsky-Korsakov emphasises that both the whole tone scale and his semitone–whole tone–semitone scale are derivatives of the circle of thirds and used to differentiate magical situations from the real world. This octatonic scale was described to Balakirev in a letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> August 1867: “Then there appears a harmonized scale (descending): A, G $\sharp$ , F $\sharp$ , F, E  $\flat$ , D, C, B, and A and so on, over a pedal of A, which comes across rather ferociously.”<sup>666</sup> This scale can also be found in *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne* in the example given previously. However, one should question whether this arose as a single progression rather than a dedicated use as will be shown for Rimsky-Korsakov.

An octatonic scale consists of alternating whole and half steps. There are two main modes, the first, the melodic scale, beginning with a whole tone and is made up of two minor tetrachords, the second starting at the tritone.

#### *Octatonic: Melodic mode*



The second, the harmonic mode, consists of two diminished tetrachords, the second starting at the tritone.

#### *Octatonic: Harmonic mode*



The scale can be transposed twice before the original pitch content is repeated.

As has been mentioned previously Bach was already an innovator and an example of a limited melodic octatonic scale can already be found in the *Sarabande* from Bach's *English Suite No.3. in g-minor* written about 1715.

<sup>665</sup> Yastrebtsev.V.V. *Op.cit.*: 41.

<sup>666</sup> Ляпунов С. 1916. Переписка М.А. Балакирева и Н.А. Римского-Корсакова (1862–1898 гг.) (Correspondence between M.A. Balakirev and N.A.Rimsky-Korsakov.) *Музыкальный современник*, VIII, 92. Quoted in Taruskin Richard 1985.



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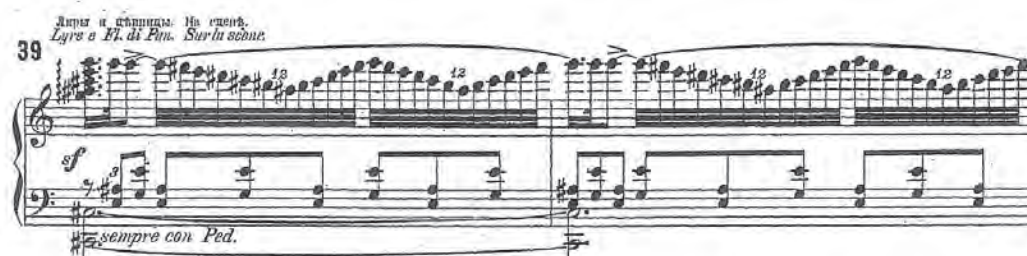
From a number of Liszt's compositions it is possible to find semitone-tone-semitone type progressions. It is, however, interesting to note the differences between Liszt's and Rimsky-Korsakov's use. As Taruskin so clearly shows, the downbeat harmonies in a true octatonic scale must be interpreted as an *appoggiatura*. If one compares two passages which appear very similar, from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Сказка/Skazka (Legend)*, 'a' in the following example and Liszt's *Dante Symphony*, 'b', and the harmonisation leading up to the cadence, it can be seen that in *Skazka* the second chord of the descending octatonic scale takes on the function of a tonally stable diminished harmony which is a link in the circle of thirds. In this respect the direction of the chord harmonisation is clearer.<sup>668</sup>



Already in *Mlada* when Yaromir is shown a vision of Cleopatra in Act III, Scene 4, the octatonic scale is clearly heard in the pan pipes.

<sup>667</sup> [http://www.free-scores.com/PDF\\_EN/bach-johann-sebastian-english-suite-no-3-in-g-minor-24415.pdf](http://www.free-scores.com/PDF_EN/bach-johann-sebastian-english-suite-no-3-in-g-minor-24415.pdf): 36–37. 24–08–2012.

<sup>668</sup> Taruskin Richard 1985. *Op.cit.*: 94, 96–97.



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From this time onwards up until his final operas Rimsky-Korsakov was interested in novel harmonisations which gave emphasise to situation in his operas. For him the whole tone scale, octatonic scale and conventional progressions were tools to be used in composition. To emphasize the change from the real world to the magical, as in the Cleopatra scene in *Mlada*, the fairytale world of Pannochka in *May Night* required an ‘unreal’ harmonic devise. This he discussed with Yastrebtsev in April 1894 where he pointed out the developing Russian music and particularly his wide use of, for instance, a Dorian cadence in *The Snow Maiden*, the use of the Mixolydian mode in Act 1 and Act III of *May Night* and the Phrygian in Act II of *Mlada*. With respect to heightened mood in *May Night* he pointed out how he had used parallel V<sup>2</sup> chords<sup>670</sup> “in the scene with Pannochka intentionally, to heighten the fantastic quality of Levko’s dream”.<sup>671</sup> In addition he cited a number of parallel V<sup>2</sup> chords in second relationships throughout the opera. This fascination with these chords is also found in *The Snow Maiden*.<sup>672</sup> The fairytale world of the bird Sirin in *Kitezh* is accompanied by a descending octatonic scale in the flutes:



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<sup>669</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1891. *Mlada. Opera-Ballet. Vocal Score*. Facsimile copy of Leipzig, M.P.Belaieff score. Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation. Facsimile copy of Leipzig, M.P.Belaieff score: 190.

<sup>670</sup> Dominant seventh chord in the third inversion.

<sup>671</sup> Yastrebtsev.V.V. *Op. cit.*: 68.

<sup>672</sup> See *Ib.*: 69, for instance.

<sup>673</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N. *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia. Opera Vocal Score*. *Op.cit.*: 284.



From his *Practical Manual of Harmony* it can be seen that Rimsky-Korsakov established clear rules with which he wanted to avoid chaos. Yastrebtsev quotes him as saying “A composer must be in full command of his tonal forces, otherwise they will master him”.<sup>674</sup> In talking about *Kaschei the Immortal* he said that although there were “harsh harmonies and modulations” (*резких гармоний и модуляций*) it was the presence of “the *invisible presence* of the tonic at all times”, the rhythm and flawless voice leading that held the music together.<sup>675</sup> It was in his strict rules on voice leading that he avoided chaos.<sup>676</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov considered that a set of chromatic pitch collections were to be used according to certain routines and techniques. All divisions of a scale were possible. It was the minor third relationships which became dominant and the octatonic scale that dominated since it could relate with traditional diatonicism in many ways and results in stable triadic material at each of its nodal points (0,3,6,9). Moreover any rotation of triads through a circle of minor thirds encompasses any given octatonic collection.<sup>677</sup> It was Rimsky-Korsakov who systematically used both the melodic as well as the harmonic octatonic scale in his compositions.

It has been suggested that Rimsky-Korsakov was influenced in his interest in tritones by Wagner. By this time the composer had also overcome the dislike of Wagner by his fellow *kuchka* composers. To Yastrebtsev he admitted that “Wagner is peerless in orchestration” although also commenting on his “constant crossing of what is possible in harmony”. He also writes to Glazunov in July 1901 that “In the last few days of June, I started work on another opera [...] the form will be Wagnerian; there will be abrupt transitions and chords with incoherent voice leading [...]”. Throughout 1902 Rimsky-Korsakov was in frequent correspondence concerning his new opera *Kashchei the Immortal* of which he wrote that for once in his life he was ‘aching’ (*побаловаться*) because of his concerns with the discordant harmony. He starts, as he says, “suspiciously in e-minor” (*в подозрительном*) and ends in D-major in order that it doesn’t resemble what went previously. He says that he is taking “harmony to the furthest limits without crossing over into hyper-harmony (*sverkh-garmonii*)”.<sup>678</sup> But it was in *Kashchei* that Rimsky-Korsakov applied all his possible harmonizations of the tritone, moving away from his past emphasis on the major-minor forms and looking at alternate derivations from symmetrical scale formations whilst, however, maintaining control. With Wagner he seemed to have a love-hate relationship. In discussions with

<sup>674</sup> Yastrebtsev, V.V. *Op.cit.*: 413.

<sup>675</sup> From a letter to Petrovsky quoted in Орлова А.А. Выпуск 3. *Op.cit.*: 305.

<sup>676</sup> See, for instance, Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 180.

<sup>677</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1985. *Op.cit.*: 100–101.

<sup>678</sup> See letters to Kruglikov for 1902 in Орлова А.А. Выпуск 3. *Op.cit.*: 275–284 and Taruskin Richard 1985. *Op.cit.*: 118.

Yastrebtsev it was noted that Wagner “seldom remains for long in the same tonality” and that he:

seems to be indicating the “principle key,” that is, the tonality around which, despite the most bizarre digressions and modulations, everything else seemingly groups itself as though about a fixed center [...] reveals a kind of instinctive urge on Wagner’s part ‘not to break completely with form?’ And what a fascinating result he achieves by constantly returning to the same tonality!<sup>679</sup>

It was also the Wagnerian orchestration which fascinated him already at a time when he was composing *Mlada*. In 1901 after studying the score of *Siegfried* he clearly stated his opinion.

Меня стали возмущать его всевозможные слуховые заблуждения и перейденные границы возможного в гармонии, попросту говоря, чепуха и фальшь, рассеянные в «Зигфриде» на каждом шагу [...] Какой ужасный вред нанес Вагнер тем, что его гениальные страницы исперецтрены всякими гармоническими и модуляционными безобразиями [...] Неужели мой музыкальный слух лучше вагнеровского? Нет, конечно, не лучше; быть может, даже хуже; но у меня есть музыкальная совесть, к которой я прислушиваюсь [...] Что у Вагнера бесподобно – его инструментовка.<sup>680</sup>

I began to be outraged with all kinds of acoustical errors and the crossing of the borders of what is possible in harmony, I simply say that this nonsense and falseness is scattered throughout every step of *Siegfried* [...]. What terrible and harmful injury Wagner inflicted on them [the public] covering it with brilliant outrages in harmonics and modulation [...]. Is it possible that my musical ear is better than a Wagnerian? No, of course not better, possibly even worse, but I have a musical conscience that I listen to [...]. What in Wagner is superb – his instrumentation.<sup>681</sup>

Here he also finds great similarities between Mussorgsky and Wagner, however, “Mussorgsky is transparently untidy and unskilful, Wagner is possessive of the facilities.” The differences between Wagner and Rimsky-Korsakov were also outlined in Engel’s review of *Kashchei* in the Russian Bulletin in December 1902.<sup>682</sup>

An interesting feature which also shows itself in *Kashchei* is how Russian folk music can be linked to the octatonic scale. During the snow storm the chorus sing “a little

<sup>679</sup> Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 263.

<sup>680</sup> Орлова А.А. Выпуск 3. *Op.cit.*: 252.

<sup>681</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>682</sup> Campbell Stuart 2003. *Op.cit.*: 60–64.

theme in the Russian spirit colours”.<sup>683</sup> The tune which starts with the altos and continues in the sopranos starts on the “tonic” tritone. There are two tritone-related sequences which together form the melodic octatonic scale (see mark 33 and 38). Since Rimsky-Korsakov divides this scale into minor tetrachords, tone-semitone-tone sequences, this then, as would have been familiar to Rimsky-Korsakov, has a relation to the melodic base of much of Russian folk music.<sup>684</sup>

It can already be seen that Rimsky-Korsakov was discussing seventh relationships and minor triads with regard to *The Snow Maiden* and *May Night* in April 1894 with Yastrebtsev. However, perhaps the first publically written record of whole tone – semitone scale was recorded by the latter in December 1900 in the *Russian Musical Gazette*:

Rimsky-Korsakov has introduced into the art of music the utterly new, and before him unknown, *artistic* treatment of the augmented triad, the chords of the second, ninth and eleventh, and the ‘whole–tone–semitone’ scale.<sup>685</sup>

### 6.3 The Kuchka and the Beliaev Circle

Mitrofan Beliaev was a St.Petersburg timber millionaire who had an interest in music and decided to take talented national composers into his patronage. In 1885 he set up a large non-commercial music publishing house in Leipzig and in the same year an organisation he called the Russian Symphonic Concert Society. With these he hoped to promote the works of young Russian promising composers. He was very much influenced by Rimsky-Korsakov’s students.

Beliaev also continued the St.Petersburg tradition that had been started by the *Kuchka* by entertaining musicians regularly at his apartment in the latter half of the 1880’s. This became known as the Beliaev Circle and effectively headed by Rimsky-Korsakov. The Circle included Borodin, Glazunov, Lyadov, and later Akimenko, Tcherpnin, and Ossovsky. Tchaikovsky, Taneev, and Skriabin are also known to have attended the meetings. Rimsky-Korsakov’s memoirs also mention Dütsch, Fyeliks Blumfeld, his brother Sigizmund and after their graduation from the Conservatoire, N.A. Sokolov,

<sup>683</sup> *Ib.*: 64.

<sup>684</sup> See, for instance, Prokhorov Vadim. *Op.cit.*: 4–11 and Taruskin Richard 1985. *Op.cit.*: 121.

<sup>685</sup> Published in the issue of the Russian Musical Gazette VIII, no. 51 (17 December 1900), dedicated to Rimsky-Korsakov’s thirty-fifth anniversary “*Н.А.Римский-Корсаков. Его биография. Его значение в истории русской музыки*” (N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov. His biography. His significance in the history of Russian music.) Transl. Taruskin Richard 1985. *Op.cit.*: 129n 75.



Antipov, Vītols, amongst others. As a member of both circles Rimsky-Korsakov was able to define the difference between the two groups:

Can Byelayev's circle be looked upon as a continuation of Balakirev's? [...] The similarity [...] consisted in the advanced ideas, the progressivism, common to the two of them. But Balakirev's circle corresponded to the period of storm and stress in the evolution of Russian music, Byelayev's circle represented the period of calm, onward march. Balakirev's circle was revolutionary, Byelaev's, on the other hand, progressive [...] Balakirev's circle consisted of musicians of feeble technique, amateurs almost, who were pioneering by sheer force of their creative talents, force that occasionally served them in lieu of technique and occasionally (as frequently with Moussorgsky) was insufficient to conceal its shortcomings. Byelayev's circle, on the contrary, consisted of composers and musicians technically trained and educated [...] Balakirev's circle was exclusive and intolerant; Byelaev's was more indulgent and eclectic.<sup>686</sup>

It can be considered that with Lyadov, Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov as active members, together with graduates of the Conservatoire, this made the circle considerably more academic. Many of the younger members have long been forgotten. However, in the period up to his death in 1908, Rimsky-Korsakov experimented with a number of opera forms and moving towards the major harmonic experimentations of *Kashchei*, *Kitezh* and *The Golden Cockerel* which pushed the boundaries to new limits. Perhaps with these three operas, which were also a culmination of his political comment and life philosophy, he wanted to shock the establishment from its labelling of him as musically 'conservative'. From this new direction it was easy for Stravinsky, Scriabin, Rachmaninov, Prokofiev and eventually Shostakovich to continue. Asafyev, in his *Book About Stravinsky*, written between 1924 and 1926 and published in 1929, writes that "Rimsky-Korsakov followed his age, and each new work was yet another concession of genius to his times and to modernity".<sup>687</sup>

#### 6.4 Rimsky-Korsakov's influence on his pupils – Russian themes and the later use of the octatonic scale

There has been extensive discussion in recent years concerning the origins and use of the octatonic scale. Olivier Messiaen in his *The Techniques of My Musical Language* (1944) treated the scale as one of his second "modes of limited transpositions". Having become acquainted with Rimsky-Korsakov's *Sadko* he said that he found "traces of it"

<sup>686</sup> MML: 285–287.

<sup>687</sup> Asaf'yev Boris 1982. *A Book About Stravinsky*. Transl. Richard F. French, Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press: 30.

and in Stravinsky's case it was "transient" and a "timid sketch".<sup>688</sup> However Rimsky-Korsakov's octatonic scale was already recognised by the composers in the Beliaev circle as the *Корсакова гамма* (Korsakov scale). In his *Practical Manual of Harmony* there is a chapter on "false progressions" (*ложные последовательности*) together with exercises that cover both circles of major and minor thirds. The octatonic scale is not presented directly, however, there are a pair of exercises concerning connections through a circle of minor thirds in which the bass line is an octatonic scale progression through a tritone. The exercise is to "complete the example begun" and, in this way, to discover the whole-tone-semitone scale. Appendix 10 shows the exercises as they appear in Rimsky-Korsakov's *Manual*.

The majority of Rimsky-Korsakov's pupils, many of whom were members of the Circle, would also have been acquainted with his textbook on harmony. Perhaps due to his role as a teacher and his insistence that harmonic 'chaos' should be avoided through a reliance on a tonal axes, this initially limited his earlier development. However his last three operas demonstrated his own potential. The further extension can later be found in the works of his pupils and, in particular, in Stravinsky and Prokofiev

In his decades at the Conservatory, Rimsky-Korsakov taught many composers who would later find fame, including Alexandr Glazunov, Sergei Prokofiev, Igor Stravinsky and Witold Maliszewski. Other students included the music critic and musicologist Alexander Ossovsky, and the composer Lazare Saminsky, Anatoly Liadov, Anton Arensky, Mikhail Ippolitov-Ivanov, Nicolai Tcherepnin, Alexandr Gretchaninov, Nicholai Myaskovsky and Mikhail Gnesin. In addition there were also many who were in the forefront in their own countries: the Latvians Jāzeps Vītols, Emīls Dārziņš and Emīlis Melngailis; the Estonian Artur Kapp; the Ukrainian Mykola Lysenko; the Armenian Alexandr Spendiaryan and the Georgian Meliton Balanchivadze. Due to his increasing fame abroad there were also Europeans such as the Italian Ottorino Respighi who studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov in 1901. The modernist poet Mikhail Kuzmin and Nikolai Evreinov who became associated with Russian symbolism started studies in music studied under Rimsky-Korsakov.

Rimsky-Korsakov's method of teaching was quite simple as remembered by the Ukrainian conductor Nikolai Malko, who later became chief conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre. "I will speak, and you will listen. Then I will speak less, and you will start to work. And finally I will not speak at all, and you will work." Malko added that

<sup>688</sup> Messiaen Olivier 1956. *The Techniques of My Musical Language*. Transl. John Satterfield. Paris, Alphonse Leduc.

"Rimsky-Korsakov explained everything so clearly and simply that all we had to do was to do our work well."<sup>689</sup> In his analysis "Chernomor to Kashchei" Taruskin outlines the use of the octatonic scale by many of his students such as Glazunov and Cherepnin.

## 6.5 The influence of Rimsky-Korsakov

In the following sections it will be shown, as an example, how Rimsky-Korsakov influenced the work of Stravinsky, Prokofiev and Scriabin.

### 6.5.1 Stravinsky

The relationship between Rimsky-Korsakov and Stravinsky was very close and it can be assumed that many of the detrimental comments expressed by Stravinsky in later years were due, in part, to Rimsky-Korsakov's family's distancing themselves from the young composer after Rimsky-Korsakov's death. Even in letters in 1913 to Steinberg, following the première and success of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, he appeals to Steinberg to play *Sacre*: "I am certain that in time you will begin to feel it [...]." And he ends his letter of July 3<sup>rd</sup>: "From the heart I wish you the same liveliness of the creative spirit, for I love you."<sup>690</sup>

Although Stravinsky's early symphony was said by Asafiev to have "revealed mastery of the compositional methods of the favourite teachers, including Glazunov";<sup>691</sup> this was also said by Rimsky-Korsakov of the 4<sup>th</sup> movement of his first symphony.<sup>692</sup> There is little doubt that *The Firebird* was influenced by the latter, whilst *The Nightingale* reflects back on the harmonies of Rimsky-Korsakov's last operas. Irrespective of this Stravinsky told an interviewer for *Comoedia*<sup>693</sup> in January 1920 "[Rimsky-Korsakov] had a profound respect for the classical rules of musical composition, and he did not always approve of what I was doing" and on 15<sup>th</sup> March 1944 in the US he prepared a statement for the Rimsky-Korsakov's centenary, to be broadcast in Russia: "[...] not only in a tribute to his genius but gratefully for his loving, unforgettable, fatherly guidance in the very inception of my creative life: To the master and man whom I love, I bow."<sup>694</sup>

<sup>689</sup> Malko, Nikolai 1972. *Vospominaniia. Stat'i. Pisma* [Reminiscences. Articles. Letters]. Leningrad: 49, quoted in Volkov Solomon. *Op.cit.*: 345.

<sup>690</sup> Stravinsky Vera and Craft Robert 1978. *Stravinsky in Pictures and Documents*. New York, Simon and Schuster: 25.

<sup>691</sup> Asaf'yev Boris 1982. *Op.cit.*: 15.

<sup>692</sup> Yatrebtsev.V. *Op.cit.*: 421.

<sup>693</sup> A French newspaper that began publication in 1907 and ended in 1944.

<sup>694</sup> Stravinsky Vera. *Op .cit.*: 48.

Although not mentioned in Rimsky-Korsakov's memoirs, it is known that Stravinsky visited him in Heidelberg in the summer 1902, when he was there with his parents. Stravinsky played him two of his early compositions, a piano scherzo in g-minor and the song *The Storm Cloud* (Туча), which was a setting to Pushkin's verse, and was advised by him to continue the study of music and composition.<sup>695</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov became a father figure to Stravinsky following the death of his own father in the autumn 1902. By this time Stravinsky was already a private pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov's having two lessons a week where he was taught the compass and register of the different instruments of the orchestra and orchestration. He also took part in the composer's regular gatherings of his pupils at his home where their works were played. It was Rimsky-Korsakov who, realising the unusual gift that Stravinsky had, had recommended that he take private lessons rather than entering the St. Petersburg Conservatory.

In my University years I became friendly with the Rimsky-Korsakov family and then advanced very rapidly [...] in 1903-04 wrote a large-four movement- Piano Sonata in F-sharp minor, incorporating many suggestions by Rimsky-Korsakov. It was performed at his home by Richter [...].<sup>696</sup>

Stravinsky arrived in Vyechasha, the estate where Rimsky-Korsakov and his family spent the summer, around the 11<sup>th</sup> August 1904 and work together with the composer on the orchestration of *Kitezha* and also *Pan Voyevoda*.<sup>697</sup> When Stravinsky was married in January 1906 to his cousin Catherine Nossenko, no relatives were present but his best men were Andrei and Vladimir Rimsky-Korsakov and his mentor blessed him on his return to St. Petersburg and gave him an icon as a wedding present.

Although initially Rimsky-Korsakov tried to teach Stravinsky a rational approach to composition with self-discipline and accuracy he soon realised that his pupil would learn these quicker through application to larger forms. The earliest work written under Rimsky-Korsakov's guidance was the Symphony in E-flat between 1905–1907. The first performance of movements 2 and 3 of this work, which was dedicated to Rimsky-Korsakov, was on April 14<sup>th</sup> (27<sup>th</sup>) 1907 at a private concert together with *The Faun and Shepherdess*, with words by Pushkin. For a talented student Rimsky-Korsakov notes:

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<sup>695</sup> See, for instance, Walsh Stephen 2002. *The New Grove Stravinsky*. London, Macmillan Publishers Limited: 3–4; White Eric 1979. *Stravinsky. The Composer and His Works*. London and Boston, Faber and Faber: 25.

<sup>696</sup> Stravinsky Vera. *Op.cit.*: 22.

<sup>697</sup> See Yastrebtsev. V.V. *Op.cit.*: 344; Орлова А.А. Выпуск 3. *Op.cit.*: 242–243.

In fact, a talented student needs so little; it is so simple to show him everything needed in harmony and counterpoint to set him on his feet in that work, it is so simple to direct him in understanding the forms of composition, if one goes about it in the right way. Just one or two years of systematic study in the development of technique, a few examples in free composition and orchestration, assuming a good knowledge of the piano – and the studies are over.<sup>698</sup>

Yastrebtsev again notes that Rimsky-Korsakov considered that Stravinsky's talent had not yet fully developed and in the fourth movement he imitated Glazunov. An additional comment concerning the new songs was that he "embraced modernism too zealously."<sup>699</sup> The première of the Symphony in E-flat was on January 22<sup>nd</sup> (February 4<sup>th</sup>) 1908. The octatonic scale, as mentioned previously, together with the closely interrelated alternate scales became an essential part of Rimsky-Korsakov's teaching. Already in the coda of the 3<sup>rd</sup> movement Largo of Stravinsky's Symphony in E flat there are a series of sliding chromatic chords that are based on the whole tone scale and a triad sequence rising by minor thirds. In addition in *The Faun and Shepherdess* a whole tone scale was used to give a mystical eroticism to the work. In this respect it resembles Glinka, the abduction of Lyudmila in Act I of *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and the descending octatonic scale of Sadko's descent to the realm of the Sea King. The Symphony in E flat brought to an end the formal teacher – pupil relationship. Prior to his death Rimsky-Korsakov may well have seen the *Scherzo fantastique* which was written between July 1907 and March 1908, especially in the light of a comment in a letter to Rimsky-Korsakov: "The harmony in "Bees" (*Scherzo Fantastique*) will be fierce, like a toothache, but should immediately alternate with agreeable harmony, like cocaine."<sup>700</sup> There is a noticeable similarity to *The Flight of the Bumble Bee* which Stravinsky himself acknowledged in his conversations with Robert Craft.<sup>701</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov probably also saw the early sketches for *The Nightingale*.

Although their friendship lasted up until the composer's death in 1908 there is no mention of Stravinsky in Rimsky-Korsakov's *My Musical Life* since he wanted to avoid favouritism. Stravinsky in his many commentaries on his life was, in general, very detrimental about his early teachers. Towards his teacher there appears to be contradiction where he considered Rimsky-Korsakov as academic and pedantic but where there was also a progressive acceptance of musical development. It may be assumed that Stravinsky's close acquaintance with Rimsky-Korsakov's last operas

<sup>698</sup> Volkov Solomon. *Op.cit.*: 345.

<sup>699</sup> Yastrebtsev. V.V. *Op.cit.*: 421.

<sup>700</sup> Stravinsky Vera. *Op.cit.*: 22.

<sup>701</sup> Stravinsky Igor and Craft Robert 1959. *Conversations with Igor Stravinsky*. London, Faber and Faber: 41.

*Kitezh* and *The Golden Cockerel* helped to formulate the rhythmic and harmonic basis of the first act of *The Nightingale* which Stravinsky was working on in the Spring 1908 and which finally acquired its form after a subsequent meeting with Diaghilev. Stravinsky's so-called Russian period also included *The Firebird*, *The Rite of Spring* and *The Wedding* all of which can be considered as a continuation of Rimsky-Korsakov's Russian Romantic tradition of the 19<sup>th</sup> century incorporating the exotic and fantastic.

*The Firebird* was noticeable in that it was the first work in which Stravinsky used folk tunes. With reference to the 1910 version of the suite he used the Rimsky-Korsakov setting of *In the small garden* (Как по садику, садику), no.79, for the Dance of the Princesses and The Rondo (khorovod), is no.21 in Rimsky-Korsakov's collection *By the gate a pine was swaying* (У ворот сосна раскачалася). To introduce a feeling of fairytale mixed with the mystic Stravinsky used string harmonic glissandi in the introduction which he originally said was his own invention, however, he later admitted that this was "a conscious attempt to out-Rimsky Rimsky".<sup>702</sup> If one examines *Petrushka*, which was first performed a year later, Bachinskaya identifies nine folk songs, four of which are attributed to Rimsky-Korsakov's collection.<sup>703</sup>

When it came to *The Rite of Spring* Stravinsky, like Rimsky-Korsakov before him, turned to established artists, in this case, the painter Nicolas Roerich to assist in the stage designs. Roerich was a recognised authority on Russian folk customs and had designed the sets for the 1909 Diaghilev Paris revival of *The Maid of Pskov*. Stravinsky would have been well aware of Rimsky-Korsakov's interest in Russian folklore and peasant customs with their closely-related folk music and his extensive use of them in his operas. For years it was thought that *The Rite* only had one genuine folk song which is introduced by the bassoon at the start of the composition, which was of Lithuanian origin. The publication of Stravinsky's sketches in 1969 showed that he had used up to a dozen from Byelorussia, Russia and the Ukraine all associated with spring festivals and also included Rimsky-Korsakov as a source.<sup>704</sup> All the melodies are transformed from their originals. In this he also closely followed his teacher since Rimsky-Korsakov, in addition to direct quotes, also extensively modified the folk melodies.

<sup>702</sup> Walsh Stephen 1988. *The Music of Stravinsky*. London and New York, Routledge: 22.

<sup>703</sup> Bachinskaya.N. *Op.cit.*: 178.

<sup>704</sup> Morton Lawrence 1979. Footnotes to Stravinsky Studies: 'Le Sacre du printemps'. *Tempo. New Series*. 128: 9–16; Taruskin Richard 1980. Russian Folk Melodies in *The Rite of Spring*. *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 33 (3): 513–518, 522, 530–533. See also van den Toorn Pieter C. 1987. *Stravinsky and The Rite of Spring. The Beginnings of a Musical Language*. Oxford, Oxford University Press: 10-15.



Stravinsky, like Rimsky-Korsakov, also ensured that the tunes and the rituals were correctly matched.

It is also interesting to note Bartók's comments on *The Rite of Spring*:

[...] he seldom uses melodies of a closed form consisting of three or four lines, but short motives of two or three measures, and repeats them 'à la *ostinato*'. These short recurring primitive motives are very characteristic of Russian music of a certain category.

Earlier he also notes that:

Stravinsky never mentions the sources of his themes. Neither in his titles nor in the footnotes does he ever allude to whether a theme of his is his own invention or whether it is taken from folk music [...] He wants to demonstrate that it does not matter a jot whether a composer invents his own themes or uses themes from elsewhere. He has a right to use musical material taken from all sources.<sup>705</sup>

Stravinsky became very contradictory in his views concerning his Russianness and the use of folk music and already in an interview for L'Étoile Belge on May 22<sup>nd</sup> 1930 he is quoted as saying:

Some composers have found their most potent inspiration in folk music, but in my opinion popular music has nothing to gain by being taken out of its frame. It is not suitable as a pretext for demonstration of orchestral effects and complications, and it loses its charm by being uprooted (*dérecinée*). One risks adulterating it and rendering it monotonous....<sup>706</sup>

It is interesting to note that although Stravinsky called Rimsky-Korsakov's anthology of folk tunes as "more or less good" and those of both Tchaikovsky and Lyadov "excellent", it was to Rimsky-Korsakov that he turned more often. In his *My Musical Life*, Rimsky-Korsakov made his views of the Christian holidays and their relationship to pagan times very clear and how, in addition, the folk song tradition, the game songs (*песни игровые*), ceremonial or ritual songs (*обрядные песни*) and calendar songs (*календарные песни*) were related to this pagan origin.

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<sup>705</sup> Bartók Béla. *Op.cit.*: 343.

<sup>706</sup> Stravinsky Vera and Craft Robert 1978. *Op.cit.*: 202.

I say indirectly and by reflection; for though sun-worship had entirely faded before the light of Christianity, yet the whole cycle of ceremonial songs and games to this very day rests on the ancient pagan sun-worship which lives unconsciously in the people.<sup>707</sup>

From an examination of *The Rite of Spring: Sketches 1911 – 1913*, in the Spring Rounds a melody is shown that bears a great similarity to song No.50 *Ну-ка, кумушка, мы покумимся*<sup>708</sup> which is from the section concerning *Семицкие, троицкие и русальные* (semik, trinity. and rusalía). These terms refer to the Thursday before Trinity or according to pagan tradition, the Thursday of the seventh week after the full moon in springtime. As mentioned previously, the week of celebration at this time was called *semitskaya* or *rusalnaya* – the time when the *rusalkas*, water spirits, appeared. There are dances associated with the fortune-telling traditions at this time. Tatiana Popova in her *Русское народное музыкальное творчество* (The Musical Works of the Russian People) describes the time as being bound up with the ancient cult of vegetation and with the cult of ancestors together with the appropriate ceremonies and customs. She particularly mentions the custom of *кумление/kumlenie* which is a type of blood-brotherhood custom where two girls kiss each other through a wreath of birch branches while a special song was sung. Rimsky-Korsakov's *Ну-ка, кумушка, мы покумимся* is one of these songs.<sup>709</sup> The song was modified and the pitch transposed to match that of the surrounding music. The rituals of *The Rite of Spring* bear a similarity to these traditions.

For *The Dance of the Earth* the sketchbooks outline a well-known wedding dance tune *The dove flew and cooed* (Летел голубь, ворковал). This is found under 'wedding tunes' nos. 109 and 109a in Bachinskaya's classification. It has also been suggested by Boris Yarustovsky that the second sketch has a very strong similarity to the beginning of Act II of *Kitezh* which Rimsky-Korsakov was composing when Stravinsky began his lessons with him. The eighth patterns and pitch of the sketch is the same as that of the bear trainers cries *Show them Mihaylushka, show them fool* (Покажи Михайлушка, покажи дурачливый). It is from these two that Stravinsky more than likely composed the final Dance.<sup>710</sup>

### 6.5.2 Rimsky-Korsakov's influence on *Svadebka* as an example

In 1914 Stravinsky became particular interested in folk poetry and during a visit to his summer home in Ustilug and also Kyev in July he bought, amongst others, a volume of

<sup>707</sup> MML: 207.

<sup>708</sup> Taruskin Richard 1980. *Op.cit.*: 512–513.

<sup>709</sup> Попова Т. 1955. *Op.cit.*: 71–73.

<sup>710</sup> A detailed analysis is given in Taruskin Richard 1980. *Op. cit.*: 335–340.

wedding songs which had been published as a supplement to the nineteenth century collection of Kireevsky, (*Песни, собранные П. В. Киреевским*). Stravinsky attributes the source of the libretto of *Свадьба* (Les Noces – The Wedding) to be essentially Kireevsky with also Afanasiev. But prior to this composition Stravinsky tried out adaption's of variable word play and rhymes in his *Прибаутку/Pribaoutki* (limericks), 1914. These are rhyming games which are common to many countries which are generally nonsense. However, from a musical point of view 'The Old Man and the Hare' is significant in that through the interaction of the singer's peasant-type four note scale with the violin and bassoon an octatonic scale on A is formed.<sup>711</sup>

IV.  
Stáriets i záiat's (The Old Man and the Hare)

Lento  $\text{♩} = 66$

Canto

Сто-итъ гра-ды-усть, —  
 Dans un' ville en l'air,  
 In der Stadt im-Traum.

Flauto grande

Corno inglese

Clarinetto in  $\text{La}$

Fagotto

Violino *sempre sul ponticello*

Viola

Violoncello *pizz.*

Contrabasso

5

Cto.

А во гра - дѣ кустѣ, —  
 un vieux as - sés par terre.  
 auf dem Hol - zer-baum

Fl.

Cor. ingl.

Cl.

Fg.

Vi.

Vla.

Vlc.

Cb.

10

16 PRIBAUTKI

712

<sup>711</sup> Walsh Stephen 1988. *Op.cit.*: 61.

<sup>712</sup> [http://imslp.org/wiki/Pribaoutki\\_Stravinsky,\\_Igor](http://imslp.org/wiki/Pribaoutki_Stravinsky,_Igor): 16. 01-02-2013.

He continued these studies with *Подблюдные* - The Four Russian Peasant Songs ('Saucers'). These are fortune-telling songs (*подблюдные пёсны*), which are vocal dance music with a shifting pulse based on movable word-stress which were based on Afanasiev's texts. All these compositions date from the period 1914–17. The libretto to *Les Noces* was written in the summer of 1914 with the first draft finalised in 1917. Initially it was conceived of as a ballet 'Songs and dances on Russian folk themes'. In this respect it was based on portraits of the bride and groom, the best man and minstrels (*skomorokhi*) with accompaniments on typical instruments such as the balalaika and gusli. Although the music and ceremony of the Orthodox church influences *Les Noces* all the action that is portrayed is pagan and ritualistic.<sup>713</sup>

The subsidiary title of *Les Noces* is "Russian choreographic scenes with singing and music". It has been shown that there is a strong affinity between *Les Noces* and folk music on the level of the *popevki*. The latter term although originally used in Russian church musical practice for melodic turns and gestures has been applied by the Soviet musicologists Feodosii Rubtsov and Boris Asafiev to folk music to designate a melodic shape as well as to the significance of each tone within a modal structure. The majority of folk songs are based on the recurrence of a *popevka* in varying forms or combinations of *popevki*.<sup>714</sup> In 19<sup>th</sup> century Russian music it can be found in the works of Mussorgsky, Borodin and Rimsky-Korsakov. A typical one is found in the Second Tableau: *At the Bridegroom's House* (*У жениха*), *Virgin Mary, come, come and aid our wedding* (Пречистая Мать, ходи, ходи к нам у хать).

Wedding songs were used extensively throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century in operas. Bachinskaia notes that whilst Mussorgsky used three and Tchaikovsky six Rimsky-Korsakov used ten. As with Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky wanted not only to use the songs but to understand them within the correct context, which is also a main theme of Lineva's introduction to her *The Peasant Songs of Great Russia*.<sup>715</sup> Consequently he was interested particularly in legends and customs from pre-Christian times, seasonal rituals and songs. The composer's view of *Svadebka* was that it revolved around the peasant faith rituals focussing on both pre-Christian and Christian concepts, a symbiosis of both the Christian and pagan practices. The wedding tunes gave many possibilities since they are metrically amongst the most complex in Russian folk song consisting of strong rhythmic patterns of units of differing length and structure (see Bachinskaia nos.

<sup>713</sup> See, for instance, White Eric Walter. *Op.cit.*: 250–260; Walsh Stephen 1988. *Op.cit.*: 51–85.

<sup>714</sup> See Mazo Margarita 1990. Stravinsky's "Les Noces" and Russian Village Wedding Ritual. *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 43 (1): 109–110; Asaf'yev Boris. *Op.cit.*: 51.

<sup>715</sup> Lineff Eugenie 1905. *The Peasant Songs of Great Russia*. St.Petersburg, Imperial Academy of Science: i–xxix.

95–126). *Svadebka* particularly revolves around three ritualistic elements, the grief and pain associated with the loss of maidenhood, a type of funeral rite, the dominant male-led procreativity and finally joy, humour and buffoonery. Around these there are to found three main types of lamenting, *vopl'* a glissando-type wail, *prichitanie*, uninterrupted rhythmic recitation and actual weeping and crying, *plach'*.<sup>716</sup> In laments the modal structure is varying. It is within these lamenting structures that the octatonic scale can be detected as, for instance, in the opening lament of the bride *Tress my tress, O thou fair tress of my hair, O my little tress* (Коса ль моя ко... Коса моя косынька рясая!). Margarita Mazo interprets the octatonic scale in *Svadebka* as “an integration of several variants of diatonic popevki...” An example of this can be seen in *Les Noces* at mark 91 in Part Two, Tableaux 4, “The Wedding Feast” and again at 127 and 129.<sup>717</sup>

129 (Одни из друзей)

S. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

М.-с. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

T. Ай, вы дру-жен.

B. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

S. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

A. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

T. „Ах, теш-ша мо-я, теш-ша лас-ко-ва-я!“

B. А ког-да

I. N

II. N

III. N

IV. N

<sup>716</sup> Mazo Margarita. *Op.cit.*: 122.

<sup>717</sup> *Ib.*: 127n.57; Stravinsky Igor 1985, *The Wedding. Score*. Moscow “Muzyka”: 170.



The second part, *The Bridegroom*, is the ‘religious’ section.

Пречистая Мать, ходи,	Virgin Mary come
ходи к нам у хать,	come and aid our wedding
свахе помогать, кудри расчесать,	come, Mary hear our pray’r,
Хветисьевы кудри,	as we comb the fair curls of Fetis,
кудри расчесать, Памфильича русы.	Virgin Mary come.

Asaf’yev likens to the style of peasant orthodox worship; “One has the impression that Stravinsky has laid bare the ancient heathen roots of orthodox ritual and its primitive incantatory signification (the cult of fertility and the propagation of the race).”<sup>718</sup> The section 50–53 is a development from the chant sung at the beginning of the dogmatic in the Russian Orthodox Service.<sup>719</sup> Again Stravinsky follows Rimsky-Korsakov in adapting the Orthodox melodies.

It is possible to follow Stravinsky as he transforms received material, the music at [50]–[53] being derived entirely—and the music after [53] partly—from the Fifth Tone of the Quamen-yi Chant,<sup>720</sup> which is sung at the beginning of the Sunday Dogmatik in the Russian Orthodox Service. Here is a fragment of the chant:



After several intermediate stages, including experiments with triplet notation (a symbol for the Trinity at least as old as Philippe de Vitry), Stravinsky altered this to



Another fragment of the chant



Stravinsky merely transposes and extends to



while still another phrase



he converts to



This last became the duet for the priest-like basses at [50].

720

<sup>718</sup> Asaf’yev Boris. *Op.cit.*: 137–138.

<sup>719</sup> Stravinsky Vera and Craft Robert. *Op.cit.*: 149–150.

<sup>720</sup> *Ib.*: 149.



In the score this translates to:

50 (Жених)  
♩ = 80 Meno mosso

B. Вос-ло-ви-те, о-течь с ма-терью, сва-но ца-ду хо-стель-пу гра-ду при-сту-пать,  
Un basso profondo del coro  
B. Вос-ло-ви-те, о-течь с ма-терью, сва-но ца-ду хо-стель-пу гра-ду при-сту-пать,

51 Più mosso Tempo 1

S. Где си-дит там Хве-тис-го-су-дари.  
M. Где си-дит там Хве-тис-го-су-дари.  
B. ка-мен-ну сте-пу раз-бить. Сво-ю су-же-  
S. Где си-дит там Хве-тис-го-су-дари.  
A. Где си-дит там Хве-тис-го-су-дари.  
C. Un basso profondo  
C. ка-мен-ну сте-пу раз-бить. Сво-ю су-же-

Stravinsky also followed his teacher's lead in carefully selecting his source material to be appropriate to the situation. Rimsky-Korsakov, more than the other *Kuchka* composers, used the folk songs in their true seasonal and ceremonial settings such as in *May Night*, *The Snow Maiden* and *Christmas Eve*. In addition to setting the tunes to new words he often combined melodies in a fairly conservative manner. Stravinsky, whilst starting from similar material, extended the music vocabulary to match the musical and harmonic development of the action. As has been noted by, for instance, Walsh and Taruskin, Stravinsky's harmonic and tonal practises came undoubtedly from a symmetrical partitioning of the octave which was based on the octatonic scale.<sup>722</sup> There are many such as van den Toon and Berger who consider that Stravinsky's compositions are essentially diatonic to which the octatonic scale is subordinated.<sup>723</sup> However, when considering Stravinsky's compositions and their development, especially during the Russian period, as can be seen from the sketchbooks, and knowing Rimsky-Korsakov's teaching methods and exercises which gave emphasise to the whole-tone and tone-semitone-tone (T-S-T) or alternate semitone-tone-semitone

<sup>721</sup> Stravinsky Igor 1985, *The Wedding. Score. Op.cit.*: 58.

<sup>722</sup> Walsh Stephen. *Op.cit.*: 8, 16–17, 35; Taruskin Richard 1987. *Chez Pétouchka: Harmony and Tonality "chez" Stravinsky. 19<sup>th</sup> Century Music* 10 (3): 267–269.

<sup>723</sup> See, for instance, van den Toon Pieter 1987. *Op.cit.*: 119–123 and van den Toon Pieter 1983. *The Music of Igor Stravinsky*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press, chapters 2 and 3; van den Toon Pieter 1984. Letter to the Editor. *Journal of Music Theory*, 28 (2): 321–325.

(S-T-S) and their harmonic possibilities, there can be little doubt that many of Stravinsky's early works had their foundation in the octatonic scale even to the extent of the 'Petrushka chord'.<sup>724</sup> With this in mind Stravinsky's comment to Robert Craft concerning Rimsky-Korsakov in 1907 that "At this time, Rimsky's own "modernism" was based on a few enharmonic devices",<sup>725</sup> is a contradiction, especially when considering how much he used these harmonic devices in his own work. The Russian Newspaper February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1913 wrote:

Stravinsky was the pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov, and we cannot imagine him without Rimsky-Korsakov. We see the influence of ideas, the attraction of fantasy, or Russian tales, and technical influence – especially in orchestration. Like Rimsky-Korsakov, Stravinsky tries to exploit the best of each instrument. But Stravinsky's orchestral palette, particularly in *Petrushka*, is much richer than Rimsky-Korsakov.<sup>726</sup>

Although Rimsky-Korsakov's initial operas can be described as limited to characteristic progressions and voice leading, in the last operas *Kashchei*, *Kitezh* and *The Golden Cockerel* he moved into a completely new range of octatonic usage. Perhaps he felt that the only way to make the listener sit up and listen to the message was through a shock to their musical system, to their previous acceptance of Rimsky-Korsakov as 'conservative'. In Saminsky's "Music of Our Day" he writes of the 'New Russians' that "[...] it is evident that to Rimsky-Korsakov alone falls the honor of being the true fountainhead and *Alma Mater* of the tonal newness that has played so great a part in the tonal reform of the last three decades".<sup>727</sup>

### 6.5.3 Scriabin

Scriabin is an interesting case since he was never a pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov's. He is known to have visited Rimsky-Korsakov's 'musical Wednesday's' at 28 Zagorodny Prospekt.<sup>728</sup> Together they also worked in collaboration with Glazunov and Lyadov, amongst others, on the *Variations on a Russian Theme for String Quartet*; this was in honour of the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Beliaev's publishing house.<sup>729</sup> Although Rimsky-Korsakov notes in his memoirs that the "[...] star on first magnitude, newly risen in Moscow, the somewhat warped, posing, and self-opinionated A.N. Scriabin" attended the Beliaev circle, it is generally acknowledged that it was, not until his return to

<sup>724</sup> Taruskin Richard 2010. *Catching up with Rimsky-Korsakov* in Н.А.Римский-Корсаков и его наследие в исторической перспективе. Материалы международной музыковедческой конференции 19–22 марта 2010 года, Санкт-Петербург: 424–425.

<sup>725</sup> Igor Stravinsky and Craft Robert 1960. *Op.cit.*: 57.

<sup>726</sup> Stravinsky Vera and Craft Robert. *Op.cit.*: 56–57.

<sup>727</sup> Saminsky Lazare 1932 and 1939. *Music of Our Day*. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Company: 225.

<sup>728</sup> MML: 427.

<sup>729</sup> See Yastrebtsev.V.V. *Op.cit.*: 497n37.

Moscow and St.Petersburg in 1909 for the Russian premières of his Symphony No.4 *Poème de l'extase* that he became more closely acquainted with the octatonic scale. Five years earlier Rimsky-Korsakov had completed *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh*. Quoting Taruskin:

Rimsky's positivistic and materialistic world view was well known to his contemporaries. It thoroughly formed artistic beliefs and teachings. He used to tell his pupils, including Stravinsky, that art was nothing more than technical know-how, and that the more one knew, the more one would know how to express. He loved experimenting with weird harmonies of a kind that many of his fellow composers (Scriabin, for one) thought mystical.<sup>730</sup>

There are a number of features in which the two composers bore similarities.

[...] his quiet meditative lyricism colored by a "sense of nature." Lazy and somnolent undulations of the sound mass, prolonged organ points in the lower layer of the orchestral texture, plagal harmonic coloring, and the pentatonic color of the short melodic phrases – all these features of Scriabin's music undoubtedly conjure up associations with the lyrical poetic pages of the scores of his older contemporary. The "Korsakovism" can also be felt in some of Scriabin's lyrical and hymn episodes – coming from the soul of a musician and poet, they are filled with a sweet feeling of merging with Nature ("birds singing" in the middle of the slow part of the Third Symphony; the beautiful B Major prelude from Op.16.).<sup>731</sup>

However, there can be little doubt when examining Scriabin's works that he, like his Russian contemporaries, was both familiar with and used within his works, not only the whole-tone scale but also the octatonic scale. Both of these, as has previously been shown, were fundamental to Rimsky-Korsakov's teaching. It was Scriabin that can be seen to have taken up Rimsky-Korsakov's premise that a fundamental understanding, the "technical know-how" enabled one to extend the expressive palette. Reise in his analysis of some of the principles behind Scriabin's style correctly places him in the Russian world of his contemporaries. Many such as Perle, Eberle and Dernova try to analyze and place his works within the developments of serial music and the atonality of Schoenberg, or try to find some middle ground between tonality and set-theory; Dernova, at least finds links between Scriabin's later style and his earlier works based

<sup>730</sup> Taruskin Richard, 2009. *Kitezh. Religious Art of an Atheist* in *On Russian Music*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 179.

<sup>731</sup> Rudakova Ye. and Kandinsky A.I. 1984. *Scriabin*. Transl. Tatyana Chistyakova, New York, Paganiniana Publications, Inc.: 26.

on tonality.<sup>732</sup> There has also been in the mentioned works as well as those by Schloezer and Bowers a fascination with the so-called ‘Mystic Chord’.<sup>733</sup> This can be defined as C, F♯, B♭, E, A, D. In the *Poème*, Op.69, the whole-tone scale is discernible as well as the basic elements of the ‘mystic chord’ which already appears in the first bar whilst the initial eight bars show a whole-tone tendency (a). The last four bars (b) shows an octatonic reinterpretation of the initial bars:

The image displays a musical score for Scriabin's *Poème*, Op. 69. It is divided into two parts: (a) and (b). Part (a) contains five staves of music. The first staff is marked 'Allegretto' and 'tendre, délicat'. It features a whole-tone scale (WT) and a 'mystic chord' (C, F♯, B♭, E, A, D). The second staff continues the melody. The third staff is marked 'gracieux, fragile' and 'pp'. The fourth staff is marked 'WT' and 'p'. The fifth staff is marked 'accél.' and 'légèr, brillant'. Part (b) consists of one staff of music, starting with 'légèr' and 'rubato', showing an octatonic reinterpretation of the initial bars.

734

<sup>732</sup> See, for instance, Perle George 1981. *Serial Composition and Atonality*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 41-43 and Reise Jay, 1983. Late Scriabin: Some Principles behind the Style. *19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music* 6 (3): 220-223.

<sup>733</sup> de Schloezer Boris 1987. *Scriabin: Artist and Mystic*. Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press: 321-322.; Bowers Faubion 1969. *Scriabin: A Biography of the Russian Composer*. Tokyo and Palo Alto, Kodansha International Ltd: 204.

<sup>734</sup> Reise Jay, 1983. *Op.cit.*: 222-225.

However it was in the work for piano composed in 1911 that all three transpositions of the octatonic scale are found.

Scriabin employs a subtle but traditionally treated principle of “chromaticism” within whole-tone and octatonic contexts. Notes foreign to the scale are introduced as chromatic elements, which are then resolved back into the given scale by half-step [...] The mystic chord is a whole-tone chord except for the note A, and it is octatonic except for the note D:



735

This fascination with the potential of the octatonic scale also continued into, for instance, the Five Preludes, Op. 74, composed in 1914 where each of the Preludes is based on the octatonic scale. In referring to Scriabin’s ‘self-analyses’, Perle shows how Scriabin developed the transpositions from his own seven-note scale which are all derivable from the octatonic scale. These are shown in the example:

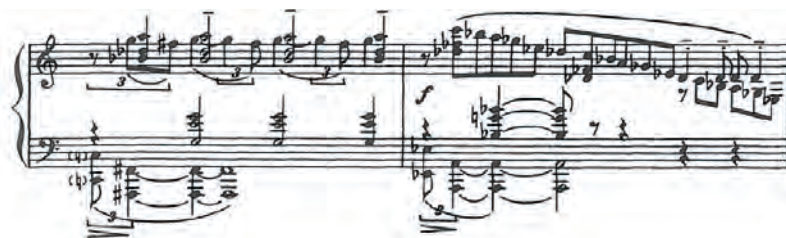


736

<sup>735</sup> Reise Jay. *Op.cit.*: 225–226.



Prelude No.5. shows a descending line based on an octatonic scale at bars 8 and 16.



737

Perle later also gives credence to the derivation of the ‘mystic chord’:

Surely what Scriabin had in mind was the octatonic scale *plus* the raised scale degree that converts a five-note segment of that scale into a whole-tone collection. This ‘constellation of nine’ gives us the ‘mystic chord’ of *Prometheus* plus the normal octatonic collection.<sup>738</sup>

There can be little doubt that there existed an acknowledgement of Scriabin’s talent by Rimsky-Korsakov who viewed his music with the critical eye of a teacher. Throughout Yatrebtsev’s accounts Rimsky-Korsakov is found to comment on Scriabin’s potential. Already in February 1895 following Scriabin’s playing of his D-sharp minor and G-sharp major etudes Rimsky-Korsakov commented : “I may be mistaken [...] but in my opinion, although Scriabin is the more gifted of the two (cf. Arensky) [...] despite Scriabin’s unquestionable talent, his devotion to the piano exclusively [...] will keep him from going further [...]”.<sup>739</sup> Two years later whilst commenting on the state of Russian music he comments: “With Glazunov’s latest symphonies—the Fifth and Sixth—and the works of Scriabin something new is already emerging.”<sup>740</sup> In 1905 he also notes that although talented his shortcoming is a “limited number of moods” and that he “is an impeccable harmonist” and that: “His music contains almost no consonancies (not a single little artless note), only enharmonic modulations and, therefore, though it is very good, it is monotonous.”<sup>741</sup> Scriabin also revered Rimsky-Korsakov and, for instance, was encouraged by the latter’s comments on his orchestral

<sup>736</sup> Perle George 1984. Scriabin’s Self-Analyses. *Music Analysis* 3 (2): 104.

<sup>737</sup> [http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/1/15/IMSLP12742-Scriabin\\_-\\_Op.74.pdf](http://japanese.imslp.info/files/imglnks/usimg/1/15/IMSLP12742-Scriabin_-_Op.74.pdf): 8. 08-01-2013.

<sup>738</sup> Perle George. *Op.cit.*: 117–118.

<sup>739</sup> Yatrebtsev.V.V. *Op.cit.*: 112.

<sup>740</sup> *Ib.*: 185.

<sup>741</sup> *Ib.*: 354, 375–76.



work which he had titled *Prélude* (now known as *Rêverie* Op. 24 and in Russia *Мечты* – daydreams) – “Delightful, wreathed in piquant harmonies and not badly orchestrated...” and later, writing to his wife: “Imagine my joy, the piece sounds very well. At the rehearsals on 1 December Korsakoff was *so* sweet. He had each section go through its parts separately and spent a whole hour in it...”<sup>742</sup>

Maes summarises and places Scriabin’s development of Rimsky-Korsakov’s harmonic advances in perspective:

Just as from the whole-tone scale, Scriabin drew conclusions from octatonism that left the clichés of the Belyayev composers far behind. The octatonic scale has as many as four tritons, making the potential of a non-functional, static harmony even greater than in the whole-tone scale. The combination of the whole-tone and octatonic scales therefore provides a continuously fluctuating harmony that no longer contains a functional—and hence emotional—tension.<sup>743</sup>

#### 6.5.4 Prokofiev

Prokofiev commenced his studies in Rimsky-Korsakov’s orchestration class when he was fifteen years old. As a result of Rimsky-Korsakov’s reputation, his classes were large. This irritated Prokofiev, who wanted the master’s undivided attention and had trouble breaking through the crowd. Nevertheless, he admitted that those students who knew how much they could learn from Rimsky-Korsakov got the benefit despite the crowding.<sup>744</sup> He found Rimsky-Korsakov’s exercises in orchestration uninteresting and as a result his teacher was critical of his work and found them “immature”.<sup>745</sup> Neither Rimsky-Korsakov or Yatrebtsev memoirs have any reference to Prokofiev. Although he was not impressed by his teaching, he did admire his music. He was fascinated by *Kitezh* which had its premiere in 1907 and wrote to his teacher Rheinhold Glière “What do you think of R.Korsakov’s new opera *Kitezh*? I like it very much, I have the music and am studying it carefully.”<sup>746</sup> On Rimsky-Korsakov’s death in 1908 Prokofiev, in his autobiography, wrote that although he “[...] never had the opportunity to become close to him personally” he was “profoundly saddened: something hurt my heart. I loved Rimsky-Korsakov’s music, especially *Kitezh*, *Sadko*, *The Snow Maiden*, the piano concerto, *Capriccio espagnol*, *Scheherazade*, *Fairy Tale*.”<sup>747</sup>

<sup>742</sup> Bowers Faubion 1996. *Scriabin, a Biography*. New York, Dover Publications Inc: Book 2, 261.

<sup>743</sup> Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 214.

<sup>744</sup> Prokofiev Sergei 1960. *Autobiography. Articles. Reminiscences*. Compiled, edited and notes by S.Shlifstein. Transl. Rosa Prokofieva. Moscow, Foreign Languages Publishing House: 24.

<sup>745</sup> Yastrebtsev.V.V *Op.cit.*: (translator’s note) xiv.

<sup>746</sup> Prokofiev Sergei. *Op.cit.*: 24-25, 155.

<sup>747</sup> Volkov Solomon. *Op.cit.*: 347.

There can be little doubt of the influence of Rimsky-Korsakov as a teacher on Prokofiev. In her memories of her husband Prokofiev's second wife Myra Mendelson-Prokofieva wrote about his view of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Christmas Eve* that it was "the living breath of Nature expressed in the music that delighted him" and that "He liked *The Snow Maiden* so much that he categorically refused to write a ballet on the same subject."<sup>748</sup> Glière also noted his interest in the Russian folk song collections of Balakirev, Rimsky-Korsakov and Lyadov.<sup>749</sup> It is also asserted that Prokofiev's symphonies are pictorially similar to the style of Rimsky-Korsakov's symphonic poems.<sup>750</sup>

With respect to the octatonic scale, as can be imagined, Prokofiev became acquainted with it both through his teacher and the Beliaev circle. As Mintum, in his analysis of Prokofiev's music points out:

Prokofiev [...] decorates traditional tonal structures in new ways , and his music is therefore part of a continuum reaching back to the eighteenth century [...] Virtually all of Prokofiev's music clings to triadic harmony [...] Categories of embellishing notes, such as neighbour note, passing note, and embellishing skip, are recognized in traditional tonal theory, and the underlying structure of a piece is shown first by clearing away surface ornament. Prokofiev's music magnifies the dictonomy between surface ornament and underlying structure because the "wrong notes" are apparently more radical representatives of traditional embellishing categories.<sup>751</sup>

This statement also, to a large extent, points towards his use of the octatonic scale in his compositions. Already in his Violin Concerto No.1. D-major, Op.19. written between 1916–1917 it is possible to discern between the solo violin slurring notation in the initial bars of the second movement an octatonic scale.

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<sup>748</sup> Prokofiev Sergei. *Op.cit.*: 187.

<sup>749</sup> *Ib.*: 148.

<sup>750</sup> Volkov Soloman. *Op.cit.*: 353.

<sup>751</sup> Minturn Neil 1997. *The Music of Sergei Prokofiev*. New Haven and London, Yale University Press: 19.

## II. Scherzo

**Vivacissimo**

Flauti  
Arpa  
Violino solo  
Violini I  
Violini II  
Viole  
Fl.  
Arpa  
V-no solo  
V-a II  
V-a III  
V-le

752

The *Fugitive Visions No.3. Allegretto* written around the same period also in bars 13 and 17 clearly show an octatonic ascending scale. Even later he returned to these forms in, for instance, the Violin Sonata No.1. in F-minor, Op.80 which was written between 1938 and 1946. The third movement is in an ABA form. When one examines the approach to the B-section starting at bar 23 Minturn shows that the passage which starts at bar 32: “The passage begins with the motive harmonized by the tritone-related triads C and G  $\flat$  making a form 6 – 30. The tritone-relation continues the octatonic structure introduced in m.23[...]”:

<sup>752</sup> [www.conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/c/ce/IMSLP65460\\_PMLP37879\\_Profofieiev\\_-\\_Violin\\_Concert\\_No\\_1\\_Op19\\_orch\\_score\\_pdf.](http://www.conquest.imslp.info/files/imglnks/c/ce/IMSLP65460_PMLP37879_Profofieiev_-_Violin_Concert_No_1_Op19_orch_score_pdf.): 42. 12-11-2012.

753

Which as shown by Minturn reduces to:

754

It can consequently be shown that Prokofiev continued experimenting with the octatonic opportunities introduced by his teacher.

<sup>753</sup> [www.imsip.org/wiki/Visions\\_fugitives,\\_Op.22\\_\(Prokofiev\\_Sergey\):27](http://www.imsip.org/wiki/Visions_fugitives,_Op.22_(Prokofiev_Sergey):27). 09-11-2012.

<sup>754</sup> Minturn Neil 1997. *Op.cit.*: 143.

## 6.6 Rimsky-Korsakov and his contemporaries.

There has been considerable discussion and disagreement concerning the dedication Rimsky-Korsakov showed towards his fellow *Kuchka* composers. It is easy in hindsight, almost a century later, to condemn his orchestrations and completions of unfinished works<sup>755</sup> without considering the position those works had already gained on the international stage.<sup>756</sup> In his autobiography and reminiscences recorded by others Rimsky-Korsakov always acknowledged the talent and genius of his fellow composers. Rimsky-Korsakov made arrangements of works such as Beethoven, Schumann and Wagner, many of which were for military bands, however, he also carried out significant re-editing and orchestrations of the works of the major Russian composers of the period. Many of these, as will be shown, were incomplete on the deaths of the composers. The following will briefly outline the cases for Mussorgsky and Borodin.

## 6.7 Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky

At his death the executor of Mussorgsky's affairs T.I. Filipov brought Rimsky-Korsakov all Mussorgsky's manuscripts and sketches "that I might set them in order, complete and prepare them for publication" for which an agreement had been made with the music publishers Bessel.<sup>757</sup> Filipov considered that due to Rimsky-Korsakov's close relationship with Mussorgsky he would be in the best position to review these papers. Of the operas *Boris Godunov* was by far the easiest to work on since Mussorgsky had already prepared a full score which had been performed. *Khovanshchina*, *Sorochintsy Fair* and *The Marriage* were hardly more than loose sketches.<sup>758</sup>

### 6.7.1 *Boris Godunov*

Amongst the many revisions of other composer's works which Rimsky-Korsakov carried out, it is his revision of *Boris Godunov* that has received the greatest criticism.

<sup>755</sup> See, for instance, discussion in Emerson Caryl & Oldoni Robert. *Modest Musorgsky and Boris Godunov: Myths, Realities, Reconsiderations*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 68 concerning *Boris Godunov* and specific comments by, for instance Asafyev: 164–165 and Shostakovich: 168–170.

<sup>756</sup> Alternate versions of *Boris Godunov* in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were written by Pavel Lamm in 1928, Dmitry Shostakovich in 1963 and David Lloyd-Jones in 1975, for instance.

<sup>757</sup> MML: 248; Орлова. А. 1963. *Труды и дни М.П.Муссорского Летопись жизни и творчества*. (The Works and Days of M.P.Mussorgsky. A Chronicle of His Life and Works). Москва, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 622.

<sup>758</sup> The revisions of *Boris Godunov* have been analysed in, for instance, Jacono Jean-Marie 1992. *Les révisions de Boris Godounov de Moussorgski - Transformations musicales et transformations sociales*. Ph.D. thesis, Université de Provence (Aix-Marseille I)



There can be little doubt as to the closeness of Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky. Nadezhda Purgold had initially met her future husband at Dargomyzhky's home in 1868. Orlova's *The Works and Days of M.P. Mussorgsky* (Труды и дни М.П.Муссорского) refers to a rehearsal of *The Stone Guest* there on 5<sup>th</sup> March in which Alexandra Purgold sang the part of Laura, Mussorgsky Don Carlos whilst Nadezhda was the accompanist.<sup>759</sup> This is also confirmed by Rimsky-Korsakov.<sup>760</sup>

On 1<sup>st</sup> September 1871 (13<sup>th</sup> September) Rimsky-Korsakov and Mussorgsky moved into flat no. 9 owned by Zarembo on Panteleimovskaya Street where, according to Stasov "[...] in the same flat and the same room and at one and the same time their aim was to compose monumental operas."<sup>761</sup> In his memoirs Rimsky-Korsakov also writes:

The fall of 1871 [...] Moussorgsky and I agreed to live together, and we took rooms, or rather a furnished room, in Zarembo's house on Panteleimonovskaya Street [...] That autumn and winter we accomplished a great deal, with constant exchange of ideas and plans. Moussorgsky composed and orchestrated the Polish act of *Boris Godunov* and the folk-scene "Near Kromy". I orchestrated and finished my *Maid of Pskov*.<sup>762</sup>

Consequently this close relationship between the composers at this time both socially as well as musically points to Rimsky-Korsakov knowing Mussorgsky's work intimately. As he wrote in the preface to his 1896 edition:

*Boris Godunov* was composed before my very eyes. Since I was on intimately friendly terms with Mussorgsky, no one else could be as well informed as myself of the author's intentions regarding *Boris*, and of the process of execution.<sup>763</sup>

There were several problems to be overcome by Mussorgsky in setting *Boris Godunov* as an opera. Following its completion in 1825, Pushkin had to send the manuscript to Tsar Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> who acted as the author's censor. As has previously been mentioned, the presentation of church representatives on stage was not permitted and the holy fool (*yurodivy*) could not be named as such; in Pushkin's play he is called 'Nikola. A simpleton'. In 1831 the Tsar gave Pushkin permission to publish the play subject to the censor's alterations. Following the death of Nicholas in 1855, there were subsequent reprints in 1855 and 1859 with alterations and the latter restored most of the suppressed

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<sup>759</sup> Орлова А. *Ib.*: 149.

<sup>760</sup> MML: 87.

<sup>761</sup> Quoted in Орлова А. 1963: 223. Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>762</sup> MML: 122–123.

<sup>763</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolay 1896. Editor's preface to *Boris Godunov*, by Modest Mussorgsky. St. Petersburg, V. Bessel & Co. Quoted in Emerson Caryl & Oldoni Robert. *Op.cit.*: 154.



material. It was not until 1866 that the play was approved for performance on stage providing the ecclesiastical characters were excluded; two scenes in which the Patriarch would have appeared on stage were cut. The first performance took place on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1870.

The approval for the stage production, consequently, opened up the possibility for Mussorgsky to set it to music.<sup>764</sup> Mussorgsky started work on the opera in 1868 and completed the first version on 15<sup>th</sup> (27<sup>th</sup>) December 1869. Both Oldoni and Orlova record that a clean copy of the libretto was probably submitted to the theatrical censor in the spring 1870.<sup>765</sup> The normal procedure at the time for getting production approval was first to get the approval of the censor prior to submission to the theatre literary committee and finally to the musical committee. Since rejection by the musical committee occurred on the 10th February 1871 it can be assumed that the censor had approved the original draft.

Rimsky-Korsakov notes that:

During this very season [1869–70] season Mussorgsky submitted *Boris Godunov* to the Board of Directors of the Imperial Theatres. It was examined by a committee consisting of Nápravník, the opera conductor Mangeant and Betz, the orchestra conductors of French and German drama respectively, and the double-bass player Giovanni Ferrero. It was rejected. The freshness and originality of the music nonplussed the members of the committee, who reproved the composer, amongst other things, for the absence of a reasonable important female role. Indeed there was no Polish act [...] Much of the fault-finding was simply ridiculous. Thus the double-basses *divisi* playing chromatic thirds in the accompaniment of Vaarlam's song were entirely too much for Ferrero.<sup>766</sup>

Oldoni and Emerson note that Rimsky-Korsakov's record is a year too early and does not list the entire committee.<sup>767</sup> There was no pressure from the directorate for any revision only a suggestion, nor did the censor place any obstacles. However, Mussorgsky had already decided to make revisions. Pushkin provided that character in the form of Marina Mnishchik. However, this Polish nobleman's daughter played no great role and, as a result, Mussorgsky had to write his own text and give her an aria, polonaise and love duet.

<sup>764</sup> See, for instance, Oldoni Robert William 1979. *Boris Godunov and the Censor. 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Music*, 2 (3): 247.

<sup>765</sup> *Ib.*: 248 and Орлова A. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 187.

<sup>766</sup> MML: 109–110.

<sup>767</sup> Emerson Caryl & Oldoni Robert. *Op.cit.*: 75.

Having been following Rimsky-Korsakov's development of the *veche*-scene in *The Maid of Pskov* and appreciating the power of this scene, Mussorgsky decided to strengthen the crowd scenes in *Boris*. In the earlier version the role of the crowd was insignificant but with inclusion of *Kromy* the confrontation between the tsar and people become central. Rimsky-Korsakov's *veche* filled him with particular enthusiasm. In a letter to the Purgold sisters, Mussorgsky wrote that before Rimsky-Korsakov's departure to 'the Finnish lands' he was with him:

и испытал превосходное – нечто. Это нечто не иное что, как черточка в таланте Корсиньки, познавшем драматическую суть музыкальной драмы. Он, т.е. Корсинька, великолепную сострепал историю с хором в вече совсем, как тому быть надлежит [в «Псковитянке»].<sup>768</sup>

and experienced something extraordinary. This something is none other than a milestone in Korsinka's talent. He has realised the dramatic essence of musical drama. He, that is, Korsinka, has concocted some magnificent history with the choruses in the *veche* [in *The Maid of Pskov*].<sup>769</sup>

The combination of free declamation and musical logic, though still absent from the first version of *Boris Godunov*, is present throughout *Pskovityanka*. The confrontation combined with the dynamics of music of the *Kromy* scene, which was absent in the initial version of *Boris* but central in *The Maid* was taken from Rimsky-Korsakov. The significance of the *veche*-scene was noted by Cui in 1873:

Вы забываете, что перед вами сцена, а на ней хористы, изображающие более или менее ловко построенную народную сцену; перед вами действительность, живой народ, и все это сопровождается бесподобной, полной содержания музыкой от начала до конца. Подобной народной сцены не было еще до сих пор ни в одной из существующих опер. Если б все остальное в «Псковитянке» было совершенно ничтожно, то этой сцены вечера было бы достаточно, чтоб опера эта получила значение в истории искусства и заняла видное место среди самых замечательных опер, а ее автор – среди лучших оперных композиторов.<sup>770</sup>

You forget that before you is a scene and in it a chorus participating, for better or for worse, in a dexterously constructed crowd scene; in front of you and in reality the people live and all of this is accompanied by a superb and complete music content from start to finish. A similar crowd scene has never existed up to now in opera. If everything else in "The Maid of Pskov" had been completely worthless this *veche* scene would have been

<sup>768</sup> Орлова А. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 191.

<sup>769</sup> Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 113.

<sup>770</sup> Кюи Ц. А. 1952. *Избранные статьи* (Cui Cesare. Selected articles) Ленинград, Государственное Музыкальное Издательство: 221.

sufficient to have made the opera significant in the history of art and for it to occupy a prominent position amongst the most splendid operas and for the author – amongst the best opera composers.<sup>771</sup>

Mussorgsky presented the revised version to the censors in early 1872. Instead of continuing his development of Dargomyzhky's naturalistic vocal style he reverted to a more traditional operatic form. A typical example of such a change was the Kremlin scene which no longer followed Pushkin's text but for which he had written new material. This gave the opportunity to give contrast to the scene which included Xenia's lament, the games and songs of the tsarevich and ending in Boris' hallucination. Apart from many changes to add dramatic content the main change was the removal of the St.Basil scene and its replacement with Kromy and the False Pretender. Protocol 15 of the meeting of the Council issued on 7<sup>th</sup> March 1872 recommended acceptance of the revised text but still the censor still drew attention to the 1837 decree of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> concerning the portrayal of tsars on stage.<sup>772</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov had already through representation by the Director of the Ministry of Naval Affairs, N.K. Krabbe, managed to get approval for the Tsar to appear on stage in *The Maid of Pskov*. This was referred to in the above-mentioned statement issued by the Council of the Bureau for Printed Materials, Ministry of Internal Affairs and in the recommendation forwarded to Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>: "From the censor's point of view, the present opera presents no difficulties, from the artistic point of view, it is noted for special musical merits".<sup>773</sup> The Tsar authorised production on 5<sup>th</sup> April 1872 and the Mariinsky Theatre approved and authorised its production on 29<sup>th</sup> April.<sup>774</sup> The revised full orchestral score was completed in June 1872.

There were a number of discrepancies between the libretto approved in 1873 and the piano-vocal score issued by V.V. Bessel in 1874, just prior to the first performance on 27<sup>th</sup> January 1874. Since this was published a year after approval, Bessel did not consider it necessary to re-submit this new score. It consequently appears that the cuts that Mussorgsky made for the first performance, the omission of the entire scene in Pimen's cell and the Act II episodes of the parrot and chiming clock were perhaps in agreement with suggestions made by Eduard Nápravník, the conductor, to improve the dramatic nature of the work.<sup>775</sup>

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<sup>771</sup> Transl. J. Nelson.

<sup>772</sup> See Орлова А. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 243–244.

<sup>773</sup> *Ib.*: 244 and Oldani Robert 1979. *Op.cit.*: 250.

<sup>774</sup> See Орлова А. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 247, 249.

<sup>775</sup> Oldani Robert 1982. *Looking into 'Boris Godunov'* in Opera Guide 11, Modest Mussorgsky 1982. Boris Godunov. Opera Guide Series Editor: Nicholas John: 11.

Although Rimsky-Korsakov notes: “On January 24 [February 5], 1874, Boris Godunov was produced with great success at the Mariinsky Theatre”<sup>776</sup> there were only a further two performances in the season. However, in the next season it was performed eight times. Between 1875 and 1882, when it was removed from the repertoire, productions were sporadic.<sup>777</sup> The opera was outlawed for political reasons during the reign of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> who personally removed it from the list of works to be performed at Imperial Theatres.<sup>778</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov valued the genius of Mussorgsky. Following the composer’s death on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 1881, Rimsky-Korsakov, at the request of the executor of the estate, agreed to examine all the manuscripts and sketches to set them in order and prepare them for publication.<sup>779</sup> On the 18<sup>th</sup> March he writes:

при всем том в большинстве случаев сочинения эти были так талантливы, своеобразны, так много вносили нового и живого, что издание их являлось необходимым. Но издание без упорядочения умелой рукой не имело бы никакого смысла, кроме биографическо-исторического. Если сочинениям Мусоргского суждено прожить непоблекнувшими 50 лет со смерти автора, когда все сочинения его станут достоянием любого издателя, то такое археологически точное издание может быть сделано, так рукописи после меня поступили в Публичную библиотеку. В настоящее же время необходимо было издание для исполнения практически художественных целей, для ознакомления с его громадным талантом, а не для изучения его личности и художественных грехов.<sup>780</sup>

Without a doubt the majority of his compositions were talented, original and introduced much that was new and striking and the publication of this is necessary and essential. But publication without a tried and skilled hand to put them in order would not make any sense apart from being of biographical and historical interest. If Mussorgsky’s compositions are to live invincibly for fifty years after the composer’s death, when all the compositions will become the property of our beloved publishers, then any archaeological edition of them can be made since they will be found in the Public Library after leaving me. For the present it is necessary that an edition be made for performance, for practical artistic purposes and for making his massive talent known – not for studying his personality and artistic sins.<sup>781</sup>

The above leaves one in no doubt as to the sincerity of Rimsky-Korsakov’s appreciation of Mussorgsky’s skill as a composer.

<sup>776</sup> MML: 142.

<sup>777</sup> Production details can be found in Fryer Paul. *Op.cit.*: Book 1.

<sup>778</sup> Emerson Caryl & Oldoni Robert. *Op.cit.*: 107.

<sup>779</sup> MML: 248 and Emerson Caryl & Oldoni Robert. *Op.cit.*: 109.

<sup>780</sup> Орлова А. 1971. *Op.cit.*: 180.

<sup>781</sup> Transl. J. Nelson. See also MML: 248–249.

In the spring of 1889 Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov attended Wagner's *Ring* rehearsals at the Mariinsky and were impressed by Wagner's method of orchestration. These Rimsky-Korsakov also started to use. The first application was to an orchestration of the Polish dance from *Boris Godunov* for concert performance. The *Polonaise* was one of the less successful portions of the opera:

Moussorgsky conceived the unfortunate and indefensible idea of imitating the “*vingt-quatre violins du roi*” – that is, the orchestra of the time of Lully (Louis XIV). What connection there was between the orchestra and time of the False Dmitri, as well as the life of Poland of that period is incomprehensible...Yet in its music the *Polonaise* was characteristic and beautiful; for this reason I undertook to turn it into a concert piece, the more so as *Boris Godunov* was no longer on the boards.<sup>782</sup>

From Yastrebtsev's *Reminiscences* it can be seen that Rimsky-Korsakov continued to be concerned about the fate of *Boris*. Alexandra Molas (née Purgold) also continued to have an interest in Mussorgsky's works. It was at a rehearsal on 6<sup>th</sup> April 1892 for a performance of *Boris* that Rimsky-Korsakov expressed his views to his new confidant Yastrebtsev:

In the sixties [...] at the time of the renaissance of Russian music, when the young Russian composers, conscious of their powers and aware of the many imperfections of the music of the classical period, wanted to shake off the yoke of routine and move forward along a new path, ‘toward new shores,’ we were still very young and considerably illiterate musically [...] the ‘New Russian School,’ [had] some curious preconceptions, which we then accepted blindly [...] Then, just at that time of struggle and doubt about the immutability of the old, along came Mussorgsky with his superbly brilliant and gifted *Boris Godunov*.

You know [...] I both adore and abhor this work. I adore it for its originality, power, boldness, distinctiveness, and beauty; I abhor it for its lack of polish, the roughness of its harmonies, and, in some places, the sheer awkwardness of the music. Of course, this is totally beyond the comprehension of our ‘musical old believers’; they confuse style and a lack of it and often construe the illiteracy of the author of *Boris* as a sign of his extraordinary individuality.<sup>783</sup>

These sentiments are found throughout both in his own autobiography as well as his discussions with Yastrebtsev on the opera, on Mussorgsky and his realism as to what the world view would be on his work. In his understanding of Mussorgsky he ranted against people such as Stasov and Alexandra Molas on their views concerning musical technique and inspiration saying that such unknowledgeable views would never have

<sup>782</sup> MML: 298.

<sup>783</sup> Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 20–21.

been heard from the lips of Mussorgsky who “though endowed with a truly outstanding creative gift, had a relatively poorly developed ear”. Yastrebtsev notes that what Rimsky-Korsakov demonstrated through examples from *Boris* showed “the harmonisation in most cases proved not only illogical but downright illiterate”.<sup>784</sup>

But keeping to his conviction concerning the outstanding talent of Mussorgsky demonstrated in *Boris* it is not surprising that when, in the Spring 1896, the Society of Musical Gatherings suggested a stage performance of *Boris Godunov* in Rimsky-Korsakov’s revision, he consented. This was given in the Conservatoire on November 28 (December 11) 1896 under Rimsky-Korsakov’s direction. Four performances were given.<sup>785</sup> It was perhaps his disgust at the reaction of Tsar Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> to the Mariinsky Theatre Director Ivan Vsevolozhky suggestion to stage *Boris Godunov* in the 1896/97 season that led to his agreeing to the Society of Musical Gatherings proposal. The Tsar was reported as saying: “No, we don’t need this opera for now. After all, it’s still the music of the Balakirev school.”<sup>786</sup> From Yastrebtsev’s record it can be seen that the work on *Boris* occupied Rimsky-Korsakov from the beginning of 1892 through to the start of May 1896 in the initial phase.<sup>787</sup> Stasov’s comment reported in the *News and Exchange Gazette* (Новости и биржевая газета) on 1<sup>st</sup> December was that it was a lasting service to his deceased friend.<sup>788</sup>

The opera in Rimsky-Korsakov’s version was produced at the Moscow Private Opera (MPO) on 7<sup>th</sup> December (19<sup>th</sup> December) 1898 with Chaliapin in the title role. In the days following the première, the newspaper reports noted that Rimsky-Korsakov had in general improved the opera melodically and softened many of its harsh features. In addition the two final scenes had been reversed so the opera ended with the death of Boris. Engel, for instance, wrote in the *Moscow Russian News* (Русские Ведомости) that all the alterations affected the opera for the better.<sup>789</sup> One dissenting note, as could be expected, was that of Cui whose views had changed since 1874 when he had complained of Mussorgsky’s technical imperfections.<sup>790</sup>

On November 9<sup>th</sup> (22<sup>nd</sup>) 1904 *Boris Godunov* was eventually staged at the Mariinsky Theatre with Chaliapin in the title-role. Initially the opera was given without cuts, but

<sup>784</sup> *Ib.*: 41–42.

<sup>785</sup> See Орлова А. 1972. *Op.cit.*: 86.

<sup>786</sup> *Ib.*: 69 and Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 144.

<sup>787</sup> Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 168–171.

<sup>788</sup> See Орлова А. 1972. *Op.cit.*: 86.

<sup>789</sup> See Орлова А. 1972. *Op.cit.*: 157–158.

<sup>790</sup> Already Cui noted these imperfections commenting in the St. Petersburg Bulletin 9<sup>th</sup> February 1873 concerning three scenes rejected by the Vaudeville Committee. Campbell Stuart 1994. *Op.cit.*: 235.



since the authorities were worried about possible political disturbances, after several performances the “Near Kromy” scene was cut.

At this time Rimsky-Korsakov wrote:

I remained inexpressively pleased with my revision and orchestration of *Boris Godunov*, heard by me for the first time with a large orchestra. Moussorgsky’s violent admirers frowned a bit, regretting something... But having arranged the new revision of *Boris Godunov*, I had not destroyed its original form, had not painted out the old frescoes for ever. If ever the conclusion is arrived at that the original is better, worthier than my revision, mine will be discarded, and *Boris Godunov* will be performed according to the original score.<sup>791</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov returned to the score in 1906 and restored most of the cuts he had made earlier. Later in 1907 he composed additional material for Diaghilev’s Paris performance, in particular extending the coronation scene. The publishers Bessel published a new piano-vocal score in 1908 incorporating these changes. It is this score that was used for the premières in Paris on 19<sup>th</sup> May 1908, New York on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1913 and at The Theatre Royal in London on 24<sup>th</sup> June 1913.

Except for the switching around of the last two scenes and some minor deletions, Rimsky-Korsakov’s version was in essence faithful to the version recorded by Mussorgsky in his piano score of 1874. Most of the changes in this version, which are not the subject of this thesis, concerned harmony and orchestration. It was the revisions by Rimsky-Korsakov of Mussorgsky’s great work that made the opera acceptable to the music world. However, since differences of opinion existed concerning which scenes to be included and in which order, Rimsky-Korsakov also made this choice possible by his work which included all possible interpretations.

### 6.7.2 *Khovanshchina*

The work carried out by Rimsky-Korsakov on *Khovanshchina* is even more pertinent when considering where it stood on Mussorgsky’s death and its potential.

The general picture of the protagonists of the opera including Khovansky’s militia (*streltsy*), the Old Believers (*raskolniki*), the German settlement (*sloboda*), the regent Sophia and the young Peter and his amusing regiment are described in a letter from Stasov to his daughter on 15<sup>th</sup> July 1872. In this he says that Mussorgsky was delighted and already beginning work on it, the text and music.<sup>792</sup> There was not a conventional

<sup>791</sup> MML: 407.

<sup>792</sup> Орлова А. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 257.

libretto to which music could be written. Mussorgsky devised a plot which spanned a number of violent events stretching over two decades of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In this respect he appears to have had clear ideas as to the characters and some ideas of monologues and dialogues together with some music. However, in essence there were only some loose unrelated sketches. In addition Mussorgsky drew his actions, many of which were unrelated, from different sources which resulted in a distortion of historical fact. As Gasparov wrote: “the plot never achieved full stability, let alone coherence.”<sup>793</sup>

Rimsky-Korsakov was already familiar with the opera and comments on it following the première of *Boris* in January 1874.

Mother Susanna had at first played a pretty important role in *Khovanshchina*, taking part as she did in the religious dispute with Dosifey. In the present version she is an unnecessary character, quite forced and useless to all intents and purposes. In Act I there had been a rather longish scene in which the people demolished the court scrivener's booth. Subsequently, after the composer's death, when preparing the opera for publication, I cut out this scene, as extremely unmusical and causing the action to drag [...] the Persian girls' dance [...] had been dragged in by the hair, so to speak, as the only pretext for introducing it there was the possibility that amongst the old Prince Khovansky's concubines there were, or could have been, Persian slave girls [...] The choral song of glorification of Prince Khovansky (G major) and Andrey's song (G-sharp minor) in Act V are of extremely doubtful originality, with unusually queer intervals in perfect fifths[...] Of the *Khovanshchina* excerpts played, mention must also be made as well of the barbarous music of empty perfect fourths [...] which infinitely delighted V.V.Stasov. Fortunately, Moussorgsky later somewhat changed his first idea and the fourths remained only here and there [...] the real subject and plan of *Khovanshchina* was vague and from Moussorgsky's accounts flowery, affected, and involved (as was his style of expression then), it was hard to grasp its subject as something whole and consecutive.<sup>794</sup>

In a letter to Mussorgsky on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1876 Stasov also drew attention to the many faults: “There are choruses, there are songs (for both men and women), there is excellent music, but no action or interest. There are also no connections with the rest of the opera...”<sup>795</sup> It was not until 1879 that Mussorgsky wrote out a full copy of the existing text in the so-called “blue notebook”. There was no proper libretto. Only two excerpts from third scene had been orchestrated by the composer. After his death it was found that two scenes remained unfinished, Act 2 lacked a conclusion and Act 5 was

<sup>793</sup> For an analysis of this see Gasparov Boris 2005. *Five Operas and a Symphony*. New Haven & London, Yale University Press: 95–103.

<sup>794</sup> MML: 143–144.

<sup>795</sup> Quoted in Brown David. *Op.cit.*: 261.

little more than in sketch form.<sup>796</sup> Consequently Rimsky-Korsakov found he had a major project on his hand.

Much had to be altered and abridged and added. In Acts I and II there turned up much that was superfluous, musically ugly, and a drag to the scene. In Act V, on the contrary, much was lacking all together, while a good deal existed only in the roughest of rough draft records. The chorus of *raskol'niks* (schismatics), with the strokes of the bell, prior to self-immolation, written by the composer in barbarous empty fourths and fifths, I recast entirely, as its original form was impossible. For the closing chorus there existed only the melody [...] Availing myself of the given melody, I composed the entire chorus from beginning to end, but the orchestral figure (of the fire blazing up) was entirely my own. For one of Dosifey's monologues in Act V, I borrowed music from Act I boldly. The variations of Marfa's song in Act III as well as the chorus "*Pryeryekokhom i pryepryekhom!* (We disputed and we argued!)" were considerably changed and worked out by me. I have said already that Moussorgsky, so often unrestrained and wanton in his modulations ran to the other extreme: he could not struggle out of his one tonality for a long time, thus throwing the composition into utter languidness and monotony. In this case, in the latter half of Act III, from the moment of the court clerk's entrance, he clung tenaciously to the key of E-flat minor to the end of the act. That was intolerable and with no reason whatever, as the whole section undoubtedly subdivides into two parts – the scene of the court clerk, and the *stryel'tsy's* (Strelitz's) appeal to old Khovansky. The first part I left in E-flat minor as in the original; the other I transposed to D-minor. The result both answered the purpose better and offered greater variety. The parts of the opera that the composer had instrumentated I reorchestrated, and, I hope, for the better. All the rest was instrumentated by me too; I, again, made the arrangement (for the piano).<sup>797</sup>

On the 4<sup>th</sup> April 1883 the Theatrical-Literature Committee of the Mariinsky Theatre rejected *Khovanshchina*. In a letter to Krooglikov dated April 14<sup>th</sup> (26<sup>th</sup>) Rimsky-Korsakov relates that the committee which included Vsyevolozhky, Nápravník and Cui had voted against the opera. There had been no debate; Cui assumed that the name of Mussorgsky would have been sufficient for acceptance.<sup>798</sup> Stasov commented:

The theatre committee, which was composed of poorly trained opera singers and an inartistic conductor, rejected it and never permitted it to be staged. Obligated to abide by the decision of a few artisans, the public was deprived of the right to hear the opera and judge for themselves. What an outrageous and arbitrary way to treat the creation of a genius!<sup>799</sup>

<sup>796</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1994. *Khovanshchina*. *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. Ed. Stanley Sadie. Vol.2: 984.

<sup>797</sup> MML: 259–260. See also Rimsky-Korsakov's explanations in Yatrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 56–58.

<sup>798</sup> MML: 267n5, Орлова А. 1971. *Op.cit.*: 214.

<sup>799</sup> Stasov Vladimir *Op.cit.*: 104.

The first performing edition was completed by Rimsky-Korsakov and published in 1883. This was the version which had its première on 9<sup>th</sup> February (21<sup>st</sup>) 1886 given by the St. Petersburg, Amateur Musical-Dramatic Club in the Kononov Auditorium conducted by Eduard Goldshteyn. The Mamontov Private Opera presented the Moscow première on 12 November 1897 conducted by Michele Esposito, with scene designs by Konstantin Korovin, Apollinary Vasnetsov, and Sergey Malyutin.<sup>800</sup> It was first performed in the Rimsky-Korsakov edition at the Mariinsky Theatre on the 7<sup>th</sup> November (20<sup>th</sup>) 1911, conducted by Albert Coates and with Chaliapin in the role of Dosifey.<sup>801</sup> A version written as a collaboration between Stravinsky and Ravel for the Diaghilev production at the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris on 5<sup>th</sup> June 1913 proved fairly unsuccessful partially since Chaliapin would only agree to sing Dosifey in the Rimsky-Korsakov version. It was produced in the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in 1913 but only reached New York in 1931 although excerpts had been performed at the Metropolitan Opera in 1919.

It is perhaps Act V that has introduced confusion and ambiguity and has led to contradictory interpretations of the ending. One cannot be sure how Mussorgsky intended his finale to sound since the sketches only feature the Old Believer's chant in A-flat minor. For the opera a convincing ending was needed. In Rimsky-Korsakov's version there is a reprise of Peter's 'Dawn over the Moskva River' march on stage after the Old Believers had perished; music which already appears in the Overture as well as in Act 4. This was an ending that was also used by Shostakovich to indicate that irrespective of the tragic events a new dawn will rise. It was only Stravinsky that allowed the opera to end according to Mussorgsky's sketches with the Old Believers ascending the pyre.<sup>802</sup>

Irrespective on what interpretation is placed on the ending now it is pertinent to return to Rimsky-Korsakov's pondering in April 1893 in discussion with Yastrebtsev (15<sup>th</sup> April 1893):

I'd like to know what would have happened to *Khovanshchina* if I hadn't cleaned it up. How would it have been orchestrated? [...] just because something sounds fairly good on the piano doesn't mean it's going to sound good when set for voices and orchestra.<sup>803</sup>

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<sup>800</sup> Орлова А. 1972. *Op.cit.*: 110.

<sup>801</sup> See comments in MML: 223 and 278, Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 53–54, Taruskin Richard 1994. *Op.cit.*: 983.

<sup>802</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1993. *Op.cit.*: 321–322 and 325–327.

<sup>803</sup> Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 42. The comment was very pertinent since Mussorgsky composed at the piano.

Again one must question what would have happened to Mussorgsky's opera if Rimsky-Korsakov had not had the appreciation, skill and knowledge of Mussorgsky's talent to ensure that *Khovanshchina* reached the national and international stage.

### 6.7.3 Some other works by Mussorgsky

There were a number of other works and songs by Mussorgsky that Rimsky-Korsakov worked on. Of the operas these included *The Fair at Sorochyntsi* (Сорочинская ярмарка) based on Gogol's Dikanka stories and Gogol's comedy *The Marriage* (Женитьба). The latter opera was started on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 1868. By the 20<sup>th</sup> July Act I had been completed but unorchestrated.<sup>804</sup> During the autumn there were a number of private performances for a number of the composer's friends. This was resurrected by Rimsky-Korsakov on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1906 at a private performance at his home which led to:

a course of action, I decided (to V.V. Stassov's profound delight) to hand this composition over to Bessel for publication, after having first looked over it and made the necessary connections and simplifications, with a view to orchestrating it at some time in the future for a stage production.

Prior to his death in 1908 Rimsky-Korsakov had written the first twelve pages of the orchestral score.<sup>805</sup> Following the publication of the score by Bessel in 1908, the first public performance in the Rimsky-Korsakov version was given in Moscow on the 12th December in the House of Nobility with the St. Petersburg première the following year on March 19<sup>th</sup>.<sup>806</sup> Again Mussorgsky was in close correspondence with Rimsky-Korsakov during the composition of the work<sup>807</sup> to the extent that in the introduction to Bessel's score he wrote "in general, the whole piece should be performed as if *a piacere*, to which I, who heard the author's own interpretation many times [...] can testify with authority."<sup>808</sup> The cantata *The Destruction of Sennacherib* (Поражение Сеннахериба), was written between 1866–67 and performed on February 3<sup>rd</sup> (15<sup>th</sup>) in the presence of the composer. This was edited and re-orchestrated in 1894 by Rimsky-Korsakov. The orchestral work *Night on Bald Mountain* (Ночь на лысой горе), was also written between 1866–67. This work was never performed in Mussorgsky's lifetime. Rimsky-Korsakov's edition was completed in 1886, and published in the same year by V. Bessel and Co. It received its première on 15 October of that year in St.

<sup>804</sup> Brown David. *Op.cit.*: 106–107, 116.

<sup>805</sup> MML: 421–422; Yastrebtsev V.V. *Op.cit.*: 379–380; Орлова А. 1973. *Op.cit.*: 64.

<sup>806</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1993. *Op.cit.*: 91–92; von Riesenmann Oscar. *Op.cit.*: 379–380.

<sup>807</sup> See, for instance entries for July and August in Орлова. А. 1963. *Op.cit.*: 158–160; Орлова А. 1971. *Op.cit.*: 25–28.

<sup>808</sup> Quoted in Taruskin Richard 1993. *Op.cit.*: 90–91.

Petersburg's Kononov Hall, performed by the orchestra of the Russian Symphony Concerts, conducted by Rimsky-Korsakov himself.<sup>809</sup>

There can be little doubt of Rimsky-Korsakov's motives in editing and orchestrating Mussorgsky's works. As mentioned previously, following Mussorgsky's death he wrote "it is necessary that an edition be made for performance, for practical artistic purposes and for making his massive talent known – not for studying his personality and artistic sins." This sentiment was confirmed by Stasov in his *The Arts of the Nineteenth Century* "Without a doubt Mussorgsky's time is yet to come, as it comes for everything which is truthful and talented."<sup>810</sup> It was through the dedicated work of Rimsky-Korsakov for his friend that the world got to appreciate Mussorgsky's talent.

### 6.8 Alexander Borodin

Alexander Borodin another amateur member of the *Kuchka* was by profession a chemist. He was eleven years older than Rimsky-Korsakov. Borodin met Balakirev in 1862 and shortly afterwards began work on his Symphony No. 1 in E flat major under Balakirev's guidance. The symphony was first performed in 1869 with Balakirev conducting. In that same year Borodin started on his Symphony No. 2 in B minor which had its première eventually in 1877 conducted by Nápravník. A revised version was performed two years later conducted by Rimsky-Korsakov. Two years later he began composing a third symphony, but left it unfinished at his death; two movements of it were later completed and orchestrated by Glazunov.

Whilst working on the second symphony in 1869 Borodin became preoccupied with the opera *Prince Igor*. Compared to Mussorgsky's *Khovanshchina*, on Borodin's death in 1887 *Prince Igor* was found to be in an even more unfinished state by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov; the only more or less completed section was Act II.<sup>811</sup> For the Free Music School season 1878–79 Rimsky-Korsakov had announced four subscription concerts which would include, amongst, others Konchak's aria, the closing chorus and Polovtsian dances from *Prince Igor*. Rimsky-Korsakov writes that at the time:

A really definite plan and scenario were non-existent; at times more or less completed numbers were composed, and again – numbers that were merely sketchy and chaotic [...] (for the concert) Konchak's aria he had orchestrated throughout, but there was no end to waiting for the orchestration of the Polovtsian dances and the closing chorus [...] I offered to help him with the orchestration. Thereupon he came to my house in the evening,

<sup>809</sup> Орлова А. 1971. *Op.cit.*: 248.

<sup>810</sup> Quoted in Olkhovsky Yuri 1983. *Vladimir Stasov and Russian National Culture*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, UMI Research Press: 73.

<sup>811</sup> Maes Francis. *Op.cit.*: 182.



bringing with him the hardly touched score of the Polovtsian dances; and the three of us – he, Anatoli Lyadov, and I – took it apart and began to score it.<sup>812</sup>

However, following Borodin's death an examination of the sketches by Rimsky-Korsakov and Borodin revealed that apart from a few numbers:

Much else existed in the form of piano sketches; all the rest was in fragmentary draft only, while a good deal simply did not exist. For Acts II and III (in the camp of the Polivtsy) there was no adequate libretto – no scenario, even – there were only scattered verses and musical sketches, or finished numbers that showed no connection between them. The synopsis of these acts I knew full well from talks and discussions with Borodin [...] The smallest bulk of composed music proved to be Act III.<sup>813</sup>

It also appears that much was also scribbled in pencil with corrections in ink over pencil or the other way round, often did not include clefs or accidentals and much in abbreviation.<sup>814</sup> The completion of the work was carried out by Rimsky-Korsakov and Glazunov. The former retouched and scored the middle section of the prologue and worked on the unorchestrated sections of Act 1, 2 and 4 and the Polovtsian March of Act 3. In many ways Glazunov had to be more creative since he needed to effectively write the whole of Act 3 on the basis of loose sketches.<sup>815</sup>

The world première was given at the Mariinsky Theatre in St. Petersburg on 23<sup>rd</sup> October (4 November) 1890.<sup>816</sup> The Moscow première took place at Ippolit Pryanishnikov's private opera in 1892. The MPO première was in the autumn 1896 and at the Bolshoi Theatre in the winter 1898.<sup>817</sup> In the following year, 1899, it had its première in Prague. Diaghilev presented it in Paris in 1909, with Chaliapin as Galitsky and Maria Kuznetsova as Yaroslavna. The same production was presented in London in 1914 conducted by Thomas Beecham, again with Chaliapin. The Metropolitan Opera première took place in 1915 but staged in Italian.

Borodin met Liszt in Weimar in 1877 and recognising his extraordinary talent Liszt gave him encouragement: "Despite the adage that 'there is nothing new under the sun', your Second Symphony is entirely new". It was Liszt who also tried to introduce

<sup>812</sup> MML: 209–211.

<sup>813</sup> MML: 283.

<sup>814</sup> Malkiel Marina and Barry Anna 1995. [CD booklet text] Alexander Borodin *Prince Igor*. Philips Classics Productions. 443 537-2. This booklet also shows a table of the extent of Rimsky-Korsakov's and Glazunov's work: 20–22.

<sup>815</sup> See Taruskin Richard 1994. *Prince Igor*. *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*. Ed. Stanley Sadie. Vol.3: 1099.

<sup>816</sup> Fryer Paul. *Op.cit.*: Book 2, 501–502.

<sup>817</sup> Hadley Olga. *Op.cit.*: 219–220.

Borodin's works to the Western world.<sup>818</sup> However, it was again Rimsky-Korsakov, who together with Glazunov, assembled a working score of *Prince Igor*. Without this work the opera may not ever have reached the national and international stage.

## 6.9 Summary

Russian operas were initially considered an enigma and even *Eugene Onegin*, which had its première in Prague in 1888 and in Hamburg in 1892 conducted by Mahler, was considered a curiosity rather than serious opera. Rimsky-Korsakov valued the genius of his *Kuchka* colleagues but also realised that the established musical school of the West would not accept 'half-finished' works. His aim and dedication during the 1880's was clear to the extent that he himself commented that he spent too much time on rewriting other composer's works and not enough on his own. This dedication led to the works of Mussorgsky returning to the Russian stage after *Boris Godunov* was cut from the Mariinsky repertoire in 1882. In addition *Khovanshchina* was unfinished at the time of the composer's death and was initially presented on the private theatre stages in 1886 and 1897 in Rimsky-Korsakov's edition. It was not until 1911 that it reached the stage of the Mariinsky. Similarly Borodin's *Prince Igor* had a similar fate, however, it was presented in St. Petesburg at the Mariinsky Theatre already in 1890. There were also many other works on which Rimsky-Korsakov worked which were subsequently performed in the West.

However, Rimsky-Korsakov was himself sufficiently cosmopolitan and knew that music and opera should appeal to a wider audience and was not just meant to be local. The arts and music, in particular, has a major significance on how that country is appreciated in a world forum. The Russian operas of the period gave a picture of the history and culture of Russia which would perhaps help to alleviate aggravation caused by the historical events of the first decade of the century. In addition it showed the Russian musical development and unique sound. Although he did not always agree with Diaghilev on how the works should be presented due to his own conservative nature, he, however, accepted that Diaghilev appreciated what a theatre audience in the West would expect. The significance of this collaboration was that these major operas of the Russian repertoire reached the international stage. It was following Rimsky-Korsakov's visit to Paris in 1907 that both *Prince Igor* and *Boris Godunov* had their premières there in 1908 and *The Maid of Pskov* in 1909. Shortly afterwards in 1913 *Khovanshchina* was performed in both Paris and London. It was also in 1913 that Rimsky-Korsakov's pupil Stravinsky, a representative of the new Russian avant-garde, premièred his *The Rite of*

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<sup>818</sup> Leonard Richard. *Op.cit.*: 131.

*Spring* in Paris leading to a near riot in the audience; the ballet *The Firebird* had been produced in Paris already in 1910. The wide-ranging work of Rimsky-Korsakov and his aims have attained their goal although his own works and operas have not found a wider audience outside Russia. His last work *The Golden Cockerel* was performed in Paris and London in 1914 and the Metropolitan Opera in New York in 1918 whilst *Kashchei* and *Kitezh* did not reach the international stage until the mid-1920's.<sup>819</sup>

As a teacher Rimsky-Korsakov not only recognised the talents of his contemporaries but was also able to influence a number of young composers. In 1874 following his appointment as Professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire, Rimsky-Korsakov was also teaching harmony and counterpoint. He initially became his best pupil and it was a demand for knowledge and perfection that remained a feature of the composer throughout his life. He not only continually returned to his own compositions and revised them but was able to ensure that the enormous talents of his contemporaries such as Borodin and Mussorgsky did not go unrecognised through their own poor technical knowledge. It was Lyudmila Shestakova, the sister of Glinka, who even encouraged him to participate in revising and editing *A Life for the Tsar* and *Ruslan and Lyudmila* together with Balakirev and Lyadov.<sup>820</sup>

In his discussions with Nadezhda Zabela-Vrubel, Rimsky-Korsakov discusses the "Russian spirit". He pointed out that the *Kuchka* were more freely able to grasp and use folk music but also questioned how long this approach could continue. As to establishing a unique Russian musical style this he considered was difficult since the harmony and contrapuntal influences were European.<sup>821</sup> Through his teaching methods he encouraged his pupils to experiment. His aim was ensure that any extension of his own harmonic practise would have a sound musical foundation. He had already extended the use of the whole-tone scale to the octatonic scale to create atmosphere through harmonic means in his own operas. The chromaticism that had previously been used for 'fantastic' characters later became used in *Kashchei* and also to characterise the absurd character of the Queen of Shemakha by extending it to border on atonality. The further extension of this can be seen in the works of, for instance, Stravinsky, Scriabin and Prokofiev, amongst others who also, as their teacher, returned to Russian history, folklore and folk music.

<sup>819</sup> Appendix 12 tabulates the premières of Rimsky-Korsakov's operas in St. Petersburg, Moscow and abroad.

<sup>820</sup> See Stasov Vladimir. *Op.cit.*: 110 and also MML: 166, 172–175.

<sup>821</sup> Карасев П. 2000. *Римский-Корсаков, Врубель и Забела-Врубель* quoted in Кандиский А. 2000. *Николай Андреевич Римский-Корсаков*. Москва, Московская гос. консерватория: 154–156.

## 7 Rimsky-Korsakov's contribution to the building of a Russian national identity

Rimsky-Korsakov began his adult life at a period when there was optimism in a society that the repressive regime of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> had ended and a new dawn would appear in the guise of his successor Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>. However, irrespective of the early reforms encompassed in serf emancipation, confusion within an uncontrolled society led to repression not only within Greater Russia but in the periphery countries. As an intelligent, questioning, liberal youth, Rimsky-Korsakov gradually came on a collision course with the Tsarist regime and this led him to a questioning of the driving principles of orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality, the 'Official Nationality' concept of the State.

### 7.1 Phases in the life and works of Rimsky-Korsakov

When examining the musical and literary output of Rimsky-Korsakov it is possible to see four clear phases in which his contribution to the concept of his own interpretation of 'national identity' can be perceived.

The first phase, 1855–1872, which ended with *The Maid of Pskov*, can be considered the period of finding his way as a composer. During this time he not only became a member of the *Kuchka* but, like his fellow members, was under the influence of Balakirev. This was also the period he experimented with romances. He also attempted many symphonic forms, writing his three symphonies, the musical tableaux *Sadko* and experimenting with the use of folk music in orchestral works. This was also the time when he first experienced the mentality and slant of the Tsarist bureaucracy and its censor for opera based on Russian history, but also showed his determination to circumvent it.

The period following his appointment to the Professorship of Practical Composition and Instrumentation together with responsibility for the orchestra class in 1871 can be considered the start of Phase 2. This was a period of teaching himself music theory and with experimenting with different musical forms and instrumentation. Throughout this period his compositions focus on various aspects of musical composition. These include a number of fugues, which he sent to Tchaikovsky to comment on and correct, choral works and chamber works. Following his appointment as Inspector of Music Bands of the Navy Department with its necessity to become acquainted with wind and brass instruments, he also wrote a number of pieces in the second half of the decade for these instruments. With his improved knowledge he also returned to *The Maid of Pskov*.

These revisions would be a future feature of his work not only revising his own works but improving those of his contemporary Russian composers. It was also in this period, which extends to around the end of the 1870's, that he started to write his *Principles of Orchestration* based on his own learning process. The folk songs which he used extensively in his later operas were also collected and arranged in the mid-1870's.

A number of events can be considered to have influenced Phase 3 which lasted from the turn of the decade to around 1894. Amongst these was Rimsky-Korsakov's appointment to the Court Kapella in the Spring of 1883, the death of Mussorgsky in 1881 and Borodin in 1887. During the early years of this period he also returned to opera and wrote *May Night* (1878–79) and *The Snow Maiden* (1880–81). These two operas were noteworthy for a number of reasons. Not only did he use recognised Russian authors for the librettos but also themes in which he could extensively use folk songs. With the use of Gogol's Dinkanka story he was able to draw attention to the plight of the Ukraine without, in this case, attracting the wrath of the censor. During this period, although having to compose and make arrangements of the liturgy for the court use, he was also interested in arrangements which would be more accessible and usable for the common everyday services of the church. To ensure the pupils of the Kapella would also receive musical recognition in later life he not only rewrote the regulations and programme of study but also a *Practical Manual of Harmony* which he would also later use in the Conservatoire.

With the extensive music knowledge he had acquired in the 1870's he was now capable of assisting and advising his fellow *Kuchka* composers. He was concerned that the great talents of these composers would not be recognised. It was during the 1880's that he worked extensively on the compositions of Mussorgsky and Borodin. The two unfinished operas by these composers *Khovanshchina* and *Prince Igor*, respectively, were completed. The year 1886 saw premières of both Mussorgsky's works *Khovanshchina* and *Night on a Bare Mountain*. *Prince Igor* was completed between 1887 and 1890 by Rimsky-Korsakov together with Glazunov; its première was in 1890.

During the early 1890's Rimsky-Korsakov had a number of personal problems. There were a number of crises in Rimsky-Korsakov's immediate family which certainly would have affected his creative ability. The year 1890 was a particularly hard time for the composer since in the Spring Nadezhda was seriously ill and one of his sons suffered from diphtheria. Later in the autumn his mother died as did his son Slavchik. In addition, his daughter Masha (Maria) became ill and this illness, which was prolonged,

was ultimately fatal; his second youngest child dying in 1893. It was also in the autumn of 1892 that Rimsky-Korsakov's health began to suffer and he experienced "more and more frequently unpleasant sensations [...] perhaps dizziness [...]"<sup>822</sup>

It was not until 1894 that Rimsky-Korsakov returned to composition and this can be considered the start of the 4<sup>th</sup> phase of his compositional output. However the last period of his life was extremely prolific. In addition to composing the majority of his operas the continuing difficulties with the Tsar and the Imperial Theatre led to the majority of his late operas being premièred in the more conducive environment of the new privately-owned theatres. This gave a more receptive audience to operas with an increasing political comment. Together with, for instance, Mamontov he was able to work with the leading designers and singers. He was able to re-introduce *Boris Godunov* onto the Russian stage as well as seeing both his own and the reorchestrated versions of his contemporaries operas performed in Western Europe. In addition to the continuing revisions of his own works there was also a vast expansion in his use of musical forms. This can be considered the most important and expansive periods of the composer's life where he was able to bring his total musical knowledge, folklore, harmonic developments, political convictions and prolongation of a developing Russian 'sound' to fruition.

## 7.2 Autocracy criticized.

By the time Rimsky-Korsakov completed his training in mathematics and navigational sciences in 1862 he was already eighteen years old. The previous year two significant things had happened, he had been introduced to Balakirev and Russian society was also becoming accustomed to the Serf Emancipation Manifesto signed by the Tsar in 1861. This was also followed, in 1864, by a reform of the Criminal Law.

It is not surprising then to find his first opera *The Maid of Pskov* already questioning the concepts of the State, the authority of the Tsar and testing the boundaries of censorship. The concept of the republican-type society of Pskov portrayed was too radical a concept at a time when such ideas were also a thorn in the side of the authority. Not only had the play been banned for this reason, in addition incidents such as Tver's demands for an independent local assembly disturbed the existing order. However, the message of the ending of the opera leaves one weighing the balance. Should there be just one dominant ruler able to 'protect' the people: "It's clear a kingdom is only strong, firm and mighty, where the people all know well that they have one supreme ruler, just as, in a flock,

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<sup>822</sup> See MML: 307, 315, 339.



there is one single shepherd.”<sup>823</sup> The ending still shows the common people, represented by Mikhail Tucha, defying the authority of the Tsar. It was the supreme power of the Tsar in theatrical matters that insisted on changes in the libretto to avoid possible audience interpretation of Rimsky-Korsakov’s meaning.

The statement of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>’s concerning his aim to enforce the autocratic centre “I will preserve the principles of autocracy as firmly and unswervingly as did my late unforgettable father”<sup>824</sup> led to the appointment of extremely conservative ministers who extended the “Temporary Regulations”, increased censorship, controlled and restricted education and the activities of the *zemstvos* and municipal governments. It was not surprising that Rimsky-Korsakov turned, in 1898, to another opera concerning Ivan the Terrible *The Tsar’s Bride* an opera that showed how power and greed destroyed people. However, as the new Tsar’s instability and lack of governing skills showed itself Rimsky-Korsakov turned to the poet for whom the veiled criticism of the regime was natural, Pushkin. The reaction within the arts can be seen in warnings given by, for instance, Alexander Blok with the poem written in 1906 *The Tale of the Cockerel and the Old Woman* and Rimsky-Korsakov’s 1907 opera *The Golden Cockerel*. The correspondence between the composer and the librettist leaves one in no doubt as to political tone of the opera.

In addition to the criticism of the bureaucracy at the time Rimsky-Korsakov chose to highlight the Russian expansionist policies of the peripheral countries within their control. His choice of Gogol’s Dikanka stories drew attention to the Ukrainian question. Direct references were made to the distance between St. Petersburg and the Ukraine, the differences in life style which, as a result, led to a non-appreciation of the local language and culture. The criticism in *May Night* is limited to references to the visit to the Ukraine by the Tsarina Catherine the Great in 1787 and Golova’s fear of a distant commissar but also questioning who makes the appointments in a village. However, fifteen years later in 1894–1895 Rimsky-Korsakov returned to the Ukrainian question in *Christmas Eve*. In this opera, in addition to the comparison between the splendour of St. Petersburg, he questioned the reasons for Catherine’s destruction of the Zaporozhian republic: “Why do you punish your faithful people? How have we angered you?” These comments can also be seen as criticism of Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> suppression of the Ukrainian language and culture.

<sup>823</sup> *The Maid of Pskov*. CD. *Op.cit.*: 154.

<sup>824</sup> Riasanovsky Nicholas, Steinberg Mark 2005. *A History of Russia Since 1855*. *Op.cit.*: 369.

It was not only the Ukraine that concerned Rimsky-Korsakov as was shown in *Pan Voyevoda*. Herzen wrote a scathing comment in *Kolokol* about the suppression of the Polish uprising in 1863 “this was not a national war, this was a police suppression of war” and continuing that this would be how the Russian regime would, in the future, control the Russian peasants. At the time when the future fires of 1905 were already beginning to burst into flame, in 1903 Rimsky-Korsakov turned to the Polish question. It was the Russification policy, the banning of the Polish language and the brutal suppression by the ‘governors’ (воеводы), where law and order had no meaning that Rimsky-Korsakov wanted to draw people’s attention to since this appeared to be the direction of the policies of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The Tsars as an institution had opposed operas by the Balakirev school and Rimsky-Korsakov, and later Mussorgsky, in particular. In addition it was the upper ‘westernised’ echelons of society that frequented the Mariinsky and Bolshoi Theatres who were only subjected to the nationalistic operas of, for instance, Glinka. For Rimsky-Korsakov to be able to address his ‘political’ views to a wider more cosmopolitan audience it was necessary to find an alternative theatre forum. Following the abolition of the State monopoly in 1882, from *Sadko*, which had its première at the Mamontov Opera in 1898, onwards Rimsky-Korsakov’s operas were almost exclusively staged on the private stage where they enjoyed great success. The press rubbed the message in by commenting on the Imperial theatres as only staging “old and worn-out” productions whilst the excellent Mamontov productions were something rarely heard in Russia.

It was on the private stage of the Solodovnikov Theatre in Moscow that *Kashchei* had its première in 1902 and it was the private stage of the actress V.F. Komissarzhevskaja which was the venue for the political cries “Go in freedom! The storm has opened the doors for you!”<sup>825</sup> which ended that opera’s performance towards the end of March 1905, following Rimsky-Korsakov’s dismissal from the Conservatoire. There can be no doubt that this added a political dimension to the composer’s views already expressed by a number of noteworthy artists in February 1905 which he subsequently underwrote:

When life is bound hand and foot, art cannot be free, for feeling is only a part of life.  
When there is neither freedom of thought and conscience, nor freedom of speech and

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<sup>825</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai 1999. *Kashchei the Immortal*, Kirov Opera and Orchestra, Valery Gergiev, Philips 446 704-2, CD. Accompanying libretto: 68.

press in the land, when obstacles are erected to all the creative undertakings of the people, artistic creativity withers.<sup>826</sup>

### 7.3 Views on theories of ‘national identity’

When considering these historical facts against the views of Hroch concerning ‘national identity’ it is enlightening to also consider Rimsky-Korsakov’s contribution to these concepts and theories.

Hroch outlined three stages of development in his modernist theory. The first of these can be considered as a national awakening within the intellectual élite. In Russia this can be considered a re-awakening to the indigenous culture and traditions that had been suppressed under Peter the Great’s westernising reforms. It was Karamzin who drew particular attention to language, for instance. Why use French when Russia had its own good and rich home language. This agitation and questioning continued through the early decades of the 1800’s leading to the Decembrist movement, public debate on nationality issues in the 1830’s and resulting in the Official Nationality ukase which indicated that the Tsarist regime totally mis-interpreted the public mood.

The second stage of Hroch’s development was the post-1855 period. This was, in fact, initiated perhaps by Radishchev already in 1790 in his commentary “Journey from St.Petersburg to Moscow” but took serious root a half a century later through the writers and commentators of that period, Chernishevsky, Turgenev and Herzen, in particular, the *peredvizhniki* and the *Kuchka*. The changing society was also ‘tested’ in the post-serf emancipation period and after the Criminal Law reform in 1864. In this period the radicals and revolutionaries took advantage of the freedom of the press and the inexperience of the law court officials leading, for instance, to the acquittal of Vera Zagush. There were minor localised acts of terrorism which did not, however, unite the people. This was also a period of national uncertainty particularly in relation to Poland and the Ukraine. It was also the time when Rimsky-Korsakov composed *The Maid of Pskov* and later the Dikanka-based operas.

The last stage of the national identity development can be placed following the accession of Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup>. As previously outlined, the Tsar’s total lack of understanding of both national and international events and his belief in his ‘divine rights’ led to a consolidation of both the radical and liberal opposition. It was at this time that Rimsky-Korsakov composed his most radical operas, *Saltan*, *Pan Voyevoda*, *Kashchei* and,

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<sup>826</sup> Yastrebtsev.V. *Op.cit.*: 353

finally, *The Golden Cockerel*. To project his views he used the newly-established private theatres. It was *Kashchei* and *The Golden Cockerel* combined with intellectuals such as Blok that provided the tinder for the eventually more violent events of 1917.

The development of ‘national identity’ in Russia clearly follows the path outlined by Hroch. It can also be seen that Rimsky-Korsakov was central and influential in the last two stages.

#### **7.4 Russian society and religion – views on orthodoxy**

Although Rimsky-Korsakov held pantheistic views it was his appreciation of not only the conflict within Russian society between the Orthodox Church and pagan beliefs but also of their affinity that he highlighted. The great religious schism in Russian life encompassed many aspects of Russian life, the double-belief, *dvoeverie*, appears to be eternal. The agrarian magical beliefs were invoked as a guarantee, like a double-edged sword, to ensure success in the fertility of the family or on the land.

Rimsky-Korsakov believed that within the Russian soul there existed a *dvoeverie* because the pagan beliefs linked to the agrarian cycle formed a basis not only of primitive religious beliefs but also that there had been a compromise forged between them and the Orthodox faith. Consequently, not only had the religious and pagan festivals been merged but also the unique folk songs had found their way into the religious chants. In this way the true identity of the people encompassed both. As mentioned previously he wrote: “The people, as a nation sing their ceremonial songs by force of habit and custom, neither understanding nor suspecting what really underlies these ceremonies and games.”<sup>827</sup> Homes were adorned with both pagan and Christian symbols.

As a result of his views it is not surprising to find Rimsky-Korsakov picturing both pagan and Christian practices in his operas. It was in *May Night* that Rimsky-Korsakov combined the Christian festivals of the week before Trinity to the pagan association of the appearance of the *rusalki*. Hannah, looking at the stars relates how God lights the Easter celebrations. The opera focuses on the folk traditions associated with the *rusalki* but it is to God that Hannah and Levko pray at the end of the opera for Pannochka to be received in heaven. *The Snow Maiden* returns to the theme of the pagan celebrations associated with the end of winter and the beginning of spring. This was a time of the rebirth of nature but also looking towards the Christian festival of Easter and the

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<sup>827</sup> MML: 207.

resurrection. Even in works such as the Russian Easter Overture Rimsky-Korsakov had in mind the close association between pagan and Christian practice.

After many years working at the Court Kapella Rimsky-Korsakov returned to Gogol and a Christian theme in *Christmas Eve* which throughout the opera, however, also plays on the pagan aspects of the festival. Through both the actions and the use of both secular and church music Rimsky-Korsakov clearly indicated the nature of and affiliation of the Christmas celebrations.

At the time when the composer was beginning to question the ‘divine right’ of the Tsar he placed in opposition the characters of Tsar Saltan and Prince Gvidon, the Tsar unable to recognise right from wrong whilst the Prince can do no wrong. Gvidon is celebrated “Let us raise all our voices in one, Full of praise for the things God has done”<sup>828</sup> as the saviour to a Russian “Greek” chant in *We Praise Thee, O God* (Тебе Бога хвалим) which the more cosmopolitan audience of Mamontov’s Private Opera would have recognised.

What was to have been his last opera, *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya*, can also be viewed as a summary of Rimsky-Korsakov’s spiritual outlook. Here his pantheism is expressed clearly that God is everywhere. As Fevronia says:

и то вѣдь Богъ ио не пездѣ ли?  
Ты вотъ мыслишь здѣсь пустое мѣсто,  
анѣ же нѣтъ: великая здѣсь церковь.  
Оглянися умными очами.<sup>829</sup>

But isn’t God everywhere?  
You may think this is a deserted place.  
But no: it is a mighty church.  
Open your eyes and look around!<sup>830</sup>

In addition to language and custom, religion forms a major force within a society. Rimsky-Korsakov again questioned whether the State Orthodox Church represented the beliefs of the Russian nation as a whole or a select few. Whilst the latter needed to be accommodated within the dictates of the Tsar the humbler needs of the people needed to be taken into account. The music of the everyday church had to be accessible to all, the more complex arrangements of the liturgy for the Court Kapella were only needed for a limited few. In addition it was necessary to accommodate the beliefs of the everyday

<sup>828</sup> Lyle Neff, private communication, Copyright © 1986, 2008.

<sup>829</sup> Rimsky-Korsakov N.A. 1906. *The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia. Opera Vocal Score. Op.cit.*: 35–40.

<sup>830</sup> English translation cd booklet accompanying ORF recording 3-1144-2 YS, 1997, P + C KOCH International GmbH: 87.

worshipper who still relied on, believed in and practiced pre-Christian customs and rituals in their everyday life. In great probability, irrespective of other differences of opinion, in this respect, Rimsky-Korsakov would have concurred with the then Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod, Konstantin Pobedonostsev:

One has to live the life of the people, one must worship as one with the people, in a united church assembly, feel that one has a common heartbeat with the people, suffused with the same sense of celebration, the same word and song.<sup>831</sup>

With Rimsky-Korsakov's pantheistic beliefs a discussion may have arisen over Pobedonostsev's views concerning true 'ecclesiastical tastes'. For Rimsky-Korsakov this 'ecclesiastical taste', if it were to reflect the nation as a whole it needed to take into consideration the pre-Christian, pagan beliefs that were still a part of the annual traditions connected with the agrarian cycle and seasons, the superstitions surrounding the winter and summer solstice, the end of winter and beginning of spring. The symbolism within the home also reflected these traditions. All of these were a part of the spiritual identity of the people.

In addition, when considering the spiritual it was not possible to discard the factions within the established church itself. The Old Believers still existed and were also to be remembered and considered. This concern he continued through his interest in Melnikov's novels. Apart from the significance of the opera itself as indicative of Mussorgsky's genius, this was also one reason why it was necessary for Rimsky-Korsakov to complete the unfinished *Khovanshchina*.

There can be little doubt that Rimsky-Korsakov believed that the concept of orthodoxy (*православие*) was much broader than the definition of a State Orthodox religion. Irrespective of the efforts of the church throughout the ages to establish a uniform religion the old customs based on pre-Christianity beliefs, rituals and customs formed an essential feature of the everyday life of the ordinary people. Folk music had become intermingled with the religious music. The church was there to serve the ordinary man and strengthen his faith not there to serve the Tsar and the upper classes of society. By including both religious and folk belief imagery in his operas he showed that both were a vital and essential part of Russian everyday life.

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<sup>831</sup> *Ib.*: xxxi–xxii.



### 7.5 Rimsky-Korsakov's concept of nationality.

As mentioned early in this thesis the concept of national identity is difficult to define when basing it on a concept rather than geographically definable attributes. Bluntsch outlined identity as a "national spirit embodied in common language, customs, and outlook of the people".<sup>832</sup> However, one should also expand this concept to include how a 'nation' is perceived and appreciated outside its defined space and how this is further developed to be seen as unique. In this respect Rimsky-Korsakov served a specific role.

Rimsky-Korsakov considered that the old concept of the Russian official nationality, which relied on the people (*narod*) considering the tsar as a 'God-appointed and anointed' ruler supported and maintained by a State-church and established aristocracy and bureaucracy no longer served a nation that saw the Russian State as an old-fashioned, non-democratic institution, was questionable. In addition the over-emphasised leaning towards the West led to Russia not being appreciated as a country in a broader framework as unique, rather than just within perhaps a bureaucratic, militaristic and economic forum.

It was in the aforementioned fields that Russia's achievements had been seen as questionable if not a failure. However, the arts had progressed and it was in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century that the arts established an appreciative audience in the West. Rimsky-Korsakov's work in the musical field can be considered paramount irrespective of the difficulties he encountered and subsequent criticism.

For Rimsky-Korsakov it was not the opinions and regulated society of the upper classes that attracted him because they lived in a sheltered, unreal, world and consequently did not represent the Russia of the majority, the people (*narod*). Consequently an unconstrained theatre was needed that would be acceptable to all, and with the abolishment of the State monopoly this became possible. With Mamontov he could stage operas with singers he could trust, with scenic designers that captivated the correct mood and a representative 'Russian' audience. Without aristocratic constraints they would appreciate the nationalistic elements and the political comment without the over-interference of the censor and a biased theatrical/musical committee. The composer's view was that his operas were for the people not the elite. An examination of the foundations of his operas in totality show how he encompassed the total palette of identity.

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<sup>832</sup> See, Snyder Louis. 1954 *Op.cit.*: 193.

<b>Opera</b>	<b>Composition completed</b>	<b>Source</b>	<b>Scenic/costume design - Premiere</b>
The Maid of Pskov	1872	Mey	Korovin and Vasnetsov(1896), Bakst (1901), Roerich (1909)
May Night	1879	Gogol	Bocharov
The Snow Maiden	1881	Ostrovsky	Bocharov, Shishkov Moscow premiere, 1885, Vasnetsov, Levitan, Korovin
Mlada	1892	Gedeonov	Benois (1923- revival) Krilov
The Night Before Christmas	1895	Gogol	Bocharov, Andreev, Suvorov, Ivanov
Sadko	1896	Folk epic	Korovin and Malyutin (bylina)
Mozart and Salieri	1897	Pushkin	Vrubel
Boyarina Vera Sheloga	1898	Mey	
The Tsar's Bride	1898	Mey	Vrubel
The Tale of Tsar Saltan	1900	Pushkin	Vrubel
Servilia	1901	Mey	Lambin, Ivanov
Kashchei the Immortal	1902	Russian	Malyutin fairy tale
Pan Voyevoda	1903	Tyumenev	
Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia	1905	Russian legends	Vasnetsov and Korovin
The Golden Cockerel	1907	Pushkin	Bilibin, Korovin (1909) Goncharova* (* Diaghalev's 1914 ballet version )

Aligned to the mentioned spiritual content and practice in the make-up of the people it was not possible to ignore the fact that the culture was not just formed by a central, educated, elite in St. Petersburg or Moscow. Dominant forces within the developing Russian culture of the late 18<sup>th</sup> century and early 19<sup>th</sup> century had been, for instance, Gogol in literature and Bortniansky and Berezovsky in music, all from the Ukraine. The statements of Valuev concerning the Ukrainian language as being 'adulterated' by the influence of Polish and that all could and should understand Russian was short-sighted from both a cultural and political viewpoint. The Emz Ukase of 1876 took this a stage further in banning the Ukrainian culture, language and music. In a similar manner following the Statute of 1832, which made Poland a part of the Russian empire, this also later led to the Polish language and culture being banned. Rimsky-Korsakov's stand on the Ukraine is clear as he composed both *May Night* and *Christmas Eve* at a time following the Ems Ukase. In addition he resurrected criticism of the suppression of Poland, and in particular the universities and students by Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup>, through *Pan Voyevoda* in 1903 at a time when the Russian State began brutally suppressing criticism and riots particularly in the Russian universities. This also highlighted Herzen's fears about Russia becoming fact. These aspects can be considered as Rimsky-Korsakov painting a picture for his native audience reflecting what he considered to be factors influencing their feeling of being Russian.

He also felt strongly not only about his contemporary Russian composers but also the future development of musical style. Irrespective of being called a strict and conservative teacher he knew, through experience, the value of a sound foundation on which his students could build their music. He had already experimented with the whole tone scale of Glinka and found that he could not attain the variations in harmony that he needed for his operas to separate the real world from the supernatural. It was out of this that he consciously developed the octatonic scale. But the exercises he gave his pupils led them to discover a wide range of tonal variations which led them towards, for instance, atonality. There can be little doubt that the next generation of Russian composers such as Stravinsky experimented with this and continued the development of a Russian sound based on these tonal relationships. In addition they continued experimentation with Russian themes and folk music.

Rimsky-Korsakov was aware that to balance the national identity of Russia, the external political and economic view of the country, it was necessary to establish a recognised Russian music repertoire in the West. Two concerts of Russian works conducted by Rimsky-Korsakov were performed as a part of the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition and

he returned to conduct at a series of five Russian concerts, in four of which his compositions were performed. The press welcomed his return.

Lazare Saminsky already in 1939 summed-up a view of Rimsky-Korsakov which is unfortunately still true today:

The world at large has created a popular image of Rimski-Korsakov in conformity with the naked orientalism of *Shéhérazade* and *Chant Hindou* [...] But can the world at large have a true idea of Rimski-Korsakov without knowing his tenderest, his most radiant, his subtlest creative dreams? I speak of the *Fairy Tale* and *Mlada*, of *Kastchei* and *Kitesz*.

For that matter did the world at large, who had had an inkling of the real Rimski-Korsakov in *Cocq d'or*, sense all the import and historical consequences of this work? Do we realize that both Stravinsky and Prokofiev are *hardly possible* without this source and forerunner of both, their grotesque and their technique? [...] We have all heard the *Snow-Maiden*, but who has turned scarcely more than a deaf ear to [...] the scene where the Snow-Maiden, at the dawn of a glowing summer day, calls her mother, the Spring, from the waters of the forest lake? Who [...] has probed the human and artistic depth hidden in these pages of genius?

The one who does not know the soft glow and the evil-bearing fires of *Mlada*, her gentle threads of archaized melos, her demonic choruses, such as the awesome devil's *Kolo*, copied with dangerous exactness by Stravinsky in *Kastchei's* dance from the *Fire-bird*; the one who does not suspect the singular pictorial and tonal wealth of *Kastchei*, with its velvety-sinister, hissing undertone; the one who has not been stirred by the night scene and choral prayer to the Madonna of *Kitesz*, has no right to join the parrots' choir shouting down Rimski-Korsakov as the schoolmaster to the Russian national group.<sup>833</sup>

Saminsky here touches on many of the essential aspects of Rimsky-Korsakov's work. His work as a teacher correcting and projecting the genius of his contemporaries in the *Kuchka*, together with his dedication in ensuring that the future generation of composers would continue the development of Russian themes and a Russian sound that was projecting a view of nationality. This view is underlined by the Russian folklore, folk music and spirituality projected in the operas particularly named by Saminsky. These operas also clearly showed the dual nature of religion in Russia. But Saminsky also mentions two operas with heavy political overtones *Kitezsh* and the *Golden Cockerel* and for the latter the "historical consequences".

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<sup>833</sup> Saminsky Lazare 1939. *Op.cit.*: 229–231.

This thesis shows that Rimsky-Korsakov believed his works, in general, and operas, in particular, would have “historical consequences”. His concept of a Russian ‘national identity’ encompassed all those aspects of the nation with which they had been imbued since childhood, language, traditions, beliefs and affiliations. They could not be imposed on them by legal arguments and definitions. The political and social undercurrents in Russian society during his lifespan not only questioned the legality of the Tsarist establishment and its achievements for the benefit of society but also the foundations and freedom of education and the roots of society. Rimsky-Korsakov through his music also added weight to these arguments and presented a new interpretation of orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality.

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## APPENDIX 1

### People mentioned in the text

Ivan 4<sup>th</sup> – the Terrible (1533–84)

Ivan 5<sup>th</sup> (1682–96)

Alexei Mikhailovich (1645–76).

Peter 1<sup>st</sup> (1672–1725)

Empress Anne (1730–40)

Catherine 2<sup>nd</sup> (1762–96)

Paul 1<sup>st</sup> (1796–1801)

Alexander 1<sup>st</sup> (1801–25)

Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup> (1825–55)

Alexander 2<sup>nd</sup> (1855–81)

Alexander 3<sup>rd</sup> (1881–94)

Nicholas 2<sup>nd</sup> (1894–1917)

Adlerberg Vladimir Fyodorovich (1791–1884)

Russian Adjutant General. Close friend of Nicholas 1<sup>st</sup>. Appointed Minister of the Imperial Court in 1852.

Afanasev Alexandr Nikolaevich (1826–71)

Russian collector of folklore and researcher into the spiritual culture of the Slavic peoples.

Alekseev-Yakolev Aleksei Yakolevich (1850–1939)

Russian director, artist and dramaturg.

Araja Francesco (1700–70)

Italian composer engaged by the Empress Anne.

Arensky Anton Stepanovich (1861–1906)

Russian composer, pianist and Professor of Music. Studied composition at the St.Petersburg Conservatoire with Rimsky-Korsakov. Became Professor at the Moscow Conservatoire where his pupils were Alexander Scriabin, Sergei Rachmaninov and Alexander Gretchaninov. Russian oriental studies historian and ethnographer.

Aristov Nikolai Alexandrovich (1847–1910)

Azanchevsky Mikhail Pavlovich (1839–81)

Russian composer and musician. Director of St. Petersburg Conservatoire 1871 – 76.

Azeev Evstafii Stepanovich (1851–1918)

Russian composer, chorus master at the Imperial Opera. Rimsky-Korsakov's associate at the Court Kapella.

Bakhmetev Nikolai Ivanovich (1807–91)	Russian composer, violinist and Director of the Court Kapella 1861–83.
Bakunin Mikhail Alexandrovich (1814–76)	Russian intellectual, philosopher and revolutionary.
Balanchivadze Meliton (1862–1937)	Georgian composer considered the founder of Georgian music. From 1889–1895 studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire. Rimsky-Korsakov was one of his teachers.
Balakirev Mily Alekseevich (1837–1910)	Russian composer and leader of the <i>Kuchka</i> . Helped to found the Free Music School.
Bartók Béla Viktor János (1881–1945)	Hungarian composer and pianist.
Beethoven Ludwig van (1770–1827)	German composer and pianist.
Beliaev Mitrofan Petrovich (1836–1903)	Initially a timber merchant, later Russian music publisher, organiser of symphonic concerts and leader of Beliaev group of composers.
Belinsky Vissarion Grigorevich (1811–48)	Literary critic and social thinker often called the father of the Russian radical intelligentsia.
Belsky Vladimir Ivanovich (1866–1946)	Librettist responsible for <i>The Golden Cockerel</i> , <i>The Invisible City of Kitezh</i> , <i>Sadko</i> and <i>The Tale of Tsar Saltan</i> .
Berezovsky Maksym Sozontovich (c. 1745–77)	Ukrainian composer and opera singer particularly known for his sacred choral works.
Bernhard August Rudolfovich (1852–1908)	Russian musicologist and teacher of German descent. Studied music theory under Rimsky-Korsakov. Director of St. Petersburg Conservatoire 1897–1905. Noted for translating <i>Eugene Onegin</i> and <i>The Queen of Spades</i> into German.
Bessel Vasilii Vasilevich (1843–1907)	Founded the music publishers V. Bessel and Co in 1869. Published works by the <i>Kuchka</i> and also Rubinstein and Tchaikovsky.
Bezborodko Alexandr Andreyevich (1747–99)	Grand Chancellor of Russia.
Bilibin Ivan Yakovlevich (1876–1942)	Russian painter, illustrator and stage designer.
Blok Aleksandre Aleksandrovich (1880–1921)	Russian lyrical poet.

Blumenfeld Feliks Mikhailovich (1863–1931)	Russian composer, conductor, pianist and teacher. Conducted Russian première of <i>Tristan und Isolde</i> and Paris première of <i>Boris Godunov</i> . Taught in Moscow Conservatoire 1922–1931.
Blumenfeld Sigizmund Mikhailovich (1852–1920)	Russian singer, pianist and composer. Brother of Feliks.
Borodin Aleksander Profir'yevich (1833–87)	Russian chemist and composer, of Georgian – Russian origin. Member of the <i>Kuchka</i> .
Bortniansky Dmytro Stepanovich (1751–1825)	Ukrainian composer. In Imperial Russia became famous for his operas, instrumental works combining Eastern and Western styles.
Bluntsch Johann Kaspar (1808–81)	German-Swiss jurist and political theorist.
Brenko Anna Alekseevna (1848–1934)	Russian actress initially with the Imperial Maly Theatre. Pioneer in founding the first professional private theatre, the Pushkin Theatre.
Cavos Caterino Albertovich (1775–1840)	Italian Composer. From 1803 Principal Conductor of the Russian Opera Theatre; 1832 Director of the Imperial Theatres' Orchestras.
Chaadaev Pyotr Yakovlevich (1794–1856)	Russian philosopher and writer. Main works: <i>Письма из истории философии</i> (Letters on the History of Philosophy) and <i>Apology of a Madman</i> .
Chaliapin Fyodor Ivanovich (1873–1938)	Russian bass who sang at both the St. Petersburg Imperial Opera as well as at Mamontov's Private Opera and helped make a number of the major bass roles of both Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov famous.
Chekhov Anton Pavlovich (1860–1904)	Russian author of short stories and plays. Trained as a physician: "Medicine is my lawful wife and literature is my mistress".
Chernyshevsky Nikolai Gavrilovich (1828–89)	Russian philosopher, critic and socialist. Editor of <i>Современник</i> (The Contemporary). In prison

Chulkov Mikhail Dmitrievich (1744–92)	wrote <i>Что делать?</i> (What is to be done?) Russian writer, historian and journalist. Wrote <i>Собрание разных песен</i> (Collection of Various Songs), Parts 1 – 4 (1770 – 1774).
Coates Albert (1882–1953)	English conductor and composer born in St. Petersburg. Studied composition under Rimsky-Korsakov. Invited to conduct at the Mariinsky by Nápravník in 1910 and became principle conductor there for five years.
Collins Samuel (1619–1670)	British doctor and author. Personal physician to Alexis 1 <sup>st</sup> of Russia, 1659–1666.
Coxe William (1747–1828)	English churchman and historian.
Cui César Antonovich (1835–1918)	Army officer and specialist in fortifications. As an amateur composer he was one of the <i>Kuchka</i> and a music critic. He served on the selection committee of the Mariinsky Theatre.
Cyril (Kirill) Danilov Kirsha	Metropolitan of Kiev 1242–81. Compiler of a collection of Russian heroic, religious and humorous songs which were published in 1804.
Dargomyzhsky Aleksandr Sergeevich (1813–69)	Russian composer between Glinka and the <i>Kuchka</i> . His opera <i>Каменный гость</i> (The Stone Guest) became influential on <i>Boris Godunov</i> for its melodic recitative style.
Dārziņš Emīls (1875–1910)	Latvian composer, conductor and critic.
Debussy Claude-Achille (1862–1918)	French composer
Derzhavin Gavril Romanovich (1743–1816)	Russian statesman and poet.
Diagilev Sergei Pavlovich (1872–1929)	Russian art critic, patron, ballet impresario and founder of the Ballets Russes.
Digges Dudley (c. 1583–1639)	English diplomat and Member of Parliament. Named Ambassador to Muscovy in 1618-19.
Dmitriev Ivan Ivanovich (1840–67)	Russian satirist and critic. Associated with various satirical journals, including <i>Искра</i> (The

Dobroliubov Nikolai Aleksandrovich (1836–61)	<i>Spark</i> ) and <i>Будильник</i> (The Alarm Clock), which he edited until March 1866. Russian literary critic, journalist and revolutionary democrat. Worked together with Chernyshevsky on <i>Современник</i> (The Contemporary).
Dostoevsky Fyodor Mikhailovich (1821–81)	Russian writer of novels, short stories and essays. His main works explored the effect of the political, social and spiritual turmoil of 19 <sup>th</sup> century Russian society.
Dütsch Otto (1823–1863)	Danish composer. In 1852 became chorus repetiteur and organist at Imperial Russian Theatre and in 1862 Professor of Music Theory.
Elagin Ivan Perfilievich (1725–94)	Russian historian, poet and translator. Acted as unofficial secretary to Catherine 2 <sup>nd</sup> . From 1762 he was Director of Court Theatres.
Esposito Michele (1855–1929)	Italian born composer, conductor and pianist. Lived most of his life in Dublin, Ireland. Conducted Moscow première of Mussorgsky's <i>Boris Godunov</i> at the Solodovnikov Theatre with the Russian Private Opera in 1897 and Rimsky-Korsakov's <i>Sadko</i> at the same theatre in 1898.
Evreinov Nikolai Nikolaevich (1879–1953)	Of Russian-French parents was active in the theatre both as a director and writer. Studied music under Rimsky-Korsakov.
Filippov Tertii Ivanovich (1825–99)	Russian statesman, senator. Collector of Russian folk music.
Fomin Evstigney Ipatevich (1761–1800)	Russian 18 <sup>th</sup> century opera composer known for his opera <i>Ямщики на подставе</i> (The Coachman at the Relay Station).
Fredericks Vladimir Borisovich (1838–1927)	Finno-Russian statesman. Minister of the Imperial Court 1897–1917.
Gapon Georgii Apollonovich (1870–1906)	Russian Orthodox priest and popular working class leader.

Gedeonov Alexandr Mikhailovich (1791–1867)	Organiser of workers' procession which resulted in "Bloody Sunday" 1905. Appointed Director of the Imperial Theatres in St. Petersburg in 1833 and Moscow in 1847.
Glazunov Alexandr Konstantinovich (1865–1936)	Russian composer, teacher and conductor. Director of St. Petersburg Conservatoire 1905–1928. Private pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov. Assisted in the completion of Borodin's <i>Prince Igor</i> .
Glière Reinhold Moritzovich (1875–1956)	Russian, Ukrainian and Soviet composer. Studied at the Moscow Conservatoire under Taneyev and Ippolit-Ivanov. Privately taught Myaskovsky and Prokofiev.
Glinka Mikhail Ivanovich (1804–57)	Russian composer considered the father of Russian opera. Had considerable influence on the <i>Kuchka</i> . His opera <i>Жизнь за царя</i> (A Life for the Tsar), premièred in 1836, stirred a discussion within society concerning the meaning of national identity ( <i>народность/narodnost'</i> ).
Gnesin Mikhail Fabianovich (1883–1957)	Russian Jewish composer and teacher. Entered the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1901 and studied under Glazunov, Lyadov and Rimsky-Korsakov.
Gogol Nikolai Vasilevich (1809–52)	Ukrainian-born Russian dramatist and novelist. His early work <i>Вечера на хуторе близ Диканки</i> (Evenings on a Farm Near Dikanka) was influenced by his Ukrainian upbringing whilst his later works such as, <i>Ревизор</i> (The Inspector General) and <i>Мертвые души</i> (Dead Souls) were political satire.
Golenishchev-Kutuzov Arsenii Arkadevich (1848–1913)	Russian poet. Wrote texts for Mussorgsky's song cycles



Golitsin Dmitrii Vladimirovich (1771–1844)	<i>Sunless and Songs and Dances of Death.</i> Russian General, statesman and military writer. Governor-General of Moscow 1820–43.
Golovin Alexandr Yakolevich (1863–1930)	Russian artist and stage designer who worked for Diaghilev, Stanislavski and Meyerhold.
Gretchaninov Alexandr Tikhonovich (1864–1956)	Russian composer for the theatre, opera and Russian Orthodox Church. Initially studied with Taneyev and Arensky at the Moscow Conservatoire and subsequently composition and orchestration with Rimsky-Korsakov in St. Petersburg.
Herder Johann Gottfried (1744–1803)	German philosopher, theologian, poet and literary critic.
Herzen Alexander Ivanovich (1812–70)	Russian writer considered the ‘Father of Russian Socialism’. Lived in exile for much of his life. His newspaper <i>Колокол</i> (The Bell) was published in London and distributed illegally in Russia.
Hunke Joseph Karlovich (1801–83)	Born in Bohemia. Organist and violinist in the St. Petersburg Imperial Theatre. Musical theoretician and composer.
Ippolitov-Ivanov Mikhail Mikhailovich (1859–1935)	Russian composer, conductor and teacher. Studied composition as a student of Rimsky-Korsakov. Appointed director of the music academy and conductor of the orchestra in Tbilisi in 1893. Professor at the Conservatory in Moscow and Director from 1905 – 1924. Conductor of the Russian Choral Society, the Mamontov and Zimin Opera Companies.
Ivanov Alexandr Andreevich (1806–58)	Russian neo-classicist painter who studied with Karl Briullov.
James Richard (1592–1638)	English scholar and poet. Went to Muscovy in 1618 as chaplain to Sir Dudley Digges. Formulated the first English–Russian dictionary.

Jurgenson Pyotr Ivanovich (1836–1904)	Born in Estonia. Music publisher, founded P.Jurgenson in 1861.
Kaap Artur (1878–1952)	Started studies at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1891. Studied composition under Rimsky-Korsakov. Eventually returned to Estonia as a professor and conductor at the Tallinn Conservatoire.
Karamzin Nikolai Mikhailovich (1766–1826)	Russian writer, poet, critic and historian known particularly for his History of the Russian State published between 1816 – 26.
Karmalina Lyubov Ivanovna (1834–1903)	Singer who took singing lessons from Glinka.
Khmelnysky Bohdan Zynoviy Mykhailovych (c. 1595 – 6 August 1657)	Hetman of the Zaporozhian Host of the Crown of the Kingdom of Poland. In 1654, he concluded the Treaty of Pereyaslav with the Tsardom of Russia, which led to the eventual loss of independence to the Russian Empire
Kireevsky Ivan Vasilevich (1806–56)	Russian journalist, literary critic and philosopher.
Kireevsky Pyotr Vasilevich (1808–56)	Russian folksong collector. Together with his brother a founder member of the Slavophile movement.
Komaneiskii Nikolai Ivanovich (1848–1910)	Russian writer on music history and Russian church music composers.
Komissarzhevskaja Vera Fedorvna (1864–1910)	Actress. Founded her own theatre. Worked with many writers and artists of the Silver Age.
Korovin Konstantin Alekseevich (1861–1939)	Russian Impressionist painter. Studied at the Moscow School of Painting together with Serov and Levitin and later at the Imperial Academy of Arts in St. Petersburg. In the 1890's concentrated on scenic and costume design at the MPO and later at the Mariinsky Theatre where he designed the 1906 production of <i>Sadko</i> .

Kostamarov Nikolai (Mykola) Ivanovich (1817–85)	Professor of History at Kiev University and later St. Petersburg University.
Kotliarevsky Ivan Petrovich (1769–1838)	Ukrainian writer, poet and national activist. Considered the father of Ukrainian literature.
Krabbe Nikolai Karlovich (1814–76)	Russian Imperial Admiral and Secretary of Navy.
Kramskoi Ivan Nikolaevich (1837– 87)	Russian painter, art critic and leader of the <i>peredvizhniki</i> (Association of Travelling Art Exhibits) movement.
Kruglikov Semen Nikolaievich (1851–1910)	Music journalist, pupil and close friend of Rimsky-Korsakov. Director of Music and Drama School of Moscow Philharmonic Society 1898–1901. Advisor to Russian Private Opera.
Krylov Ivan Andreyevitch (1769–1844)	Russian writer of fables which later became satirical.
Krylov Viktor Alexandrovich (1838–1908)	Russian dramaturg and librettist responsible for César Cui's <i>William Ratcliffe</i> and <i>Prisoner of the Caucasus</i> , and Rimsky-Korsakov's <i>Mlada</i> .
Krupenskii (Krupyensky) Anatolii Nikolaevich (1850–1923)	Russian diplomat.
Kuzmin Mikhail Alekseevich (1872-1936)	Russian poet, novelist and musician. Studied music under Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire.
Lamm Pavel (1882 – 1951)	Russian musicologist, pianist and music teacher. Known for his re-orchestrations of Mussorgsky's works.
Laroche Herman Augustovich (1845–1904)	Russian music critic and composer. Professor of Music History at both the Moscow and St. Petersburg Conservatoires.
Lavrov Pyotr Lavrovich (1823–1900)	Russian philosopher and sociologist who joined the revolutionary movement in 1862.
Liadov Anatoly Konstantinovich (1855–1914)	Russian composer, teacher and conductor who was close to the <i>Kuchka</i> . Studied composition under Rimsky-Korsakov. Taught at the St.Petersburg Conservatoire

- Liszt Franz (1811–86) from 1878. His pupils included Prokofiev.  
Hungarian pianist, composer, conductor and teacher. Influenced the music of the *Kuchka* and particularly Mussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov.
- Lomakin Gavril Yakimovich (1812–85) From 1848 to 1861 served as teacher of singing in the Imperial Court Chapel. Collaborated with Alexei Lvov on the harmonization of the *Obikhod* of 1848. Conducted the choir of the Free Musical School, founded by him and Mily Balakirev.
- Lortzing Gustav Albert (1801–51) German composer, singer and conductor. First opera *Zar und Zimmermann* in 1837.
- Lvov Alexei Fyodorovich (1799–1870) Russian composer who composed, amongst others, the opera *Ундина* (Undina) and the Russian Imperial Anthem *Боже, Царя храни* (God Save the Tsar).
- Lvov Nikolai Aleksandrovich (1751–1803) Russian diverse artist who is known as an architect and ethnographer although contributing to geology, history, language and poetry. Together with Ivan Prach the *Собрание русских народных песен с их голосами на музыку положил Иван Прач* (A Collection of Russian Folk Songs with their melodies, set to music by Ivan Prach) was first published in 1790.
- Lysenko Mykola Vitaliyovych (1842–1912) Ukrainian composer, pianist, conductor and ethnomusicologist. Studied music at Leipzig Conservatoire. To improve his abilities in composition and orchestration continued his studies under Rimsky-Korsakov in the mid-1870's. An ardent Ukrainian nationalist.
- Maliszewski Witold Osipovich (1873–1939) Polish composer. Founder of Odessa Conservatoire and Professor of Warsaw

Malko Nikolai Andreevich (1883–1961)	Conservatoire. A pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov. Russian/Ukrainian conductor. In 1909 graduated from the St. Petersburg Conservatoire where his teachers were Glazunov, Lyadov and Rimsky-Korsakov. In 1909 he became a conductor at the Mariinsky Theatre.
Malyutin Sergei Vasilyevich (1859–1937)	Russian painter, architect and stage designer. In the 1890's worked at the MPO. Known for his illustrations of Pushkin's <i>The Tale of Tsar Saltan and Ruslan and Lyudmila</i> .
Mamontov Savva Ivanovich (1841–1918)	Russian industrialist and entrepreneur. Founded the Abramtsevo artist colony and maintained the Russian Private Opera.
Mann Konstantin Aleksandrovich (1811–82)	Director, Chancellery of the Navy.
Melgunov Yuly Nikolaevich (1846–93)	Russian music theorist and folksong collector claiming to have discovered the polyphonic nature of Russian folk music.
Melnikov Pavel Ivanovich alias Andrei Pecherskii (1818–83)	Russian writer particular known for his novels <i>В лесax</i> (In the forests) and <i>На горax</i> (On the hills) which influenced Rimsky-Korsakov's opera <i>Kitezh</i> .
Melngailis Emīlis Jūlijs (1874–1954)	Latvian composer and folklorist. Studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire from 1898.
Menshikov Alexandr Sergeyevich (1787–1869)	Russian Statesman and Minister.
Mieckiewicz Adam Bernard (1798–1855)	Polish poet, dramatist and political writer.
Mikhail Nikolaevich of Russia (1832–1909)	Grand Duke. Son of Tsar Nicholas I.
Molas Alexandra Nikolaevna née Purgold (1844–1929)	The elder sister of Nadezhda Rimskaya-Korsakova. Mezzo-soprano and singing teacher. Had a close relationship with the <i>Kuchka</i> and particularly with Mussorgsky.

Mussorgsky Modest Pertrovich (1839–81)	Russian composer. Initially studied as a cadet in the Preobrazhensky Regiment of the Imperial Guard. He was a member of the <i>Kuchka</i> and closely associated with Rimsky-Korsakov.
Myakovsky Nikolai Yakolevich (1881–1950)	Russian and Soviet composer known as the “Father of the Soviet Symphony”. Initially pursued a military career and took private lessons with Glière. Became a student of Lyadov and Rimsky-Korsakov at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1906.
Nápravnik Eduard Francevič (1839–1916)	Czech conductor and composer. Principle conductor of the Mariinsky Theatre from 1869 until his death.
Neverov Yanuari Mikhailovich (1810–93)	Russian essayist whose main interest was in education.
Nikanor – Brovkovich Aleksandr Ivanovich (1826–90)	Archbishop of Kherson and Odessa.
Nikitenko Aleksandr Vasilevich (1804–77)	Initially a Ukrainian serf of Count Sheremetev. Served as a censor through most of Nicholas 1 <sup>st</sup> 's reign.
Nikon - Nikita Minin (1605–81)	Seventh Patriarch of Russian Orthodox Church, Moscow from 1652 to 1658.
Novikov Nikolai Ivanovich (1744–1818)	Musician journalist and publisher who republished Chulkov's folksong collection in 1780–81.
Odoevsky Vladimir Fedorovich (1804–69)	Russian music critic, philosopher and writer. Was a promoter of the national values of Glinka.
Ogarev Nikolai Platonovich (1813–77)	Russian poet, historian and political activist who collaborated with Herzen on <i>Kolokol</i> .
Olearus Adam (1599–1671)	German scholar, librarian and mathematician to Frederick III. Appointed secretary to ambassador to Muscovy and Persia.
Orlov Mikhail Fyodorovich (1788–1842)	Major-General. Decembrist.

Ossovsky Alexandr Vyacheslavovich (1871–1957)	Russian critic, musicologist and Professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire 1915–18 and 1921–52. A pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov.
Ostrovsky Alexandr Nikolaevich (1823–86)	Russian playwright. Many of his works were adapted for opera such as Rimsky-Korsakov's <i>The Snow Maiden</i> .
Pahlen Konstantin Ivanovich (1833–1912)	Russian General, Statesman and Minister of Justice.
Pashkevich Vasilii Alekseevich (1742–97)	Russian composer, singer, violinist and teacher.
Paskevich Ivan Fyodorovich (1782–1856)	Ukrainian. Field Marshal in the Russian army. Responsible for the 'Russification' of Poland.
Paskhalova Alevtina Mikhailovna (1875–1953)	Lyrical coloratura soprano, opera and chamber singer and pedagogue.
Pavlovna Grand Duchess Yelena (1807–73)	Founder of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire and sponsor of music development in Russia.
Perov Vasily Grigorevich (1834–82)	A founder member of the <i>peredvizhniki</i> group of Russian realist painter.
Petrovich Evgenii Maksimovich (1873–1919)	Amateur musician who wrote articles and opera reviews for the Russian Musical Gazette.
Philaret – Vasilii Mikhailovich Drozdov (1782–1867)	Metropolitan of Moscow and Kolomna from 1821–67.
Pisarev Dmitry Ivanovich (1840–1868)	Russian social critic and radical writer active during the 1860's. Acknowledged as major influence on events of 1905 and later 1917. Said to have influenced Lenin.
Pleve von Vyacheslav Konstantinovich (1846–1904)	Director of Imperial Russian police and Minister of the Interior 1902–1904.
Pobedonostsev Konstantin Petrovich (1827–1907)	Russian jurist, statesman and Ober-Procurator of the Holy Synod. Advisor to three Tsars.
Pogodin Mikhael Petrovich (1800–75)	Russian historian and journalist.
Polonsky Yakov Petrovich (1819–98)	A leading Pushkinist poet. Librettist for Serov's proposed version of <i>Christmas Eve</i> .
Popova Tatyana Vasilevna (1907–81)	Russian musicologist.



Potemkin-Tavrichevskii Grigory Aleksandrovich (1739–91)	Russian military commander and statesman. A favourite of Catherine the Great.
Potulov Nikolai Mikhailovich (1810–73)	Russian researcher specialising in church singing. Together with Odoyevsky and Razumovsky explored various approaches to harmonizing unison chants. He compiled four collections of harmonizations 1876 — 1898.
Prach Ivan Bogumir (mid 18th century–1818)	Of Czech origin. Musical folklorist, composer and educator. Joint compiler with Lvov of Collection of Russian Folk Songs.
Preobrazhensky Antonin Viktorovich (1870–1929)	Writer, pedagogue and professor. One of the most prominent authorities and researchers of Russian church music.
Prokofiev Sergei Sergeyeovich (1891–1953)	Russian composer, pianist and conductor. Studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire from 1904 also in Rimsky-Korsakov's class.
Pushkin Aleksandr Alekseevich (1799–1837)	Russian author considered to be Russia's greatest poet and founder of Russian literature. Librettos for operas by Mussorgsky, Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov amongst others were based on his works.
Rachmaninov Sergei Vasilievich (1873–1943)	Russian composer, pianist and conductor. Studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire and later at the Moscow Conservatoire. Early influences were Tchaikovsky and Rimsky-Korsakov.
Ravel Joseph-Maurice (1875–1937)	French composer.
Razumovsky Dmitrii Vasilevich (1818–89)	Russian priest and Professor of Church Music at the Moscow Conservatoire.
Respighi Ottorino (1879–1936)	Italian composer, musicologist and conductor. Went to Russia in 1899 as principal violist to take part in season of Italian Opera at the Russian Imperial Theatre in St Petersburg. While there he

Rimsky-Korsakov Andrei Nikolaevich (1878–1940)	studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. Son of Nikolai. Russian musicologist, teacher and correspondent. Founding editor of <i>Музыкальный современник</i> (Contemporary Music).
Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai Andreevich (1844–1908)	Russian composer and most prolific and accomplished member of the <i>Kuchka</i> . Professor of composition, harmony and orchestration at the St.Petersburg Conservatoire.
Rimsky-Korsakov Vladimir Nikolaevich (1882–1970)	Son of Nikolai. Played the viola.
Rimskaya-Korsakova Nadezhda Nikolaevna née Purgold (1848–1919)	Russian pianist and composer and wife of Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. They married in 1872; Mussorgsky was best man.
Romanov Grand Duke Konstantin Nikolaevich (1827–1892)	Second son of Tsar Nicholas 1 <sup>st</sup> . Admiral of Russian fleet; instrumental figure in emancipation of serfs; Viceroy of Poland 1861–1863.
Romanov Grand Duke Mikhail Nikolaevich (1832–1909)	Fourth son of Tsar Nicholas 1 <sup>st</sup> . Governor-General of Caucasia 1862–1882.
Romanov Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich (1847–1909)	Son of Tsar Alexander 2 <sup>nd</sup> and brother to Tsar Alexander 3 <sup>rd</sup> . Adjutant-General, Senator 1868; Member of Council of State 1872; Military Governor of St.Petersburg. Patron of arts. Russian poet, librettist and critic. Notable works <i>A Life for the Tsar</i> .
Rozen Egor Fyodorovich (1800–60)	Philosopher, writer and composer.
Rousseau Jean-Jacques (1712–78)	Russian-Jewish pianist, composer and conductor. He established the St.Petersburg Conservatoire in 1862.
Rubinstein Anton Grigorevich (1829–94)	Russian pianist, conductor and composer. He was the younger brother of Anton Rubinstein and
Rubinstein Nikolai Grigorevich (1835–81)	

	founded the Moscow Conservatoire in 1866.
Rumiantsev-Zadunaisky Pyotr Alexandrovich (1725–96)	Russian General. Governed Little Russia (Ukraine) 1764–96.
Rybnikov Pavel Nikolaevich (1832–85)	Russian ethnographer and collector of folk songs.
Saltykov-Shchedrin Mikhail Yevgrafovich (1826–89)	Russian author, satirist and editor of magazine <i>Отечественные записки</i> (The Home Notes).
Saminsky Lazare Iosifovich (1882–1959)	Performer, composer and conductor of Jewish music. Founder member of the ‘Society for Jewish Music’. Pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov.
Scriabin Alexandr Nikolayevich (1872–1915)	Russian composer and pianist. Studied at the Moscow Conservatoire under Arensky and Taneyev. Developed an atonal and dissonant musical system, which was influenced by mysticism.
Selikov D	Russian 19 <sup>th</sup> century court composer.
Serov Aleksandr Nikolaevich (1820–71)	Russian composer and music critic. He was very critical of Glinka and also of the <i>kuchka</i> .
Shermetev Sergei Dmitrievich (1844–1918)	Member of Russian Council of State, Head of Court Kapella administration and historian.
Schiller von Johann Christoph Friedrich (1759–1805)	German poet, philosopher and playwright.
Shkafer Vasilii Petrovich (1867–1937)	Russian tenor and director. Worked at the Russian Private Opera from 1897–1904.
Shostakovich Dmitri Dmitrievich (1906–75)	Russian composer and pianist. Studied at the Petrograd Conservatoire under Glazunov.
Sipiagin Dmitrii Sergeevich (1853–1902)	Russian Statesman. Minister of the Interior 1900–1902.
Smirnova-Rosset Alexandra (1809–1882)	Maid of Honor to the Imperial Court. Literary and artistic salon hostess.
Snegiryov Ivan Mikhailovich (1793–1868)	Russian historian, ethnographer and folklorist. Censor throughout Nicholas 1 <sup>st</sup> 's reign who censored <i>Eugene Onegin</i> and <i>Dead Souls</i> .

Sokolov Nikolai Alexandrovich (1859–1922)	Russian composer and teacher. Studied under Rimsky-Korsakov and subsequently was a member of the Beliaev Circle. Taught Tcherepnin and Shostakovich.
Sokolovsky Mikhail Matveevich (1756–after 1795)	Russian composer, violinist and conductor.
Sollogub Vladimir Alexandrovich (1813–82)	Writer. Officer for Special Commissions in Imperial Court. Sent abroad to study European theatre in 1858. From 1877 official historian at court.
Solovyov Sergei Mikhailovich (1820–79)	Russian historian. Professor of History at University of Moscow and Dean c. 1871–77.
Spendiaryan Alexandr Afanasievich (1871–1928)	Armenian composer and conductor. Studied under Rimsky-Korsakov who encouraged his interest in folklore. Considered the Patriarch of Armenian classical music.
Stankevich Nikolai Vladimirovich (1813–40)	Russian philosopher and poet.
Stanislavski Constantin Sergeevich (1863–1938)	Russian actor and theatre director who developed the concept of “method acting”. Began vocal training at the Moscow Conservatoire where he studied under Fyodor Komissarzhevsky, Stanislavski's used his 'method' to train opera singers for productions of <i>The Tsar's Bride</i> in 1926 and <i>May Night</i> in 1928.
Stasov Vladimir Vasilevich (1824–1906)	Russian music and art critic. He invented and used the term <i>moguchaya Kuchka</i> for Balakirev's group of amateur composers.
Steinberg Maximilian (1893–1946)	Russian composer. Pupil of Rimsky-Korsakov and son-in-law. Edited and completed Rimsky-Korsakov's <i>Principles of Orchestration</i> .
Storozhenko Andrei Yakovlevich (1791–1857)	Russian statesman and publicist.
Stravinsky Igor Fyodorovich (1882–1971)	Russian composer, pianist and conductor who later took French and American citizenship.

Struysky Dmitri Yuryevich (1806–56)	Russian composer, music critic and poet.
Taneyev Sergei Ivanovich (1856–1915)	Russian composer, pianist and teacher. Taught harmony and composition at the Moscow Conservatoire.
Tchaikovsky Pyotr Ilich (1840–93)	Russian composer. One of the first graduates of the St.Petersburg Conservatory. His Western-style training set him apart from then nationalistic <i>Kuchka</i> .
Tcherepnin Nikolai Nikolayevich (1873–1945)	Russian composer, pianist and conductor. Studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. Joined the Mariinsky Theatre as a conductor. At Rimsky-Korsakov's request conducted every important performance of his works. In 1908 Tcherepnin joined the St.Petersburg Conservatoire to teach composition and conducting. His star pupil was Serge Prokofiev.
Telyakovsky Vladimir Arkadevich (1861–1924)	From 1898–1901 Manager of the Moscow Imperial Theatres and 1901–17 Director of the Imperial Theatres.
Teplov Grigory Nikolaevich (1717–79)	Russian academic administrator and amateur musician who published a songbook, <i>Между делом безделье</i> (Intervals of Repose from Labour) in 1759.
Tereshchenko Alexandr Vlasevich (?1806–65)	Russian ethnographer and archaeologist.
Tikhon of Zadonsk (1724–83)	Russian Orthodox Bishop and spiritual writer who was canonized.
Tolstoi Aleksey Konstantinovich (1817–75)	Russian novelist, playwright and poet. Famous for his satirical works.
Tolstoi Dmitry Andreevich (1823–1889)	Russian statesman and Member of State Council. Over-procurator of Holy Synod and simultaneously Minister of National Enlightenment 1865–1880. Minister of Interior 1882–1889.

Tolstoi Feofil Matveevich (1809–81)	The music critic Rostislav. He also wrote short stories and novels, but also composed three operas and some songs. He studied music in St.Petersburg and Naples.
Tolstoi Lev Nikolaevich (1828–1910)	Russian writer of novels and short stories. His <i>Война и мир</i> (War and Peace) and <i>Анна Каренина</i> (Anna Karenina) are considered his greatest works and major examples of realist fiction. In 1898 he wrote an essay called <i>Что такое искусство?</i> (What is art).
Tretyakov Pavel Mikhailovich (1832–98)	Russian businessman and art collector. Founder of the Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow.
Trutovsky Vasily Fyodorovich (c. 1740–c. 1810)	Ukrainian folksong collector, gusli player and composer who published one of the first folksong collections, <i>Собрание русских песен с нотами</i> (Collection of Russian Rustic Songs with Music) in 1776.
Turchaninov Pyotr Ivanovich (1779–1856)	Ordained as a priest in 1804 and appointed choirmaster of St. Petersburg Metropolitan Choir. Taught singing at the Court Kapella from 1827. Composed Kievan and Znamenny chants in chordal harmony.
Turgenev Ivan Sergeevich (1818–83)	Russian novelist, writer of short stories and playwright. His novels such as <i>Отцы и дети</i> (Fathers and Sons), <i>Дым</i> (Smoke) and <i>Дворянское гнездо</i> (The Nest of the Gentry) picture a decaying Russian society and are considered foremost in the Russian Realism movement.
Turgenev Nikolai Ivanovich (1789–1871)	Russian economist and political theoretician. Wrote <i>Essay on the Theory of Taxation</i> and <i>Russia and the Russians</i> .
Ushakov Vasilii Apollonovich (1789–1838)	Russian writer and contributor to the newspaper <i>The Northern Bee</i> .

Uvarov Sergei Semyonovich (1786–1855)	Russian Minister for Education. Responsible for the formulation of Tsar Nicholas 1 <sup>st</sup> ‘Official Nationality’ policy based on <i>православие, самодержавие, народность</i> (orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality).
Valuev Pyotr Aleksandrovich (1815–90)	Russian Statesman, Minister of the Interior and writer.
Vasnetsov Viktor Mikhailovich (1848–1926)	Russian painter whose speciality was mythological and historical subjects. Was a co-founder of Russian folklorist and romantic modernist painting movement. In 1885 was stage and costume designer for Rimsky-Korsakov’s <i>The Snow Maiden</i> and subsequently for première of <i>Sadko</i> .
Verdi Giuseppe Fortunino Francesco (1813–1901)	Italian Romantic composer. His opera <i>La Forza del Destino</i> was commissioned by the Imperial Theatre in St. Petersburg and the première given at the Bolshoi Kamenny Theatre in 1862.
Verstovsky Aleksey Nikolaevich (1799–1862)	Russian composer. Popular for his opera-vaudevilles and ballads and best known opera <i>Аскольдова могила</i> (Askold’s Grave).
Viazemsky Alexander Alexeevich (1727–93)	Russian politician and Imperial Procurator-General.
Villebois’ Konstantin Petrovich (1817–82)	Russian composer. His collection of Russian folksongs <i>Сто русских народных песен</i> (100 Russian National Songs) published in 1860 was used extensively by Rimsky-Korsakov amongst other composers of the period.
Vītols Jāzeps (1863–1948)	Latvian composer. In 1880 studied composition with Rimsky-Korsakov. Taught at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire. His pupils included Myaskovsky and Prokofiev.
Vladimir Alexandrovich of Russia (1847–1909)	Grand Duke. Son of Tsar Alexander II and brother of Tsar



Vladimir Sviatoslavich the Great (c. 958–1015)	Alexander III. President of the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. Grand Prince of Kiev. Converted to Christianity in 988 and Christianized the Kievan Rus'.
Volkonsky Pyotr Mikhailovich (1776–1852)	Russian General – Field Marshall. Minister of the Imperial Court 1826–1852.
Volkonsky Sergei Mikhailovich (1860–1937)	Director of Imperial Theatres 1899–1901.
Vorontsov-Dashkov Illarion Ivanovich (1837–1916)	General and Minister of the Imperial Court.
Vsevolozhsky Ivan Alexandrovich (1835–1909)	Director of Imperial Theatres in Russia from 1881 to 1898 and then the Hermitage.
Wagner Richard (1813–83)	German composer, conductor, writer of treatise on music and theatre director. He was a close friend of Liszt. His bold use of leitmotif, complex textures, harmonies and orchestration were to influence Rimsky-Korsakov's later works.
Witte Sergei Yulevich (1849–1915)	Russian Minister of Finance 1892–1905. Chairman of Council of Ministers 1905–1906. Author of October Manifesto 1905.
Yakushkin Pavel Ivanovich (1822–1872)	Russian ethnological writer and folklorist. Published his own collection of folksongs in 1860.
Zabela-Vrubel Nadezhda Ivanovna (1868–1913)	Ukrainian and Russian opera singer, lyrical coloratura. Married Mikhail Vrubel in 1896. Leading soprano in Mamontov's Private Opera.
Zarembo Nikolai Ivanovich (1821–79)	Russian musical theorist and composer. He succeeded Anton Rubinstein as Director of the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in 1867.
Zaslavich Vera Ivanovna (1849–1919)	Russian writer and revolutionary. Translated Karl Marx's works into Russian.

## APPENDIX 2

### Russian and English names for works mentioned in the text

<i>Аскольдова могила</i>	Askold's Grave
<i>В Средней Азии</i>	In the Steppes of Central Asia
<i>Борис Годунов</i>	Boris Godunov
<i>Боярыня Вера Шелога</i>	Boyarinya Vera Sheloga (The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga)
<i>Век</i>	Century
<i>Вечера на хуторе близ Диканьки</i>	Evenings Near the Village of Dikanka
<i>Вишневый сад</i>	The Cherry Orchard
<i>Война и мир</i>	War and Peace
<i>Дворянское гнездо</i>	A Nest of the Gentry
<i>Дубинушка</i>	Dubinushka
<i>Дым</i>	Smoke
<i>Евгений Онегин</i>	Eugene Onegin
<i>Жизнь за царя</i>	A Life for the Tsar
<i>Золотой петушок</i>	The Golden Cockerel
<i>Камаринская</i>	Kamarinskaya
<i>Каменный гость</i>	The Stone Guest
<i>Кащей бессмертный</i>	Kashchei the Immortal
<i>Князь Игорь</i>	Prince Igor
<i>Колокол</i>	The Bell
<i>История государства Российского</i>	History of the Russian State
<i>Эстетические отношения искусства к действительности</i>	Aesthetic Relations of Art to Reality
<i>Майская ночь</i>	May Night
<i>Между делом безделье</i>	Intervals of Repose from Labour
<i>Мёртвые души</i>	Dead Souls
<i>Московский Вестник</i>	Moscow Messenger
<i>Моцарт и Сальери</i>	Mozart and Salieri
<i>Ночь перед Рождеством</i>	The Night Before Christmas (Christmas Eve)
<i>Отцы и дети</i>	Fathers and Sons
<i>Основы оркестровки</i>	Principles of Orchestration
<i>Пан Твардовский</i>	Pan Twardowski
<i>Песни и пляски смерти</i>	Songs and Dances of Death
<i>Песни собранные П.Н. Рыбниковым</i>	Pieces Collected by P.N. Rybnikov
<i>Письма из истории философии</i>	Letters on the History of Philosophy
<i>Практический учебник гармонии</i>	Practical Manual of Harmony
<i>Псковитянка</i>	The Maid of Pskov
<i>Ревизор</i>	The Inspector General or The Government Inspector
<i>Руслан и Людмила</i>	Ruslan and Lyudmila
<i>Русские народные песни, непосредственно с голосов народа записанные</i>	Russian songs, recorded directly as sung by the people
<i>Садко</i>	Sadko
<i>Санкт-Петербургские Ведомости</i>	St Petersburg Bulletin

<i>Северная пчела</i>	Northern Bee
<i>Сказание о невидимом граде Китеже и девице Февронии</i>	Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia
<i>Сказка о Царе Салтане, о сыне его славном и могучем богатыре князе Гвидоне Салтановиче и о прекрасной Царевне Лебеди</i>	The Tale of Tsar Sultan, of his son the Renowned and Mighty Bogatir Prince Guidon Saltanovich, and of the Beautiful Swan Princess
<i>Слово о полку Игореве</i>	The Ballad of Igor's Wars
<i>Снегурочка</i>	The Snow Maiden
<i>Собрание разных песен</i>	Collection of Various Songs
<i>Современник</i>	The Contemporary
<i>Собрание русских простых песен с нотами</i>	Collection of Russian Rustic Songs with Music
<i>Собрание русских народных песен с их голосами. На музыку положил Иван Прач</i>	A Collection of Russian Folk Songs with their melodies, set to music by Ivan Prach
<i>Старинная песня</i>	Old Songs
<i>Сто Русских Народных Песен</i>	One Hundred Russian Folksongs
<i>Хованщина</i>	Khovanshchina
<i>Черевики</i>	The Slippers
<i>Что делать?</i>	What is to be done?
<i>Царская невеста</i>	The Tsar's Bride
<i>Ямщики на подставе</i>	The Coachman at the Relay Station

## APPENDIX 3

### Miscellaneous terms used

<i>былина</i>	bylina
<i>веснянка</i>	Spring dances
<i>гусли/ gusli, гудок/ gudok, арфа/arfa</i>	Russian folk instruments
<i>двоеверие</i>	dual religion (coexistence of Christian and “pagan” elements in the religious practice)
<i>эпоха капитализма</i>	age of capitalism
<i>запевала</i>	the initial melody of a folk-song
<i>знаменны</i>	Orthodox church chant
<i>Императорская Российская академия</i>	Russian Academy or Imperial Russian Academy
<i>колядка, колядки</i>	carols
<i>купала</i>	midsummer, Feast of St. John the Baptist
<i>лишний человек</i>	superfluous person
<i>лучина</i>	a piece of wood burning instead of a candle
<i>Могучая кучка</i>	The Mighty Handful
<i>народность</i>	national identity
<i>разночинцы</i>	people having a different status i.e. not aristocrats and not serfs
<i>передвижники</i>	group of Russian realist painters known as “The Association of Travelling Art Exhibits.”
<i>подголоски</i>	independent contrapuntal voice parts
<i>помещики</i>	19 <sup>th</sup> century landowning classes
<i>Православие, самодержавие, народность</i>	orthodoxy, autocracy and nationality
<i>простонародность</i>	national identity of the common people
<i>протяжная</i>	drawn-out songs
<i>Российская академия</i>	Russian Academy
<i>русалка/ русалки, ruslalka/rusalki</i>	water spirits
<i>Русаля/ Семицкая неделя</i>	7 <sup>th</sup> week after Easter
<i>Русальные песни</i>	water spirit songs
<i>сверх-гармония</i>	hyper-harmony
<i>скоморохи</i>	minstrels
<i>Святки</i>	Yuletide
<i>Семик</i>	previously celebrated the seventh week after the full moon of Spring and later the seventh week after Easter
<i>утопленницы</i>	water spirits
<i>Цензурный комитет</i>	Bureau of Censorship
<i>чин</i>	rank
<i>юродивый</i>	the Holy Fool
<i>Ярило/yarilo</i>	the sun

APPENDIX 4  
Operas by Rimsky-Korsakov

Title	Acts	Libretto	First performance	Remarks, publication
<i>Псковитянка</i> 3 (The Maid of Pskov)		Rimsky-Korsakov after L.A.Mey		
1 <sup>st</sup> version			St.Petersburg 1/13 Jan 1873 cond. E.Nápravnik	comp. 1868 – 72 St.Petersburg 1872
2 <sup>nd</sup> version				comp. 1876 - 77
3 <sup>rd</sup> version			St.Petersburg, Panayev, 6/18 April 1895, cond. I. Davidov; Moscow, 12/24 Dec 1896, Cond. G. Truffi	comp. 1891 - 92 St. Petersburg 1892
‘Standard’ version	prol., 3		Moscow, Bolshoi, 10/23 Oct 1901, cond. I. Al’tani	rev. of 2 <sup>nd</sup> version; incl. Prol. <i>Боярыня Вера Шелюга</i> (The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga); new aria for Act 3 comp. 1898

Title	Acts	Libretto	First performance	Remarks, publication
<i>Млада</i> (i) (Mlada)	opera –ballet, 4	V.A.Krylov		comp. 1872, collab. with Borodin, Cui, Mussorgsky and Minkus
<i>Майская ночь</i> (May Night)	comic op.3	Rimsky-Korsakov, after N.V.Gogol	St.Petersburg, 9/11 Jan 1880, cond. E. Nápravník	comp. 1878 – 9 Leipzig, 1893
<i>Снегурочка</i> (The Snow Maiden)	springtime tale prol., 4	Rimsky-Korsakov after A.N. Ostrovsky		
1 <sup>st</sup> version			St.Petersburg 29 Jan/ 10 Feb 1882, cond. E. Nápravník	comp. 1880 - 81 St. Petersburg 1881
2 <sup>nd</sup> version (slightly abridged)				comp. c. 1885 St. Petersburg 1898
<i>Млада</i> (ii)	magical opera-ballet, 4	Rimsky-Korsakov after Krylov	St.Petersburg 29 Oct/ 1 Nov. 1892 cond. E. Nápravník	comp.1889 - 90 Leipzig, 1891
<i>Ночь перед Рождеством</i> (The Night Before Christmas)	carol- come-to-life, 4	Rimsky-Korsakov after Gogol	St.Petersburg 28 Nov/ 10 Dec 1895 cond. E. Nápravník	comp. 1894 – 5

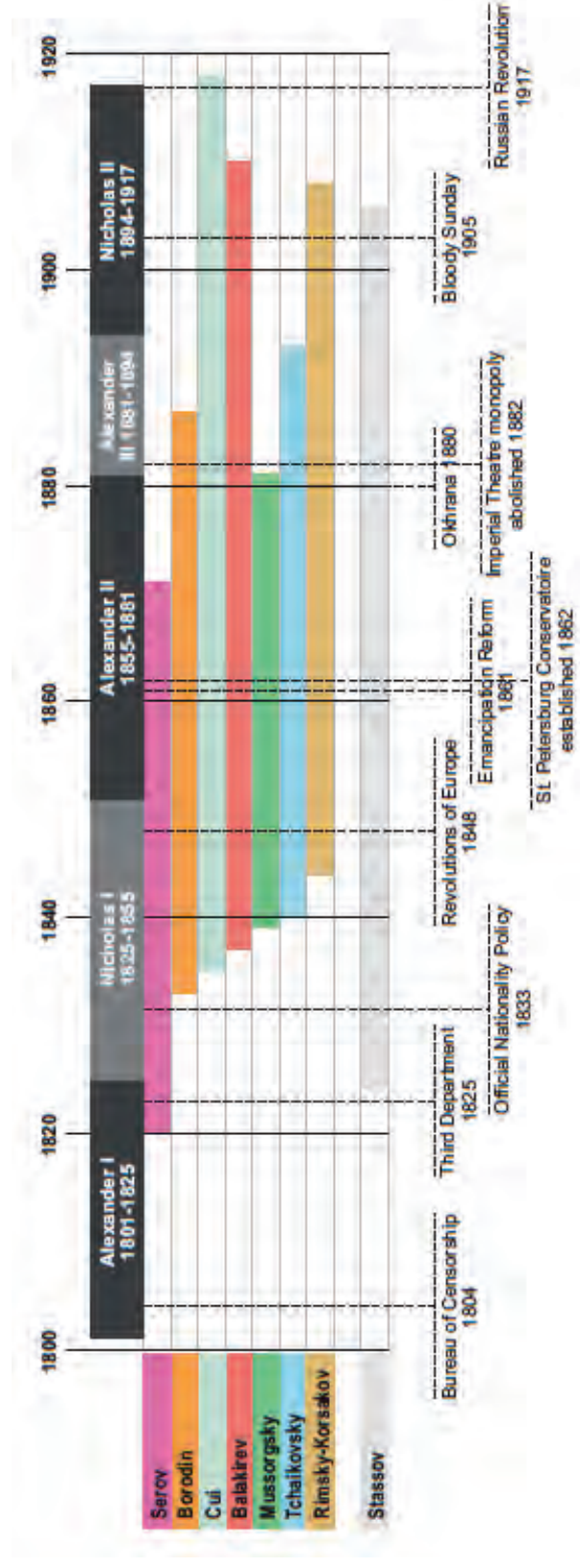
Title	Acts	Libretto	First performance	Remarks, publication
<i>Садко</i> (Sadko)	opera-bilina, 3 or 5 (7 scenes)	Rimsky-Korsakov, V. Stasov, V. Yastrebtsev, N. Shtrup, N. Findeyzen, V.N. Belsky	Moscow, 26 Dec. 1897/ 7 Jan. 1898 cond. E. Esposito	comp. 1895 – 6
<i>Багдадский бородобрей</i> (The Barber of Bagdad)	1			sketches comp. 1895
<i>Моцарт и Сальери</i> (Mozart and Salieri) op.48	1	A. Pushkin	Moscow, 25 Nov/7 Dec 1898	comp. 1897 Leipzig, 1898
<i>Боярыня Вера Шелюга</i> (The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga) op.54	1	Rimsky-Korsakov after Mey	Moscow, 15/27 Dec 1898 St.Petersburg, 1898	comp.1898
<i>Царская невеста</i> (The Tsar's Bride)	4	I.F.Tyumenev after Mey	Moscow, 22 Oct/ 3 Nov 1899 cond. M. Ippolitov-Ivanov	comp. 1898 Leipzig 1899 new aria, Act 3, comp. 1899
<i>Сказка о Царе Салтане, о сыне его славном и могучем богатыре Князе Гвидоне Салтановиче и о прекрасной Царевне Лебеди</i> (The Tale of Tsar Sultan, of his Son the Renowned and Mighty Bogatir Prince Guidon Saltanovich, and of the Beautiful Swan Princess)	prol, 4	Belsky after Pushkin	Moscow, 21 Oct/3 Nov 1900 cond. M. Ippolitov-Ivanov	comp. 1899 – 1900 St.Petersburg, 1901



Title	Acts	Libretto	First performance	Remarks, publication
<i>Сервиля</i> (Servilia)	5	Rimsky-Korsakov after Mey	St. Petersburg, 1/14 Oct 1902 cond. F. Blumenfeld	comp. 1900 – 01 St. Petersburg, 1902
<i>Кашей бессмертный</i> (Kashehei the Immortal)	autumnal parable, 1 (3 scenes without pause)	Rimsky-Korsakov and S. Rimsky- Korsakov, after Y.M. Petrovsky	Moscow, 12/25 Dec 1902 cond. M. Ippolitov-Ivanov	1901 – 2 St. Petersburg, 1902; conclusion rewritten 1906
<i>Пан воєвода</i> (Pan Voyevoda)	4	Tyumenev	St. Petersburg Conservatory, 3/16 Oct 1904 cond. V. Suk	comp. 1902 – 03 St. Petersburg, 1904
<i>Сказание о невидимом граде Китеже и девице Февронии</i> (Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevronia)	4	Belsky, after I.S.Meledin, P.I. Melnikov and trad. tales	St. Petersburg, 7/20 Feb 1907 cond. F. Blumenfeld	comp. 1906 – 07 Leipzig 1906
<i>Золотой петушок</i> (The Golden Cockerel)	prol., 3, epilogue	Belsky after Pushkin	Moscow, 24 Sept/7 Oct 1909 cond. E. Cooper	comp. 1906 – 07 Moscow 1908
<i>Стенька Разин</i> (Stenka Razin)	sketches	Belsky		comp. 1905
<i>Земля и небо</i> (Heaven and Earth)	sketches	Byron		comp. 1905

## APPENDIX 5

The life of Rimsky-Korsakov related to the reigns of the Tsars, significant events and other major composers including the critic Stasov.



## APPENDIX 6

### Chronology of Rimsky-Korsakov's works

#### Phase 1

- 1855 The Butterfly (*Бабочка*), duet  
Overture – piano, unfinished, lost
- 1859-60 Allegro in D minor, piano, lost  
Variations on a Russian Theme (*Вариации на русскую тему*), piano, lost
- 1860? Scherzo (*Скерцо*) in C minor, piano (4 h), lost  
Nocturne in B-flat minor, piano, lost  
Funeral March (*Похоронный марш*) in D minor, lost
- 1861 Come to me, signora (*Выходи ко мне, синьора*)
- 1861-65 Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 1, (1st version), originally in E-flat minor
- 1865 In the blood burns the fire of desire (*В крови горит огонь желанья*)  
words by Pushkin, lost
- 1865–66 Four Romances, Op. 2; No.2. piano part by Balakirev; No.3. Lullaby from  
the drama The Maid of Pskov (*Псковитянка – Колыбельная песня*)  
later incorporated into the opera *The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga*  
(*Боярыня Вера Шелого*)
- 1866 Four Romances, Op. 3  
Four Romances, Op. 4  
You will soon forget me (*Ты скоро меня позабудишь*), lost  
Overture on Three Russian Themes in D major, op. 28 (1st version)
- 1866-73 Symphony No. 3 in C major, Op. 32, (1st version)
- 1866-69 Symphony (*Симфония*) in B minor, unfinished. Some music re-used in  
The Snow Maiden (*Снегурочка*)
- 1867 Sadko, Op. 5, musical tableau, (1st version)  
Fantasy on Serbian Themes, Op. 6 (1st version)  
Four Romances, Op. 7, No.3. The Mermaid of Lake Sweitz (*Свитезянка*)  
used in the Cantata Op.44
- 1868 Symphony No.2. “*Antar*”, Op. 9 (1st version)
- 1868-1870 Six Romances, Op. 8
- 1869 Sadko, Op. 5, musical tableau, (2nd version)
- 1869 César Cui, William Ratcliff. Orchestrated several passages for first  
performance in 1869
- 1868-72 The Maid of Pskov (*Псковитянка*): (1st version)
- 1870-76 Two Songs, Op. 25

**Phase 2**

- 1872 Mlada (*Млада*): (portions of Acts II and III from project composed collectively by Borodin, Cui, Minkus, Mussorgsky, and Rimsky-Korsakov)
- 1872 Alexander Dargomyzhsky, The Stone Guest (*Каменный гость*). According to composer's wishes last few lines of Tableaux 1 composed by César Cui and orchestration by Rimsky-Korsakov
- 1873 Principles of Orchestration (*Основы оркестровки*), unfinished. (Completed by Steinberg)
- 1874 Two Choruses, Op. 13, for three women's parts – secular choral
- 1875 Four Variations and a Fughetta on the Russian Folksong "Надоели ночи", Op. 14, for four women's parts with piano or harmonium *ad lib.* – secular choral
- String Quartet in F major, Op. 12
- Antar (*Антар*), Op. 9, (2nd version)
- Six Fugues, Op. 17 – piano
- Fugue C major in 4 parts (also transcription for 4 h), piano
- Three Fughettas on Russian Themes, piano
- Three Fugues in 4 parts, piano. Nos.2 and 3 are double fugues, No.3 is based on the theme B-A-C-H
- Six Fugues in 3 parts, piano
- 1875–76 Three Pieces, Op. 15, (Waltz, Romance, Fugue) – piano
- 1876 Six Choruses, Op. 16, variously for mixed, women's, and men's voices – secular choral
- 1875–76 Collection of One Hundred Russian Folksongs, Op. 24
- 1875–82 Forty Folksongs, piano. Collaboration with Tertii Filippov
- 1876 String Sextet in A major, for 2 violins, 2 violas and 2 violoncellos
- Quintet in B-flat major, for flute, clarinet, horn, bassoon, and piano
- 1876 Two Choruses, Op. 18, for mixed voices – secular choral
- 1876 Four Choruses, Op. 23, for three men's parts with piano *ad lib.* – secular choral
- 1876–1877 Four Pieces, Op. 11, (Impromptus, Novelette, Scherzino, Etude) – piano
- 1876–1877 The Maid of Pskov: (2nd version)
- 1877 Music to Mei's drama The Maid of Pskov, suite of five numbers, (adapted from the opera as incidental music)
- 1877 Concerto in B flat major, for trombone, woodwind, brass, percussion
- 1878 Six Variations on the theme B-A-C-H, Op. 10, (Waltz, Intermezzo, Scherzo, Nocturne, Prelude and Fugue) – piano
- Paraphrases ("Chopsticks") (*парафразы для фортепиано*) Variations (Nos. 1, 2, 6, 11, 3, 16 and 19) and Pieces (Lullaby, Little Fugue on the theme B-A-C-H, Tarantella, Minuet, Bells (*Трезвон*), Comic Fugue) from collaborative work with Borodin, Cui, Liadov, Shcherbachyov and Liszt to a fixed theme, piano
- Variations in G minor on a theme by Glinka, for oboe, woodwind, brass, percussion
- Clarinet Concerto (Konzertstück) in E flat major, for clarinet, woodwind, brass, percussion
- Poem about Alexey, The Man of God, Op. 20, for altos, tenors, and bass (voice type) with orchestra – secular choral

Variations on a Theme by Glinka in G minor (*Вариации на тему Глинки*), oboe, woodwind, brass, percussion

### Phase 3

- 1878-79 May Night (*Майская ночь*)  
String Quartet on Russian Themes. Nos.1 and 3 re-used in Sinfonietta on Russian Themes. Op.31, No.4 published separately as At the Monastery (*В монастыре*) in B flat major.
- c.1878-79 Variations to the theme by Misha, (composer's son) - piano
- 1879 Fifteen Russian Folksongs, Op. 19, for mixed voices – secular choral  
In Church (*В церкви*), fugue arrangement of At the monastery for 4 h, piano
- 1879–80 Overture on Three Russian Themes, op. 28 (2nd version)  
Fairytale (*Сказка*), Op. 29
- 1879–84 Sinfonietta on Russian Themes (*Симфониетта на русскую тему*) in A minor, Op. 31.; adaptation of first three movements from string quartet of 1878-1879
- 1879–90 "Glory" ("*Слава*"), Op. 21, for mixed voices with orchestra – secular choral
- 1880-81 The Snow Maiden (*Снегурочка*): (1st version)
- 1881-82 Modest Musorgsky, Khovanshchina (*Хованщина*), revised and completed. Première – 1886  
Music to Mei's drama The Maid of Pskov, revision
- 1882 Four Romances, Op. 26
- 1882 Songs and Dances of Death (*Песни и пляски смерти*), nos. 1 and 3 orchestrated by Glazunov, nos. 2 and 4 by Rimsky-Korsakov. Published in 1882.
- 1882–1883 Piano Concerto in C# minor, Op. 30
- 1882 Two Songs, Op. 49, for bass. No.1. arranged for violin orchestra, 1906; No.2. arranged for violin orchestra, 1899
- 1883 Four Songs, Op. 27
- 1883 "Thee, O God, We Praise" ("*Тебе Бога хвалим*"), for double chorus, sacred choral
- 1883 Collection of Sacred Musical Compositions by N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov Used at the Imperial Court. Four-Voice Compositions from the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom, Op. 22, contains 8 pieces
- 1883 Collection of Sacred Musical Arrangements by N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov Used at the Imperial Court, Op. 22b, contains 23 hymns based on chant melodies
- 1883–1884 Collection of Sacred Musical Compositions and Arrangements by N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov for Mixed Chorus, contains 23 pieces, published posthumously in 1913
- 1883?-1894? Two Duets in F, for two horns  
Canzonetta and Tarantella, for two clarinets
- 1884 Two Choruses, for children's voices – secular choral, unfinished  
Symphony No. 1 in E minor, Op. 1, (2nd version)  
Symphony No. 4 in D minor, unfinished, sketches for Scherzo
- 1885 Four Variations on a Chorale in G minor, for string quartet

- Quadrille (Joke) (*Кадриль(Шутка)*), piano, contribution to collaborative work with Artsybushev, Vitols, Liadov, Sokolov, Glazunov
- 1885 Practical Manual of Harmony (*Практический учебник гармонии*)
- 1886 Symphony No. 3 in C major, Op. 32, (2nd version)
- String Quartet "B-la-F", 1st movement; other movements by Lyadov, Glazunov, and Borodin
- Modest Musorgsky, Night on a Bare Mountain, revised. Première - 1886
- 1886–1887 Fantasy on Serbian Themes, Op. 6, (2nd version); also called *Serbian Fantasy*
- Fantasy on Russian Themes in B minor, for violin and orchestra, Op. 33
- 1887 Capriccio Espagnol in A major, Op. 34, (Based mainly on Asturian traditional folk music themes)
- 1887 String Quartet *Jour de fête (Именины)*, finale ("Round-Dance" ("Хоровод")); other movements by Glazunov and Liadov
- Little-Russian Fantasia (*Малороссийская фантазия*), orchestral, unfinished, incomplete sketches
- 1887-1890 Alexander Borodin, Prince Igor (*Князь Игорь*). Completed with Glazunov
- 1888 Scheherazade , Op. 35, symphonic suite
- Russian Easter Festival Overture (Светлый праздник), Op. 36
- Mazurka on Polish Themes, *Souvenir de trois chants polonaise*, (*Мазурка на польские наподные темы*) for violin and orchestra
- Nocturne in F major, for four horns
- 1889-1890 *Mlada*, opera-ballet (complete setting of unstaged collaborative project from 1872)
- 1891-1892 *The Maid of Pskov*: (3rd version)
- 1891-1892 Sadko, Op. 5, musical tableau, (3rd version)
- 1893 Serenade, for violoncello and piano; also orchestrated, 1903, as Op. 37

#### Phase 4

- 1894 *Mlada* - Suite
- 1894-95 Christmas Eve (*Ночь перед Рождеством*)
- 1894 Two Pieces, Op. 38, (Prelude-Impromptus, Mazurka) – piano.  
Contribution to a collaborative album for Vasiliy Bessel
- 1895 Allegretto C major, (without opus no) - piano
- The Snow Maiden: (2nd version)
- The Barber of Bagdad (*Багдадский бородобрей*), unfinished opera
- The Snow Maiden - Suite
- 1895-1896 Sadko (*Садко*)
- 1896 Prelude G major, piano
- 1896 Modest Musorgsky, *Boris Godunov* (*Борис Годунов*), revision, performed St. Petersburg Conservatoire 1896, Solodovnikov Theatre, Moscow, 1898, Mariinsky Theatre, 1904.
- 1897 Four Songs, Op. 39
- Four Songs, Op. 40
- Four Songs, Op. 41
- Four Songs, Op. 42
- Two Songs, Op. 49, for bass, revision

- In Spring (Весной)*, Op. 43, (four songs)  
*Mozart and Salieri (Моцарт и Сальери)*, Op. 48  
 Fugal intermezzo, piano 4h, intended for *Mozart and Salieri*  
*Switezianka (Свитезянка)*, Op. 44, cantata for soprano and tenor soloists and mixed voices with orchestra – secular choral  
*Antar*, Op. 9, (3rd version)  
 String Quartet in G major  
 Trio in C minor, for violin, violoncello, and piano; completed by his son-in-law Maximilian Steinberg in 1939  
 1897-1899 To the Poet (*Поэту*), Op. 45, (five songs)  
 1897 By the Sea (*У моря*), Op. 46, (five songs)  
 Two Duets, Op. 47, for mezzo-soprano and baritone or soprano and tenor  
 1897 *Dragonflies (Стрекозы)*, Op. 53, for 2 sopranos, mezzo-soprano, orchestra (+full choir)  
 1897-1898 Four Songs, Op. 50  
 Two Duets, Op. 52  
 Four Songs, Op. 55, for tenor  
 1898 Five Songs, Op. 51  
 Two Songs, Op. 56, for soprano  
 The Noblewoman Vera Sheloga (*Боярыня Вера Шелого*)  
 The Tsar's Bride (*Царская невеста*)  
 Theme and Variation No. 4 in G major, for string quartet; for collaborative Variations on a Russian Theme ("*Надоели ночи надоскучили*"), with Artsybushev, Skriabin, Glazunov, Lyadov, Vitols, Blumenfeld, Ewald, Winkler, and Sokolov; (*Вариации на русскую тему*)  
 1898-1901 The Maid of Pskov, revision  
 1899 Theme and 1st variation from collaborative variations to the Russian theme, (without opus no) - piano  
 1899 *Song of Oleg the Wise*, Op. 58, cantata for tenor and bass soloists and men's voices with orchestra – secular choral  
 1899 Allegro in B-flat, for string quartet, for the collaborative set of string quartet pieces entitled *Les vendredis*, Book 2, No.1, with Glazunov, Artsybushev, Sokolov, Lyadov, Vitols, Osten-Sacken, Blumenfeld, Borodin, and Kopylov  
 Variations on a Russian Theme in A major, piano. Variation No.1. collaborative with Winkler, Blumenfeld, Sokolov, Vitols, Liadov, Glazunov  
 1899-1900 The Tale of Tsar Saltan, of His Son, the Famous and Mighty Bogatyr Prince Gvidon Saltanovich, and of the Beautiful Princess Swan (*Сказка о Царе Салтане, о сыне его славном и могучем богатыре Князе Гвидоне Салтановиче и о прекрасной Царевне Лебеди*)  
 1899-1901 Night on Mount Triglav (*Ночь на горе Триглаве*), symphonic poem adapted from Act III of *Mlada*  
 1900-1901 Servilia (*Сервилия*)  
 1901 Little Song (in the Dorian mode) (*Песенка в дорийском ладу*) (Andantino) from the army collection *Arzunkner*, 1901



- 1901 From Homer (*Из Гомера*), Op. 60, prelude-cantata for soprano, mezzo-soprano, and alto soloists and women's voices with orchestra – secular choral  
The Tale of Tsar Saltan – Suite, Op. 57
- 1901-1902 *Kashchei the Immortal* (*Кащей бессмертный*), revised 1906
- 1902-1903 Pan Voyevoda (*Пан воевода*)
- 1903 *Antar*, Op. 9, (amended 2nd version published by Bessel). Originally designated "Symphony No. 2," he later reclassified it a "symphonic suite." (See Rimsky-Korsakov, *My Musical Life*, 92.)  
Theme and Variation No. 4, from collective set of variations on a Russian theme, with Artsybushev, Vitols, Lyadov, Sokolov, and Glazunov  
Serenade for cello and orchestra, Op. 37, orchestrated in 1903 from cello/piano original  
Alexander Dargomyzhsky, *The Stone Guest*. Alterations and corrections. This became the standard version. Première – 1907  
Christmas Eve - Suite
- 1903-04 The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh and the Maiden Fevroniya (*Сказание о невидимом граде Китеже и девице Февронии*)  
Pan Voevoda – Suite, Op. 59
- 1904 At the Grave, Op. 61 (Prelude in Memory of M.P. Belaieff) (*Над могилой- Прелюдия памяти М.М. Беляева*)
- 1905 The Mountain Spring (*Горный ключ*), Op. 52b, for soprano, mezzo-soprano, alto, orchestra  
"Dubinushka" (*Дубинушка*), Op. 62, (1st version)  
Heaven and Earth (*Земля и небо*), opera, unfinished  
Stenka Razin (*Степьяк Разин*), opera, unfinished
- 1906 "Dubinushka", Op. 62, (2nd version with choral parts *ad lib.*)
- 1906-07 The Golden Cockerel (*Золотой петушок*)
- 1907 "Greeting" (*"Здравница"*), for Glazunov's jubilee  
Neapolitan Song (*Неополитанская песенка*), Op. 63  
The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh – Suite  
The Golden Cockerel – Suite. Arranged by Glazunov and Steinberg after the composer's death  
The Tale of the Fisherman and the Fish (*Сказка о рыбаке и о рыбке*), symphonic poem, unfinished

## APPENDIX 7

### Scores used

#### Rimsky-Korsakov

Boyarynia Vera Sheloga	Vocal score, USA: Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation
Christmas Eve	Vocal score. Unabridged facsimile of C.G.Röder, Leipzig. USA: Elibron Classics. Adamant Media Corporation.
The Legend Of the Invisible City of Kitezh and Maiden Fevronia	Vocal score. Unabridged facsimile of M.P.Belaïeff, Leipzig, 1906. USA: Elibron Classics. Adamant Media Corporation.
Kashchei the Immortal <i>Псковитянка</i> (The Maid of Pskov)	Vocal score, USA: Elibron Classics. 1981. Опера в 3 действиях. Клавир. Ленинград. Издательство «Музыка», Ленинградское отделение.
May Night	Vocal score. unabridged facsimile of M.P.Belaïeff, Leipzig, 1895. USA, Elibron Classics.
Mlada (Opera-ballet)	<i>Mlada. Opera–Ballet. Vocal Score.</i> Facsimile copy of Leipzig, M.P.Belaieff score. Elibron Classics, Adamant Media Corporation.
Pan Voyevoda	Vocal score, USA: Elibron Classics.
Sadko	Vocal score, USA: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., Kalmus K 05257, 1984.
The Tale of Tsar Saltan	Vocal score, V. Bessel', St. Petersburg and Moscow.
The Snow Maiden	Piano Score, Sankt. Petersburg: Compozitor Publishing House, 2005.
The Tsar's Bride	Vocal score, Moscow: «Myzika», 2000.
The Golden Cockerel	Vocal score, USA: Belwin-Mills Publishing Corp., Kalmus K 05266, 1983.

*Le Coq D'Or.* Conductor's Score, Edwin F.Kalmus & Co.,  
Inc, Florida, reprint of 1908 first edition ,  
Moscow, P.Jurgenson.

([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Golden\\_Cockerel](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Golden_Cockerel). 23.11.2011.)

The Complete Sacred Choral Works Vladimir Morosan (ed.), Madison, USA,  
Musica Russica, 1999.

Сто русских народных песен. Москва, Издательство «Музыка»,  
1977.

Russian Easter Festival.  
Overture for Orchestra op.36. Mainz, Ernst Eulenburg Ltd.

*La Grande Pâque Russe. Overture for  
Orchestra, Op.36.* London, Ernst Eulenburg Ltd.

Scheherazade Op.35. New York, Dover Publication, Inc.

Première Symphonie E moll pour orchestre.  
Leipzig. W.Bessel & Co, 1891.

### **Others**

Borodin Aleksandr *Prince Igor, Opera, Vocal Score.* Facsimile  
copy of Leipzig, M.P.Belaieff score. Elibron  
Classics, Adamant Media Corporation.

Glinka Mikhail *A Life for the Tsar, Opera, Vocal Score.* Facsimile  
copy of Moscow, P. Jurgenson score. Elibron  
Classics, Adamant Media Corporation. 2007.

Liszt Franz *Ce qu'on entend sur la montagne : symphonische Dichtung  
no. 1 für grosses Orchester.* London, Eulenburg

Mussorgsky Modest. *Boris Godunov. Piano Score.* Saint-Petersburg, Compozitor  
Publishing House, 2008.

Stravinsky Igor *The Wedding.* Moscow, "Myzyka", 1985.

Tchaikovsky Pyotr *Eugene Onegin, Vocal Score,* Richard Schauer-London, Elite  
Edition 190, 1993.

APPENDIX 8

Russian composers’ use of Balakirev’s and Rimsky-Korsakov’s arrangements of folk songs

Composer	Work	Year of composition	References to		Influence
			Rimsky-Korsakov	Balakirev	
Arensky Anton	Quartet in A minor Op.35	1894	1		Studied composition under Rimsky-Korsakov 1879 . Graduated 1882.
	Quartet in G major Op.11	1888	1		
	Opera: <i>Сон на Волге</i> (Dream on the Volga)	1888	2		
	Fantasia on Russian Themes for piano and orchestra	1899	1		
Balakirev Mily	Symphony No.1. in C major	1864 – 66	1		3
	‘Rus’, Second Overture on Russian Themes	1863 – 64			
	Symphony No.2 in D minor	1900 – 1908	2		

Composer	Work	Year of composition	Rimsky-Korsakov	References to Balakirev	Influence
Grechaninov Alexandr	Опера: <i>Добрыня Никитич</i> (Dobrynya Nikitich)	1896 – 1901	3		Studied at Moscow Conservatoire 1881 under Taneev and Arensky. Late 1880’s quarrelled with Arensky moved to St.Petersburg where he studied composition and orchestration with Rimsky-Korsakov to 1893.
	<i>Снегурочка</i> (The Snow Maiden)	1900	3	1	
	- incidental music to play. Russian folk dance for piano			5	
Mussorgsky Modest	Опера: <i>Борис Годунов</i> (Boris Godunov)	1868-69	4	1	Were living together at this time.
	Опера: <i>Хованщина</i> (Khovanshchina)	1872-80	4	1	
	<i>Взятие Карса</i> (The Capture of Kars)				
Serov Aleksandr	Опера: <i>Вражья сила</i> (The Power of the Fiend)	1867 – 1871	1	2	

Composer	Work	Year of composition	References to		Influence
			Rimsky-Korsakov	Balakirev	
Stravinsky Igor	Ballet: <i>Жар-птица</i> (The Firebird)	1910	1		1905, began to take private lessons from Rimsky-Korsakov. These lessons continued until 1908
	Ballet: <i>Петрушка</i> (Petrushka)	1911	3		Close relationship.
Tchaikovsky Pyotr	<i>Гроза</i> ((The Storm) Concert Overture Op.76	1864	1		Entered into a working relationship with Balakirev in 1869. Led to first performance of <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> .
	Opera: <i>Опричник</i> (The Oprichnik)	1870 – 72	3	3	
	String Quartet No.1 in D Major Op.11	1871	1		Correspondence with Rimsky-Korsakov 1873 – 1876 and 1886 – 1891. Musical co-operation following his appointment as Professor.

Composer	Work	Year of composition	References to		Influence
			Rimsky-Korsakov	Balakirev	
<hr/>					
Tchaikovsky (cont.)	<i>Снегурочка</i> (The Snow Maiden) – incidental music Op.12	1873	2	1	
	Symphony No.4 in F minor Op. 36	1877 – 78	1		
	Serenade in C for String Orchestra Op.48	1880		2	
	1812 Overture Op. 49	1880		1	
	Opera: <i>Mazena</i> (Mazeppa)	1881 - 83	1	1	
	Songs for Children Op. 54	1881 – 83	1		



Composer	Work	Year of composition	Rimsky-Korsakov	References to Balakirev	Influence
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Rimsky-Korsakov Nikolai	<b>Operas</b>				
	<i>Псковитянка</i> (The Maid of Pskov)	1868–1872 (1st version); 1876–1877 (2nd version); 1891–1892 (3rd version)	2	1	
	<i>Снегурочка</i> (The Snow Maiden)	1880–1881 (1st version); 1895 (2nd version)	13	1	
	<i>Млада</i> (Mlada)	1889-1890		1	
	<i>Садко</i> (Sadko)	1895-1896	1		
	<i>Царская невеста</i> (The Tsar's Bride)	1898	1		
	<i>Сказка о Царе Салтане</i> (The Tale of Tsar Saltan)	1899-1900	6		
	<i>Сказание о невидимом граде Китеже</i> (The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh)	1903-1904	9		

Composer	Work	Year of composition	Rimsky-Korsakov	References to Balakirev	Influence
<hr/>					
Rimsky-Korsakov (cont)	<i>Золотой петушок</i> (The Golden Cockerel)	1906-1907		1	
<b>Instrumental</b>					
	Overture on Three Russian Themes, op. 28	1866 (1st version) 1879–1880 (2nd version)	1	1	
	Four Variations and a Fughetta on the Russian Folksong "Nadoeli noch'i" Op. 14, for four women's parts with piano or harmonium	1874		1	
	Sinfonietta on Russian Themes in A minor, Op. 31	1879–1884	5		
	Piano Concerto in C-sharp minor, Op. 30	1882–1883		1	
	Fantasy on Two Russian Themes, for violin and orchestra, Op. 33	1886–1887	1	1	

APPENDIX 9

Performances of Rimsky-Korsakov Operas at the Mariinsky Theatre 1903 – 06 compared with those of other Russian composers

Season	1903 – 04	1904 – 05	1905 – 06
The Maid of Pskov	7	-	-
The Tsar's Bride	5	-	3
<i>Sadko</i>	2	6	-
The Snow Maiden	-	-	11
Mozart and Salieri	-	-	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>
Glinka	7	13	13
Tchaikovsky	17	17	8
Borodin	2	-	-
Mussorgsky	-	9	-
Rubinstein	2	8	8

Performances at the Mariinsky Theatre 1903 - 06

Season	Opera	1903 – 04	1904 – 05	1905 - 06
Glinka	A Life for the Tsar	7	4	3
	Ruslan and Lyudmila	-	9	10
Tchaikovsky	Eugene Onegin	8	7	8
	The Queen of Spades	9	10	-
Rubinstein	Demon	2	8	8
Borodin	Prince Igor	2	-	-
	Boris Godunov	-	9	-

## APPENDIX 10

## Octatonic scale progression exercises

### Ложные последовательности по кругу больших терций

§ 294. Из тонических трезвучий:

Handwritten musical notation for "The Rose Tree" in G major. The notation is arranged in two rows, each containing a treble and bass staff. The first row is labeled "1. END" and the second row is labeled "2. END". The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The melody is in the treble clef and the bass line is in the bass clef. The first ending leads to the second ending, which then leads to the final cadence. The notation is written in a cursive, handwritten style.

**Задачи.** Написать восходящие последовательности.

§ 295. Ложно приготовленные, но правильно разрешенные диссонансы:

Гамма целыми тонами

[illegible]

Задачи. 1) Написать то же в миноре.

2) Разработать хроматическими проходящими потоками.

§ 296. Правильно приготовленные, но ложно разрешенные диссонансы:

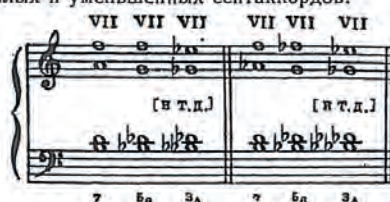
ГИМН ПЕЛЫНЕ ТЕНЬЯ

**Задачи.** Разработать хроматическими проходящими нотами.

§ 297. Ложная последовательность из одних диссонансов:

а) из доминантсептаккордов:

б), в) из малых и уменьшенных септаккордов:



Задача. Закончить начатые секвенции.

§ 298. Ложные последовательности по кругу малых терций.

а) Из тонических трезвучий:



Задача. Написать восходящие последовательности.

б) Ложно приготовленные, но правильно разрешенные диссонансы:



Задачи. 1) Закончить начатые примеры.

2) Разработать их хроматическими проходящими.

в) Правильно приготовленные, но ложно разрешенные диссонансы:



Задачи. 1) Дописать начатые примеры.

2) Разработать хроматическими проходящими:

§ 299. Из одних диссонансов.

Из доминантсептаккордов:



Задача. Написать подобные последовательности из малых и уменьшенных септаккордов. Последний случай представит последовательность неуловимую для слуха, но видимую только в письме.

## **Translation of octatonic scale progression exercises**

False progressions on the circle of major thirds.

§ 294        From tonic triads.

Exercise (Задача): Write ascending progressions.

§ 295        False preparation but correct resolution of dissonances.

Exercise: 1) Write the same in minor.

2) Elaborate with chromatic passing notes.

§ 296        Correct preparation but false resolution of dissonances.

Exercise: Elaborate with chromatic passing notes.

§ 297        False progression based entirely on dissonances.

- a) From dominant seventh chords;
- b) From half-diminished and diminished seventh chords.

Exercise: Complete the started sequences.

§ 298        False progressions on the circle of minor thirds.

- a) From tonic triads.

Exercise: Write ascending progressions.

- b) False progressions but correct resolution of dissonances.

Exercise: 1) Complete the started example.

2) Elaborate with chromatic passing tones.

- c) Correct preparation but false resolution of dissonances.

Exercise: 1) Complete the started examples;

2) Elaborate with chromatic passing tones.

§ 299        From dissonances alone: From dominant sevenths.

Exercise: Write similar progressions with half-diminished and diminished seventh chords. The last chord will be aurally indistinguishable but discernible only in the written version.



APPENDIX 11

Rimsky-Korsakov opera premières in St.Petersburg, Moscow and abroad

Opera	St.Petersburg		Moscow		Abroad
	Date	Theatre	Date	Theatre	Theatre
<hr/>					
<b>The Maid of Pskov</b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> version	1/13 Jan 1873	Mariinsky Theatre			
3 <sup>rd</sup> version	6/18 April 1895	Panayevsky	12/24 Dec 1896	Russian Private Opera	1909 Paris/Théâtre du Châtelet
Standard version			10/23 Oct 1901	Bolshoi,	
<b>May Night</b>	9/11 Jan 1880	Mariinsky Theatre	1892	Russian Private Opera	1995 Wexford Festival
			1909	Bolshoi	1999 American première, Saratova
<b>The Snow Maiden</b>					
1 <sup>st</sup> version	29 Jan/10 Feb 1882	Mariinsky Theatre	1885	Russian Private Opera	
			1893	Bolshoi	
2 <sup>nd</sup> version					
<b>Mlada</b>	1/11Nov 1892	Mariinsky Theatre	1913	Zimin Opera Company	
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	28 Nov/10 Dec 1895	Mariinsky Theatre			1988 English National Opera
<b>Sadko</b>	26 Jan 1901	Mariinsky Theatre	26 Dec 1897/7 Jan. 1898	Russian Private Opera	25 Jan 1930 Metropolitan Opera, New York
			1906	Bolshoi	June 1931 London

Opera	St.Petersburg		Moscow		Abroad	
	Date	Theatre	Date	Theatre	Date	Theatre
<b>Mozart and Salieri</b>						
			Nov 25/7 Dec 1898	Russian Private Opera	11Oct 1927 1933	London Forest Park, Pennsylvania, USA
<b>The Noblewomen Vera Sheloga</b>	1898		15/27 Dec 1898	Solodovnikov Theatre	9 May 1922	New York
<b>The Tsar's Bride</b>	30 Oct/11 Nov 1901	Mariinsky Theatre	22 Oct/ 3 Nov 1899 1916	Private Opera Company Bolshoi Theatre	14 April 2011	Covent Garden, London
<b>The Tale of Tsar Saltan</b>	1902	St. Petersburg Conservatoire	21 Oct/3 Nov 1900	Solodovnikov Theatre	11 Oct 1933	Sadler's Wells Theatre, London
	1915	Mariinsky Theatre	1913	Bolshoi Theatre	27 Dec 1937	USA
<b>Servilia</b>	1/14 Oct 1902	Mariinsky Theatre				
<b>Kashchei the Immortal</b>	27 Mar/3 April 1905	Komissarzhevskaya Drama Theatre	12/25 Dec 1902	Solodovnikov Theatre	1924	Barcelona
			1917	Bolshoi Theatre	1928 1994	Salzburg UK
<b>Pan Voyevoda</b>	3/16 Oct 1904	St. Petersburg Conservatoire	27 Sept 1905	Bolshoi Theatre	12 May 1905	Warsaw
<b>The Legend of the Invisible City of Kitezh</b>	7/20 Feb 1907	Mariinsky Theatre	15 Feb 1908	Bolshoi Theatre	Feb 1926	Gran Teatre del Liceu, Barcelona
<b>The Golden Cockerel</b>			24 Sept/7 Oct 1909	Solodovnikov Theatre	1914	London and Paris
			6 Nov 1909	Bolshoi Theatre	6 Mar 1918	Metropolitan Opera, New York