

## Introduction

Although best known for his music for concert hall, ballet, and film, Sergey Prokofiev considered himself to be a composer of opera above all. Opera occupied him from the time of his first creative activity as a child in rural Ukraine to his final, declining years in Stalin's Soviet Union. At mid-career in the 1930s, his desire to write for the theatre contributed significantly to his decision to return to Russia. Prokofiev had experienced years of frustration in trying to bring his early operas to the stage, during the period of the genre's historic decline in interwar Europe. The Stalinist state, meanwhile, was beginning actively to cultivate opera for its own purposes. Of all the perceived creative and material advantages that prompted Prokofiev's move to the Soviet Union, among the most attractive was the promise of a fully fledged opera career, benefiting from state patronage, an enthusiastic and Russian-speaking audience, and the opportunity to work with distinguished directors. This was combined with the prospect of concentrating on composition, being free of the need to tour as a concert pianist in order to maintain his standard of living. Once resettled, Prokofiev eagerly returned to the genre, and was engaged with work on opera throughout his later career. He considered a wide range of subjects, began a number of new projects, made plans for revisions of his earlier works, and completed four major scores: *Semyon Kotko* (1939), *Betrothal in a Monastery* (1940/43), *War and Peace* (1941–52), and *The Story of a Real Man* (1947–8).

Although his reputation has been slow to develop, Prokofiev undoubtedly stands as one of the leading opera composers of the twentieth century. His four 'Soviet' operas are among his greatest works, and are crucial to an understanding of his overall achievement. Moreover, they define his later career, serving to demonstrate both the potentialities and the pitfalls of his years as a Soviet composer. This book is a study of these works in their original contexts during the height of the Stalin era, taking account of the interaction and often conflict between the composer's approach to opera and state demands for the genre, as well as the historical vicissitudes that affected their creation and reception. Opera has always been closely bound up with political systems, institutions, and ideologies. Soviet opera is one fascinating subsection in its history, involving purposeful development by a propaganda state, in particular during the mid 1930s to the late 1940s,

from high Stalinism to late Stalinism (with World War II in between), a period of enormous social and political upheavals. Opera had been central in discussions of Soviet music since the 1920s, and held a unique status, being highly valued by the regime as an elevated form that also possessed genuine mass appeal, capable of making a major impact on multiple levels – sensual, communal, ideological. In the early Revolutionary period, Lenin and Lunacharsky had imagined that ‘only theater could replace religion’.<sup>1</sup> But it was only in the mid 1930s – and just at the moment of Prokofiev’s return – that opera became an official ‘project’, intended to represent the epitome of the arts and give potent expression to party-state ideals.<sup>2</sup> By the end of the decade, the Stalinist authorities were seeking to turn the opera house into an arena for the performance on a monumental scale of heroic myth and nationalist propaganda (as part of a general embrace of pre-Revolutionary culture that Lenin would not have anticipated). The opera project ran until the late 1940s, exactly overlapping with Prokofiev’s work in the genre. This book therefore examines his last four operas in terms of their involvement with contemporary culture, historical events, and political censure during the most significant period for Soviet opera.

The general aims and emphases of Stalinist aesthetics required specific applications in the individual arts. While musicians in the Soviet Union enjoyed relative breathing space in comparison with other artists, opera was a special case: Stalin had referred to opera as composers’ greatest task, and it was heavily scrutinized by various levels of government. Because of opera’s combination of content and media, it was situated within a triangulated area governed by guidelines for music, literature, and a broad category of public art (including theatre and film). As a texted genre, each opera was subject to extensive review, since non-musicians felt qualified to make judgements, offering critical comments on librettos, characters, and productions, as well as the music (if not in technical terms). Soviet composers, many of whom had little experience writing for the stage, faced a unique challenge in this sphere. Prokofiev was a central figure in Soviet music and the most active as well as most experienced composer of opera, and while he may potentially have been able to meet the stringent (albeit vague) demands that were the corollary of state support, he also repeatedly set himself up for failure. He had assumed that upon his return he would retain creative autonomy, due in

<sup>1</sup> Nicolas Rzhevsky, *The Modern Russian Theatre: A Literary and Cultural History* (Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe, 2009), p. 84.

<sup>2</sup> See Marina Frolova-Walker, ‘The Soviet Opera Project: Ivan Dzerzhinsky vs. *Ivan Susanin*’, *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 18/2 (2006), 181–216.

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part to his international stature; his reluctance to accept advice from bureaucrats and lesser artists (or even well-meaning peers) led to miscalculations and criticisms of his work throughout his later career. His cosmopolitan background did not work to his advantage – on the contrary, since he could never overcome the stigma of the outsider who had yet to prove himself. He never managed to integrate himself in terms of either his works or his professional conduct, while he also struggled to maintain his independence; the liberties he enjoyed at first were eroded under increasing interference by the cultural bureaucracy. Despite his efforts and enthusiasm, his operas were met in Russia as they had been in the West, with only occasional performance, mixed reception, controversy, and in one case, immediate rejection.

That fate is gradually being reversed, as Prokofiev's operas have become more familiar to international audiences since the 1990s. The same period has also witnessed renewed scholarly interest in the composer, and his Soviet period in particular. Benefiting from the opening of Russian archives, important research has appeared, including Simon Morrison's authoritative biography covering the composer's later years, monographs dealing with individual genres, as well as the publication of sources and commentaries by Russian musicologists.<sup>3</sup> At the same time there have appeared valuable historical studies of Soviet music and its institutions, again with concentration on the Stalin period.<sup>4</sup> Despite these positive developments, however, Prokofiev's last four operas have yet to receive what is undoubtedly their scholarly due. These are arguably the pivotal works of his later career, and because of the high-profile nature of the genre they were a principal point of contact between the composer and the

<sup>3</sup> Simon Morrison, *The People's Artist: Prokofiev's Soviet Years* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009); Simon Morrison (ed.), *Sergey Prokofiev and His World* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2008); Kevin Bartig, *Composing for the Red Screen: Prokofiev and Soviet Film* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013); and Yekaterina Sergeyevna Vlasova (ed.), *S. S. Prokof'yev: K 125-letiyu so dnya rozhdeniya. Pis'ma, dokumenty, stat'i, vospominaniya* (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Leonid Maksimenkov, *Sumbur vmesto muziki: Stalinskaya kul'turnaya revolyutsiya, 1936–1938* (Moscow: Yuridicheskaya kniga, 1997); Amy Nelson, *Music for the Revolution: Musicians and Power in Early Soviet Russia* (University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004); Kiril Tomoff, *Creative Union: The Professional Organization of Soviet Composers, 1939–1953* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006); Simo Mikkonen, *Music and Power in the Soviet 1930s: A History of Composers' Bureaucracy* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009); Yekaterina Sergeyevna Vlasova, *1948 god v sovetskoy muzike: Dokumentirovannoye issledovaniye* (Moscow: Klassika-XXI, 2010); Marina Raku, *Muzikal'naya klassika v mifotvorchestve sovetskoy epokhi* (Moscow: Novoye literaturnoye obozreniye, 2014); Marina Frolova-Walker, *Stalin's Music Prize: Soviet Culture and Politics* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016); and Pauline Fairclough, *Classics for the Masses: Shaping Soviet Musical Identity under Lenin and Stalin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016).

Stalinist regime, and are of crucial significance for the history of Soviet music. Notable texts in the literature include Rita McAllister's doctoral dissertation of 1970 and book-length studies of individual operas by Russian musicologists: Marina Sabinina on *Semyon Kotko*, Anatoliy Volkov on *War and Peace*, and (much more recently) Nadezhda Lobachyova on the *The Story of a Real Man*.<sup>5</sup> While these scholars have examined a significant amount of the primary source material, none of them has been inclined to investigate the operas' ideological contexts, or to place them within the wider frame of Soviet cultural history – indeed, this has become possible only since the opening of the archives and the appearance of a wealth of new research in Slavonic studies.

In this book I have sought to combine two angles of approach, critical and contextual, on the one hand proposing new readings of the operas' musical and dramatic properties, on the other developing insights into their historical connections, drawing on a wide range of archival documents, including the original manuscript scores, drafts, and notebooks. I have enriched my arguments through consultation of Russian and Soviet sources, and engaged with recent research in Slavonic studies, in the fields of history, political science, literary criticism, theatre and film studies, and sociology. I have brought into my discussion some of the main themes that have engaged scholars in these areas, including Stalinist aesthetics, political ideology, practices of consumption, and issues of identity and subjectivity. Broadly my aim is to uncover encounters between Prokofiev's operas and state policies, while more specifically my approach has been to examine each of the four operas as individual works possessing distinctive stylistic qualities and a particular relationship to contemporary culture.

### Stalinist Aesthetics and the Soviet Opera Project

All the chapters of this book confront in some way the issue of Stalinist aesthetics and its relationship to opera. The study of Soviet opera can contribute to the understanding of socialist realism, for which it represented an (unattainable) apex. Opera took on a public role of national importance, and attracted the attention of the highest political levels, peaking in the high Stalinist period from the mid 1930s. Recent work in

<sup>5</sup> Rita McAllister, 'The Operas of Sergei Prokofiev' (PhD dissertation, University of Cambridge, 1970); Marina Dmitriyevna Sabinina, '*Semyon Kotko*' i problemi opernoy dramaturgii Prokof'yeva (Moscow: Sovetskiy kompozitor, 1963); Anatoliy Isaakovich Volkov, '*Voyna i mir*' Prokof'yeva: Opit analiza variantov operi (Moscow: Muzika, 1976); and Nadezhda Aleksandrovna Lobachyova, '*Povest' o nastoyashchem cheloveke*' S. S. Prokof'yeva: 60 let spustya (Moscow: Kompozitor, 2008).

this area by Marina Frolova-Walker, Philip Ross Bullock, and Yekaterina Vlasova has advanced our understanding of opera under Stalin, and I summarize this history here, along with my own insights and emphases.<sup>6</sup>

In the post-Revolutionary period, opera had been in danger of being rejected altogether, and the theatres had to be 'saved' (by Anatoliy Lunacharsky) amidst plans to have them shut down. Theories of how opera could be used as a Soviet art were circulated in the 1920s, but the time was not yet right for these to be applied. Existing works in the repertory were performed with new librettos (*Tosca* as *In the Struggle for the Commune*, *Carmen* as *Carmencita and the Soldier*), while contemporary European operas such as *Wozzeck* and *Jonny spielt auf* were also programmed during the relaxed conditions of the New Economic Policy. During the first Five-Year Plan and its associated cultural revolution, the arts were under the control of proletarian groups, which were opposed to all Western influence and forms of 'bourgeois' art and entertainment. The Russian Association of Proletarian Musicians (RAPM), however, did not wholly reject opera, and native opera production of works on Soviet subject matter even increased. A significant change in the landscape of Soviet art was the *perestroyka* brought about by the Central Committee's resolution of April 1932, in which all non-state organizations were eliminated. This was encouraging to professional artists, not least Prokofiev himself, then still abroad but contemplating his return; after being excluded during the late 1920s, they made their return to policy-making, along with specialists in other fields of industry. But they would now be working exclusively within the domain of the party-state, which asserted its control through new administrative bodies, the Composers' Union in the case of music.<sup>7</sup> Art henceforth operated directly as a function of political aims, and aesthetic categories and concepts became more fully subordinate to ideology. As with other professional experts, the responsibility of artists was to apply *tekhnika* in the service of *politika*. The process of centralization was complete with the establishment in December 1935 of the powerful All-Union Committee on Artistic Affairs (KDI); and the first matter the

<sup>6</sup> See Marina Frolova-Walker, 'The Soviet Opera Project'; Philip Ross Bullock, 'Staging Stalinism: The Search for Soviet Opera in the 1930s', *Cambridge Opera Journal*, 18 (2006), 83–108; Yekaterina Sergeyevna Vlasova, 'The Stalinist Opera Project', in *Russian Music since 1917: Reappraisal and Rediscovery*, ed. Patrick Zuk and Marina Frolova-Walker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 164–87. Earlier studies include those by Valerian Bogdanov-Berezovskiy and Abram Gozenpud.

<sup>7</sup> See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1992).

KDI undertook to address was the progress of Soviet opera, which had become a priority for the regime.<sup>8</sup>

Together with this new centralized control over the arts, official aesthetics became systematized, as the new code of socialist realism was formulated in 1934 at the First Congress of Writers in Moscow. After being introduced in literature, the doctrine was applied to other spheres of art, and came to dominate Stalinist artistic practices. Leonid Heller's summary of the three 'central concepts' of socialist realism is particularly clear: translating these as 'ideological commitment' (*ideynost*), 'Party-mindedness' (*partiynost*), and 'national/popular spirit' (*narodnost*), he states that *ideynost* was concerned with the 'idea', the promotion of content over form, against formalism; *partiynost* involved 'commenting on real problems of socialist society', stressing optimism and opposing passivity; and *narodnost* related to the expression of 'the expectations and the will of the whole people' and the appeal to a wide audience.<sup>9</sup> Apart from such broad precepts, socialist realism was more specific in terms of what should be avoided in Soviet art: '[a]s has been repeatedly observed, socialist realism was normative, but only negatively so: it gave practical instructions on what could not be done, but its positive applications and its theorizing . . . remained highly nebulous.'<sup>10</sup> A full understanding of the origins, nature, and effects of socialist realism would require, beyond theoretical and historical overviews, examination of its dissemination in the creation of standards for the individual arts, analysis of its application in individual works, and consideration of various levels of reception. One issue that has engaged scholars is the question of the extent to which it was imposed from above by the Party hierarchy or derived from the existing tastes of the masses. It involved a rejection of revolutionary art, which had proved unpopular, replacing this with an eclectic appropriation of long-established conventions and genres of art, as Evgeny Dobrenko and others have pointed out.<sup>11</sup> The Bolsheviks believed that in the post-historical society they had built they could select freely from the history of world

<sup>8</sup> According to Laurel Fay, *Shostakovich: A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p. 89 and Maksimenkov, *Sumbur vmesto muziki*, p. 66, the founding of the KDI and the attention to opera were related politically.

<sup>9</sup> Leonid Heller, 'A World of Prettiness: Socialist Realism and Its Aesthetic Categories', in *Socialist Realism without Shores*, ed. Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 51–75 (53).

<sup>10</sup> Heller, 'A World of Prettiness', p. 60.

<sup>11</sup> Evgeny Dobrenko, *Political Economy of Socialist Realism*, trans. Jesse M. Savage (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2007), xi.

art,<sup>12</sup> and, in practice, formal and narrative properties were usually derived from older existing models. The socialist realist novel, for example, was based on exemplars from the Russian *Bildungsroman* and classic early Soviet works, while it also harkened back to the medieval parable.<sup>13</sup> Models (and national traditions) offered familiarity, but were also chosen on the basis of their adaptability to Stalinist ideology.

Archetypes for opera were slower to appear, partly because of the multimedia nature of the art form – the necessity of coordinating official requirements for text, music, and staging, commingling familiar conventions and new socialist content in different dimensions simultaneously. While it would take time to develop more detailed standards, the normative limits for opera were effectively set in place at the very moment the project was launched, when in January 1936 Stalin and his entourage appeared at two performances at the Bolshoy Theatre in Moscow, followed by official approval of Ivan Dzerzhinsky's 'song opera' *Tikhiy Don* (*The Quiet Don*) and vitriolic condemnation of Dmitriy Shostakovich's *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk* in the pages of *Pravda*. This spectacular intervention from the top announced unequivocally that opera was worthy of the regime's close attention, while the detailed listing of Shostakovich's supposed failings alongside promotion of Dzerzhinsky and support for the song opera set in motion the next stage for its development. Stalin's statement to Dzerzhinsky was that 'classical Soviet opera must be profoundly moving and exciting. In it must be utilized the melodiousness of national song, [and] in its form it must be maximally accessible and intelligible.'<sup>14</sup> *The Quiet Don* is a setting of an epic novel by Mikhail Sholokhov, a Civil War story that was a classic of socialist realism. Its sequence of songs and choruses represented a new and authentically Soviet genre, closely tied to socialist realist literature and its central concepts rather than to operatic traditions, altogether avoiding elements of Western modernism and emphasizing accessibility to the general public. In March 1936 the KDI held its first meetings on opera, and confirmed the points raised by the leadership. Stalin himself addressed the topic of opera again in 1937, in a speech at a conference of composers, musicologists, and opera producers, promoting the essential attributes of socialist subject

<sup>12</sup> Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, *New Myth, New World: From Nietzsche to Stalin* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002), p. 48.

<sup>13</sup> See Katerina Clark, 'Socialist Realism with Shores: The Conventions for the Positive Hero', in *Socialist Realism without Shores*, ed. Thomas Lahusen and Evgeny Dobrenko (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997), pp. 27–50 (28).

<sup>14</sup> Ivan Dzerzhinskiy, 'Sozdamim sovetskuyu klassicheskuyu operu', *Leningradskaya Pravda*, 24 January 1936.



matter and an accessible musical style based in national traditions, and also underlining the importance of heroic content.<sup>15</sup>

Soviet composers usually enjoyed considerable autonomy as they sought to apply the principles laid down by the party-state, due to the non-referential nature of their art as well as the specialized expertise they possessed. But opera, as a text-based and theatrical genre, occupied a unique position. The KDI had taken control of the now high-profile project, and while specific demands for music remained outside the scope of the administration's competence, the cultural bureaucracy could draw on a range of talents from the various fields involved. In addition to committee discussions, practical application of official edicts was initiated through the 'workshop' method of collaborative creation: composers would be guided by directors and conductors in the theatre, after the example of *The Quiet Don*, which had been a team effort at the Leningrad Small Opera Theatre (MALEGOT), with input from Shostakovich and the conductor Samuil Samosud.<sup>16</sup> The second half of the 1930s was the period of greatest activity in opera, with many being written in celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution in 1937; altogether more than twenty operas were composed between 1937 and 1939.<sup>17</sup> This abundant quantity increased the likelihood that a work of high quality would result, including by providing the opportunity for artists to learn from each other's experiences. It remained on one level an experiment, pursued through trial and error, but expectations remained high that the Soviet

<sup>15</sup> Quoted in Marina Frolova-Walker, "'National in Form, Socialist in Content': Musical Nation-Building in the Soviet Republics', *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 51/2 (Summer 1998), 363.

<sup>16</sup> For example, the Bolshoy commissioned several works in 1936 as part of a 'creative workshop' under the director Vladimir Vladimirov, including Marian Koval's *Yemel'yan Pugachyov*, Anatoliy Aleksandrov's *Bela*, Sergey Vasilenko's *Suvorov*, and Vano Muradeli's *Sergo Ordzhonikidze*. Vlasova, 'The Stalinist Opera Project', p. 168.

<sup>17</sup> Those in the song-opera style included *Podnyataya tselina* (Dzerzhinsky again), *Myatezh* and *Sem'ya* (L. A. Khodzhi-Einatov), *Mat'* (V. V. Zhelobinsky), and *Shchors* (G. K. Fardi). Works endeavouring a higher quality of music and dramatic development were *Pompaduri* (A. F. Pashchenko), *Aleksandr Nevsky* (G. Popov, unfinished), *Kola Bryun'on* (D. Kabalevsky), *Boyeviye druž'ya* (V. Shebalin), and *Dekabristi* (Yu. Shaporin). In the spring of 1939 the KDI organized a conference on opera, at which eight works still in progress were performed, including the last two in the above list (Shebalin and Shaporin). According to Vladimir Surin's paper presented before the KDI on 24 January 1945, twenty-two operas were composed in 1938–9 ('Stenogramma zasedaniya Komiteta: O tvorcheskoy rabote po sozdaniyu novikh sovestkikh oper', RGALI f. 962 (Komitet po delam iskusstv), op. 3, yed. khr. 1379, l. 3), while according to Moisey Grinberg, writing in *Sovetskaya muzika* in March 1939, twenty-five operas had been composed in the previous three years.



Union would soon have its own opera, worthy of its new status as a world power and beacon of communism.

Official attention was devoted, first of all, to the libretto. Bullock has suggested that the collectively created opera libretto, through the processes of reduction and concentration of the literary source, was able to highlight essentials and remove ambiguities, and thus constituted an 'act of censorship' by providing a gloss on a novel's ideological content.<sup>18</sup> This was indeed an important feature of Soviet opera, most notably in the song-opera format, which lacked the musical sophistication to elevate its text – or divert attention away from it. At best, it could generate a 'hit song', like *The Quiet Don*'s final chorus ('Ot kraya do kraya'), but it was not capable of achieving genuine musical drama. To become 'exciting' and heroic in operatic terms (according to Stalin's directives) all elements of the art form would need to be harnessed: the persuasive powers of music and impressive visual effects were to enhance the text in compelling ways that would shape an audience's response. Music and image would also add further layers of interpretation, thus providing a further means of explication of the literary source. Librettos, to fulfil these aesthetic (as well as ideological) objectives, would also need to be written with such a form of opera in mind. The higher authorities expected opera to be a union of the arts that utilized the expressive potential of music to the utmost, and Soviet opera, in the end, would be held up to the standards of the greatest achievements in the history of the art form. The works that resulted from collaborative efforts often did reach performance (in some cases – such as Yuriy Shaporin's *Dekabristi* (*Decembrists*) – only many years later), but were very limited in their success with critics and the public. The experiment was failing, and works were often ridiculed within the KDI and the Composer's Union, not least *Podnyataya tselina* (*Virgin Soil Upturned*), Dzerzhinsky's much-hyped follow-up to *The Quiet Don* (and also based on Sholokhov). Behind the scenes there had been several years of dwindling support for the song opera; it was never powerful enough, nor did it prove popular enough, nor had anyone composed one that attained a satisfactory artistic level. Thus, despite its original endorsement by the regime, it was found to be inadequate as a future model for Soviet opera.

The Composer's Union, which already offered opportunities for professional discussion and advice to its members within the forum, had begun to address the question of opera with a far greater sense of urgency, and to confer on more specific directions for the application of socialist realist

<sup>18</sup> Bullock, 'Staging Stalinism', 96.

ideals to operatic music.<sup>19</sup> Composers and critics debated the proper balance of high and low, with consensus beginning to form on the necessity of high technical standards alongside the appeal to the existing tastes of the masses. When the politically connected critic Georgiy Khubov summarized Stalin's 1937 conference speech in *Sovetskaya muzika* (the Union's journal), he added a fourth requirement, 'the mastery of symphonic development', associated with the classics of nineteenth-century opera that eventually came to be promoted as models instead. At this time a repertoire of masterworks dominated in Soviet theatres, overshadowing new productions. Russian composers of the nineteenth century were celebrated for their inclusion of folk music, but the works of Verdi and Wagner in particular were valued for providing compelling heroic archetypes and examples of overwhelming effects of chorus and orchestra. Wagner's influence can be traced back to the 1920s and the ideals of Lunacharsky and others (even Lenin was a Wagnerian), as recognized by Frolova-Walker and Bullock, but the importance of Verdi, which continued into the 1940s, has yet to be appreciated.<sup>20</sup> As prescriptions for opera developed during these and subsequent years, it was not merely *pesennost'* (song-like melody), folk music, or 'accessibility' that was the principal mark of the Stalinist ideal for opera, but a much more grand manner, ideally employing heroic solo and choral voices as well as musical-dramatic development to generate engulfing and awe-inspiring effects of music, image, and drama, seizing and directing listeners' emotional responses. My study of the official and critical reception of Prokofiev's operas proves that producing such an effect on audiences was indeed held to be the primary aim for the medium, to be achieved by its own uniquely integrated means.

This shift in opera aesthetics was also driven by broader changes in the cultural landscape. High Stalinism of the second half of the 1930s – the period during which the project was most actively pursued – was distinguished by an increasing political and social conservatism, including the rise of a leadership cult. This involved a radical shift in the official attitude to the national past, along with exploitation of the art and the iconography of pre-revolutionary imperial Russia. Soviet arts were called on to represent and celebrate not only the achievements of the revolution and socialist construction, but also the earlier history of the Russian state and its

<sup>19</sup> Frolova-Walker, 'The Soviet Opera Project', 196.

<sup>20</sup> Wagner was rarely performed in the theatre, but remained a favourite in orchestral concerts, as Pauline Fairclough has confirmed. Pauline Fairclough, *Classics for the Masses: Shaping Soviet Musical Identity under Lenin and Stalin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), pp. 134 and 213.