KEITH, JAMES ANDREW, D.M.A. Pavel Chesnokov's Op. 45, *Bo дни Брани, In Days of Battle:* A New Publication and Conductor's Analysis. (2013) Directed by Dr. Welborn Young, 80 pp.

Within the standard U.S. choral repertoire, Pavel Chesnokov is not an obscure name. His name is mostly associated with the frequently performed *Спасение Соделаль* (Salvation is Created), a favorite among choirs and audiences, especially during the Christmas season. The aim of this document is to provide a new edition of a sacred choral concerto composed by Chesnokov, previously unpublished outside of Russia, as well as a conductor's analysis of the work. The concerto, *Во дни Брани, ор. 45*, first published in 1915, is an a cappella sacred concerto in six movements including one supplemental arrangement of the fifth movement (5a) for an all-male chorus.

The texts for the work are drawn from existing Orthodox services, and the Orthodox book *Prayers for Various Occasions*. The analysis will show how Chesnokov organized these texts to make a specific work relevant to periods of battle and infirmity, which was a prominent social issue at the time of original publication.

During Chesnokov's lifetime, he authored a book entitled *The Choir, and How To Direct It.* Chesnokov sought to have this book translated and published abroad, but was unsuccessful during his lifetime. It wasn't until 2010 that John Rommereim, of Grinnell College in Iowa, completed a translation, and Musica Russica in San Diego has subsequently published the book. This work represents a most valuable resource for choral conductors regarding the performance practice of pre-revolutionary Russian choral music. This book will provide the foundation for the other component of this document: a practical conductor's analysis and performance suggestions for *Bo дни Брани*.

By applying the concepts of Chesnokov's book to this specific work, the choral conductor will have a strong foundation to approach other choral works from this incredible genre of music.

PAVEL CHESNOKOV'S OP. 45, *BO ДНИ БРАНИ, IN DAYS OF BATTLE:*A NEW PUBLICATION AND CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS

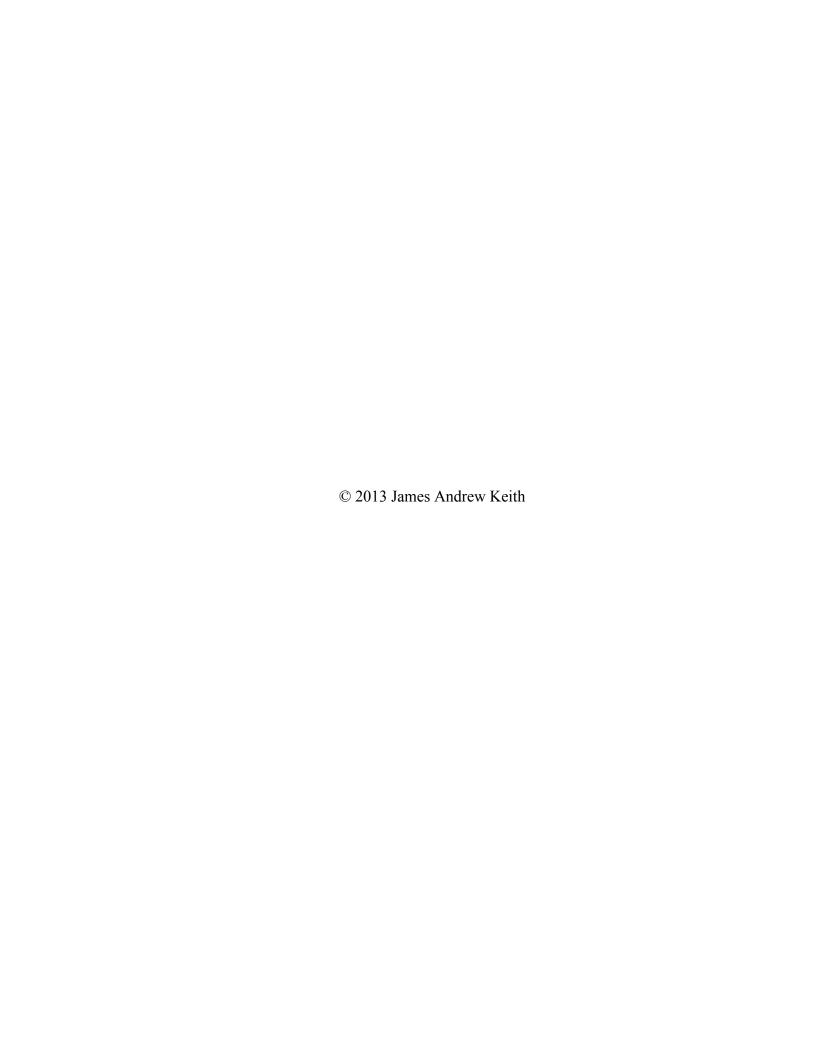
by

James Andrew Keith

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APPROVAL PAGE

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

		Page
СНАРТ	ER	
I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE	4
	Biographical Information	
	Chesnokov's Early Period (1884–1900)	
	Chesnokov's Middle Period (1900–1917)	
	Chesnokov's Final Period, His "Life's Work" (1917–1944)	10
III.	CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS	15
	No. 1 "На Одре Болезни" (On Beds of Sickness) No. 2 "О, Пресладкий и всещедрый Иисусе" (O Most-Sweet and	
	Most-Compassionate Jesus)(8 171081 8 Weet und	
	No. 3 "Teбe, Heoборимую Стену" (Thee, Insurmountable Wall)	
	No. 4 "Скоро Предвари" (O Lord, Save Thy People)	
	No. 5 "Мати Божия" (Mother of God)	
	No. 5a "Мати Божия" Arranged for men's choir and alto	33
	No. 6 "Тя Едину Пречистую" (Thee, Only Protectress)	
IV.	THE NEW EDITION	38
V.	CONCLUSIONS	76
BIBLIO	GRAPHY	79

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

At the time of the composition and publication of *Bo дни Брани (In Days of Battle)*, Chesnokov was a student at the Moscow Conservatory, acted as head of the Russian Choral Society, taught directing courses for church musicians in St. Petersburg during the summer, and had been the director at the church of the Holy Trinity at the "mud baths" (Церкви Троицы на Грязях) since 1902. There appears to be no extant record of the work's premiere performance, but it could be assumed from the title and the date of publication that the work was composed for a war benefit concert or a service regarding Russia's first offensive attack and subsequent struggles in the East Prussia region during 1914 and 1915.

The grouping of the texts is not drawn from a single specific orthodox service.

They are a compilation of texts from *Молитвы на разные случан (Prayers for Various Occasions)*, existing hymn texts, and an Akathist.² This grouping, therefore, creates a musical prayer for the specific time of "battle," which will be referred to as a sacred concerto.

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¹ Алексей Наумов (Aleksei Naumov), personal research notes *Сводная Летопись*, provided by Naumov to the author at Государственный Центральный Музей Музикальной Культуры им. М. И. Глинки, Glinka State Central Museum of Musical Culture, Moscow, Russia, 12/8/2011.

² An Akathist is an Orthodox hymn.

During this period, Chesnokov's peers included notable composers such as Rachmaninoff, Danilin, and Kastalsky, with Chesnokov being the lesser known of his contemporaries. These composers became part of a "new direction" in Russian choral music, looking for a new national identity while also regarding the church's past.

Composers felt a need to revive the original spirit of the ancient church with a new national identity in sound; central to this identity was the Moscow Synodal Choir and its reforms, which began in 1886.

At present, there is no edition of *Bo дни Брани* available for purchase outside of Russia. There is a version of the work which appears to be an electronic scan of a later edition, available through a Russian music website, similar in function to www.cpdl.org. This edition, however, has numerous errors, and the text is only printed on two of the four staves throughout the work. The print quality, errors, and text issues make this edition inaccessible to non-Russian choirs. Further, the edition does not include a translation of the text for each movement, only a translation of the titles of each movement. In addition to the printed work's obscurity, there is only one produced recording of the work in its entirety, performed by *Lege Artis*.³

The purpose of this document is to present a critical edition of this work for publication. This edition will make the work accessible to ensembles and conductors beyond Russia. In order to more accurately analyze the structure and compositional style of Chesnokov, this document will further address the historical context in which *Bo дни*

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³ *Lege Artis*, a native Russian chamber choir, was founded in St. Petersburg in 1987 under the direction of Boris Abalyan. The recording was produced in 1995 on Sony Classical, titled "Songs of the Cherubim, Modern Sacred Choir Music."

Брани was composed, the sub-genre of sacred concerto, Chesnokov's contemporaries and musical influences, and most importantly, Chesnokov's passion for the advancement of the choral art and the study of choral conducting.

Chapter two contains a biographical sketch of Chesnokov. The third chapter is a structural analysis, as relevant for a conductor. This will include discussions of compositional style, and the characteristics of each movement that can then be related to the work as a whole. Chapter four is the new edition in its entirety, followed by concluding remarks in chapter five.

CHAPTER II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Biographical Information

Pavel Grigorevich Chesnokov was born into a family of ten children in 1877 in Voskresensk, southeast of Moscow. The family was supported by Chesnokov's father, Grigory Petrovich (d. 1894), whose income was undoubtedly meager as the precentor⁴ at the local church. In 1884, Pavel was sent to the Moscow Synodal School of Church Music. The school provided boarding, and tuition was free. In 1886 the school's curriculum began a long process of revision, beginning with Stepan Smolensky's (1848–1909)⁵ appointment as director of the school.

Upon his appointment, Smolensky found a choral program with strong potential, but lacking in many musical fundamentals and discipline. In his memoirs, he recounts:

The school was in utter confusion both educationally and as regards discipline; the Choir was comparatively well coordinated, sang well in tune and with a good sound, but was at the same time profoundly ignorant of the rudiments of music and of repertoire, and profoundly undisciplined in the way they earned money on

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⁴ Precentor is an older term for church music director, and it is still used in the context of writings regarding the church musicians in Russian Orthodoxy.

⁵ Stepan Smolensky is a pivotal figure in the resurgence of pre-revolutionary Russian sacred choral music. He was formally trained as a lawyer, and self-taught in music. He served as a choir director in Kazan and privately amassed a collection of ancient Russian musical manuscripts, which can be found in the "Collection of Ancient Singing Manuscripts" at the State Historical Museum in Moscow. He served as the Director of the Moscow Synodal School, the founder of the Precentors' School in St. Petersburg, Director of the Imperial Court Chapel in St. Petersburg, and a professor of Russian Church Singing at the Moscow Conservatory.

the side (by discreetly singing in other choirs) and in the complete breakdown of discipline in the singers' behavior. The poverty of the Choir and the school was absolutely complete in all respects without exception. Absolutely nowhere at all was there good order.⁶

Smolensky laid the foundation for the school to reach its heights of renown prior to being dissolved by the Bolsheviks in 1918. His contribution to the curriculum included a four-year course in choral conducting for the young musicians. Eventually, Smolensky's curriculum revisions led to a rigorous nine-year program of musical study that included a total of five years of choral conducting, one year of orchestral conducting, six years of choral score reading, and seven years of solfege training.⁷

Through Smolensky's reforms, the Synodal School reached critical acclaim for their level of artistry in the choral field. With this recognition, Smolensky's work as a paleographer of ancient Russian musical manuscripts was able to inspire composers to write more music for the church. These compositions utilized what Smolensky had found in his research to be "indigenously Russian musical elements (e.g. counter-voice polyphony, a variable texture, modal harmony).⁸

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⁶ Svetlana Zvereva, *Alexander Kastalsky: His Life and Music* trans. Stuart Campbell (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2003), 46.

⁷ Vladimir Morosan, *Choral Performance In Pre-Revolutionary Russia* (Madison, CT: Musica Russica, 1994), 170–173.

⁸ Vladimir Morosan, *One Thousand Years of Russian Church Music:* 988–1988 (Washington DC: Musica Russica, 1991), 780.

Chesnokov's Early Period (1884–1900)

Smolensky completed his reforms and advancements in the school's curriculum during Chesnokov's formative years. This is likely why Chesnokov would always revere Smolensky, eventually dedicating his book, *Xop и Управление им, Kor i Upravlenie* (The Choir, and How To Direct It), to him:

I dedicate this book to the memory of my teacher and friend Stepan Vasil'yevich Smolensky, a remarkable musician and a thoroughly educated man.⁹

With what biographical information exists about Chesnokov, it becomes clear that his years at the Synodal School formed both the foundation for Chesnokov's success in church music, and the foundation for the struggles Chesnokov would have in Moscow's musical society. While the education the Synodal School provided was excellent musical training, it was very narrow in its focus on preparing church precentors. This view of the Synodal School's curriculum by Moscow's musical elite is confirmed by a letter from Sergei Taneyev (1856–1915)¹⁰ to Smolensky, after the latter had attempted to help Chesnokov obtain composition lessons from Taneyev:

He is a very nice person, but he is a typical graduate of the Synodal School. He is capable of doing a great deal in the area of Russian church music, but I don't want to deflect him from his chosen path.¹¹

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⁹ Pavel Chesnokov, *The Choir and How to Direct It* trans. John Rommereim (San Diego: Musica Russica, 2010), author's preface lxvi.

¹⁰ Sergei Taneyev was a strong figure in the Moscow musical elite. He was a pupil of Tchaikovsky, and he taught Rachmaninoff at the Moscow Conservatory where he succeeded Tchaikovsky.

¹¹ Rommereim, ibid., xix.

Chesnokov's tenacity would later convince Taneyev to take him on as a pupil. While Taneyev's letter is negative, it does confirm the Synodal School as an excellent source for education in the area of Russian sacred choral music. This specific focus was limiting within the musical elite of Moscow at the time, but in attempting to analyze Chesnokov's compositional output, it is important to be aware of this focus, and know that even during his lifetime, Chesnokov was known as a master in the sacred choral music of Russia.

Upon his graduation from the Synodal School in 1895, Chesnokov was hired by the school to teach chant. While teaching at the Synodal School, he began private composition studies with Mikahail Ippolitov-Ivanov (1859–1935). ¹² He studied with Ippolitov from 1895–1900, at which point there was a major shift in the administration of the Synodal School, and this appears to be a point of change in Chesnokov's life.

Chesnokov's Middle Period (1900–1917)

There are many circumstances between the years 1900 and 1913 that may have led to turning points in Chesnokov's life. This period is marked by various forms of rejection, and at the same time, professional recognition for his work in choral music.

As previously mentioned, Chesnokov asked Smolensky to aid him in becoming a student of composition with Taneyev. At first, Taneyev rejected Chesnokov as a student:

Writing Cherubim Songs and 'Our Fathers' is not the same as studying composition. The Synodal Choir does not give either the musical or the general preparation necessary for a composer, and therefore it is not possible for me to work with Chesnokov. ¹³

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¹² Naumov, ibid.

¹³ Rommereim, ibid., xix.

According to his letters to Smolensky, Chesnokov felt defeated by this rejection, but the defeat only served to increase his volume of writing. In 1905, he presented Taneyev with all of his published works up to that point for his perusal. The works apparently made a positive impression on Taneyev who began to work with Chesnokov. ¹⁴ Chesnokov's study with Taneyev (and later Vasilenko) can be seen as the impetus for his departure from the strict use of chant melodies in his compositions and his expansion of contrapuntal techniques, as is the case with Op. 45.

Another source of rejection was also related to Smolensky. Smolensky left the Synodal School in 1901 when he was appointed as the director at the imperial court in St. Petersburg. When he left, he appointed Vasily Orlov (1856–1907) as his successor in directing the Synodal School. Orlov appointed Alexander Kastalsky (1856–1926) as the choir's conductor, and listed Chesnokov as the assistant conductor. In 1910, Kastalsky appointed Chesnokov's peer, Nikolai Danilin (1878–1945) as the conductor who remained in the role until the choir's demise in 1918. Throughout this first decade, Chesnokov's relationship with the Syondal School was strained, as the school became the source of rejection and being passed over on several occasions.

Despite his difficulties at the Synodal School, Chesnokov became well known as a choral composer and conductor through his work with his church, Церкви Троицы на

¹⁴ Chesnokov, trans. Rommereim, Letter from Chesnokov to Smolensky as quoted in Naumov's article "Marking the 120th Anniversary of P.G. Chesnokov's Birthday," (*Muzikal'naia Akademiia*, vol. 2, 1998), 175.

Danilin brought the choir to artistic heights and public acclaim. Under his direction, the Synodal choir was selected for the premiere performances of Rachmaninoff's choral works.

Грязях (The Church of The Holy Trinity), where he conducted from 1902–1913. 16

Chesnokov came into his own...not through his work with the professional Synodal Choir, but rather through his work with the amateur choir of The Church of The Holy Trinity (1902–1914), which became in a short while one of the most interesting and brilliant ensembles in Moscow.¹⁷

Though Chesnokov had already established himself as a known choral composer, he entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1913 to study composition once again with Ippolitov as well as Sergei Vasilenko (1872–1956). ¹⁸ Chesnokov prospered at the conservatory and received his diploma at age forty.



Figure 1. Portrait of Chesnokov, 1917

Upon his graduation from the conservatory, he gave this portrait to his professor,
Vasilenko, as a gift. The inscription reads: "To my dear, indispensible professor, Sergei
Nikiforovichu Vasilenko, gratefully and sincerely yours, P. Chesnokov 29th April,

¹⁷ Naumov, ibid.

¹⁶ Naumov, ibid.

¹⁸ Naumov, ibid.

1917."¹⁹ Without his Conservatory connection, Chesnokov had no other work that was unrelated to the church. In his preface, John Rommereim accurately asserts that:

Relying solely on his expertise as a church precentor, it seems unlikely that he (Chesnokov) would have prospered during the post-revolutionary era or would have assumed the professorship at the Conservatory as he did in 1920.²⁰

In 1928, under Stalin's rule, Chesnokov had to officially "cease all public activity related to the church."²¹

Chesnokov's Final Period, His "Life's Work" (1917–1944)

Chesnokov had begun work on his choral conducting manuscript in December of 1917, and it is easy to see that the book became his life's work with his rapid decline in published music. 22 It wasn't until 1940 that Muzgiz finally approved the book for its first printing. Its popularity subsequently required two further releases of the text in 1952 and 1961. The book's popularity in Russia is a clear sign of his renown in the field of choral conducting. Through Vladimir Morosan's valuable text, *Choral Performance in Pre-Revolutionary Russia*, a case could be made that Chesnokov had seen the need for a work of this type since his early education at the Synodal School. Regarding the school's

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¹⁹ Fig. 1 provided as a gift to the author from Aleksei Naumov at the Nikolai Golovanov Museum, 12/8/2011, Moscow, Russia.

²⁰ Rommereim, translator's preface, xx.

²¹ Rommereim, ibid., xxiv.

²² Aleksei Naumov, П. Чесноков; Духовные Произведения для смешанного хора А сарреlla, Выпуск V; арренdix, Перечень духовно-Музыкальных сочинений П.Г. Чеснокова, (Sacred works for A Cappella mixed choir, book V, appendix, list of sacred music by Chesnokov), (Moscow: Живонсный источник, 2008), 43-39.

²³ Muzgiz was a state music publishing house. They incorporated the previously largest Russian music publisher, P. Jurgenson. The publisher remained a state owned commodity until 2004.

conducting curriculum, Vladimir states:

Of particular interest was a course entitled "Methodology of choral singing and conducting." Judging from the syllabus, the course offered a very detailed study of the organizational, technical, and musicianship skills involved in conducting a choir. There was, however, no single text available for this course: none of the texts listed as resources dealt directly with the topics covered.²⁴

Chesnokov organized his book in two parts: I. The Choir and II. Choral Conducting. In part I, Chesnokov addresses issues directly related to the choir and the sound aesthetic of the choir. Of particular interest in part I is his chapter on intonation; it is the longest chapter, and this is a topic for which Chesnokov received highest praises when conducting an ensemble, even from his colleagues, as Morosan notes: "Chesnokov was a superb master of choral sonority. Danilin maintained that Chesnokov had no equal in the art of making a choir sing in tune." 25

The second part of Chesnokov's book is similar in structure to the first, but it deals exclusively with the conductor's role in achieving the concepts outlined in the first part, specifically, ensemble, intonation, and nuance. By its contents, Chesnokov appears to be satisfying the need for a text of this type in his country, a need that he had observed since his early education.

Following the revolution, Chesnokov remained in Moscow. He remained in his position as professor of choral music at the Moscow Conservatory from 1920 until his death on March 14, 1944. Chesnokov's early development and training placed him in a small niche of Russian sacred choral music. That said, his life prior to the revolution saw

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²⁴ Morosan, ibid.

²⁵ Morosan, ibid., 202.

the blending of Russian sacred music and concert performances, which provided Chesnokov with a public outlet for his compositions. Following the revolution, Chesnokov utilized the vast experience he had in choral singing, conducting, and composition, and made it his goal to have the art of choral music recognized as a formal course of study, and one that is recognized as a significant vehicle for human expression. In the author's preface to his book, he clearly states his intentions, and this passage is one that solidifies the book's prominence not only as a conducting text, but also as a source for performance practice of pre-revolutionary Russian sacred choral music:

I do not pretend to have answered fully all of the questions that are raised in this book concerning choral music, choral conducting, and the organization of choirs. I have, however, shed some light on them, and I challenge the next generation of conductors to elaborate further upon them. It was necessary for me to work on this book without secondary materials. Indeed, there are none...This work is based on observations acquired through years of practical experience. My primary task has been to develop a theoretical basis for the conclusions I reached in my practical work. The reader will not find any sort of strict postulates here. Rather, my goal has been to systematize and consolidate the achievement of many years of practical endeavor. I wanted, above all, to make it easier for the beginning conductor to find his or her way along the road that I myself followed. I hope that this work of mine may be the first step toward the development of a choral science.

Chesnokov experienced difficulties in publishing his book. He was twice rejected by Muzgiz in Moscow. At the time, Chesnokov was well known, but he was so connected with the Orthodox church that any ability to connect the book with the church was enough to be rejected. In addition, Muzgiz referred to the book as "apolitical," and this was not allowed under Soviet rule. After his rejections, Chesnokov reached across the

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²⁶ Chesnokov, trans. Rommereim, Author's Preface, lxv.

Atlantic to a colleague, Alfred Swan (1890–1970), choral conductor and professor at Swarthmore College, and eventually, the University of Virginia. Chesnokov's letters to Swan offer an interesting perspective into the personality of Chesnokov, as well as his desperation to have his "life's work" published.

I have written very many choral compositions and especially religious ones. I estimate about 500 religious and about 100 secular works. Yet the central point of my work, as my lifework itself, I consider my book, which I completed in December 1930. I had been writing it exactly for 13 years. It is entitled "The Chorus and Choral Conducting" and the subtitle "Choral Guidance and Choral Management."...Twice it was examined by the Moscow MUZGIZ and twice rejected. Reason - it is apolitical. It has been stated to me orally as well as in writing: "very good, exquisite book, there are no such books in the area of choral literature. But in the USSR one cannot write apolitical books." So my poor book is dangling in the air. That is a pity. It (the book) is needed for all choral conductors and advanced choral singers. That is what I was told by choral conductors in Moscow and by the students in the Chorus Department of the Moscow State Conservatory to whom I have read and am still reading my book in the form of lectures. But, what can one do? I hope that the time will come when people will remember my poor book!²⁷

The English edition of 2010, translated by John Rommereim of Grinnell College, Iowa, is the first translated edition to appear outside of Russia. Obviously, there is a plethora of choral conducting texts available to students and conductors alike. The unique nature of this text is that the methods Chesnokov presents are not only based on his years of practical experience, but also on the aesthetic of the Synodal School Choir. After

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²⁷ Pavel Chesnokov to Alfred Swan, October 22, 1933, The papers of Milos Velimirovic, 13802-b, University of Virginia Library Special Collections. Collection accessed September 27, 2011. Velimirovic was also a professor at the University of Virginia, and he translated the letters that Chesnokov wrote to Swan. This quotation is taken directly from his manuscript, but the collection of letters can be found in the book *Slavonic and Western Music; Some Letters of Pavel Chesnokov In the United States*, Oxford University Press, 1985.

viewing Chesnokov's original manuscript of the book, Morosan provides clarity to the choral ideal Chesnokov had in his mind while writing the book:

"Having thus analyzed the sonority of an imaginary exemplary choir," concludes Chesnokov, "we establish the three most important composite elements of choral sonority: ensemble, tuning, and nuances"....found in Chesnokov's personal copy of the book, now located in his archive...After the word "imaginary" there appears an asterisk and the following note in the margin: "For me, however, this choir is not imaginary, but real: one that existed in Moscow...This ideal chorus (S.V. Smolensky, Administrative Director; V. S. Orlov, Conductor)...served for me as a concrete model in the writing of this book."

Considering the fact that the Synodal Choir was the choir used to premiere many of the famous choral compositions of this era, such as Rachmaninoff's *All-Night Vigil*, Chesnokov's book becomes not only a choral conducting text, but one that can be used for performance practice research for the era of pre-revolutionary Russian sacred choral music.

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²⁸ Morosan, ibid., 163.

CHAPTER III

CONDUCTOR'S ANALYSIS

Chesnokov's op. 45 is marked by some of the most characteristic compositional devices of his middle period. The following characteristics are also common to Chesnokov's contemporaries who embody the "new direction in church music." The "new direction" was a direct result of the reforms put in place by Smolensky at the Synodal School. Though the "new direction" began with the resurgence of interest in the ancient chant melodies, Chesnokov's works in the years after he began to study with Taneyev show a departure from the use of chant cantus firmi, and an embrace of heavy contrapuntal devices and varied textures. Most noticeable is the frequent shifting of aesthetics. There are large sections of homophony followed by sections of instability not only of structure, but of harmonic foundation as well. The listener is often surprised by a rapid shift from choral unison to an expansive eight-part (occasionally more) texture. There are frequent voice pairings as well as call and response textures when one voice section will have the primary motive that will be answered homophonically by the remaining voices. There are also fugal passages that culminate in a return to homophony, and these are frequently distinguished by initiating with harmonic instability and concluding with a strong cadence.

²⁹ A. V. Preobrazhensky, "A Description of the Most Recent Attempts to Restore the Ancient Chants," in Russians On Russian Music, ed. and trans. Stuart Campbell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 193.

What is most clear in this composition is that his writing is deliberate. This particular work, within the scope of his compositional output, shows Chesnokov's knowledge of the voice and his practical experience as a choir director. His departure from the direct use of ancient chants allowed Chesnokov the freedom to use the texts as his ultimate organizational tool.

Though Chesnokov's contrapuntal writing is an obvious departure from his previous chant-based works, the Russian Orthodox requirement of text clarity is observed through the sectionalization found in each movement. While Chesnokov does use specific meters for each movement, his harmonic and melodic content as a combination do not always agree with the chosen meter, and this helps to achieve the goal of text clarity. The phrases often cross barlines, a factor that conductors must consider when deciding their approach to each section of each movement of this work. It would be nearly impossible to achieve any expressive quality if the conductor is only able to work within specified metrical patterns. The phrases demand that a conductor be familiar with every phrase initiation and termination. This can only be articulated if the conductor can reach beyond the constraints of metrically-based patterns and employ a gesture that conveys the direction of the phrase while promoting the breath support required to execute each section.

Chesnokov's vast experience with choirs helped him compose in a way that lets the conductor and the ensemble focus on evoking the emotion of the given text. The compositional characteristics take into consideration all technical aspects of the final performance. The frequent shifts of texture provide dynamic contrasts without the singers

having to produce them physically. His use of voice-pairing to double choir, close four part harmonies to expanded chords, and the full practical range of the human voice, creates a well-balanced and technically superior piece of choral literature.

No. 1 "Ha Одре Болезни..." (On Beds of Sickness)

Movement 1 is in three distinct sections. The first is written in a homophonic character with the soprano and tenor parts functioning in a melodic duet while the altos and basses provide the bulk of the harmonic material. Most notably, the first section begins on the relative minor, with an immediate shift in the chord's function from a root position triad to a third inversion minor seventh chord, functioning as a secondary dominant to ii.



Example 3.1. Mvt. 1, mm. 1-3

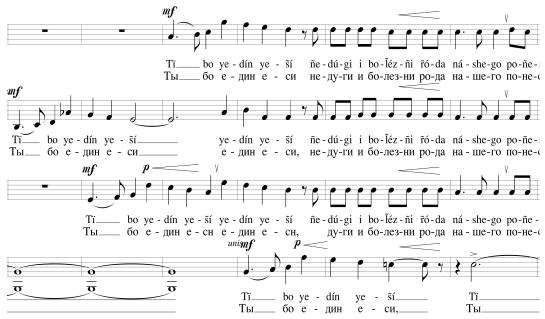
The first section comprises mm. 1-8 and is a musical period, which moves harmonically from the relative g-minor to a perfect authentic cadence on the relative major, B-flat. This section is split at m. 4 from the antecedent to the consequent phrase. Here, the soprano and tenor duet becomes more obvious as the melody is altered slightly from its first statement to a modified version that leads directly to a strong cadence in m. 8.



Example 3.2. Mvt. 1, mm. 4-8

The second section begins with a fugal passage with the head motive sequenced in all voices between mm. 9-13. Within this passage, the harmonic structure is disturbed by the introduction of an ascending diminished fifth to an A-flat in the first motivic statement by the altos. The A-flat is returned to A-natural in the remaining statements, but they are dissonant against the bass' pedal B-flat. This harmonic disturbance is setting

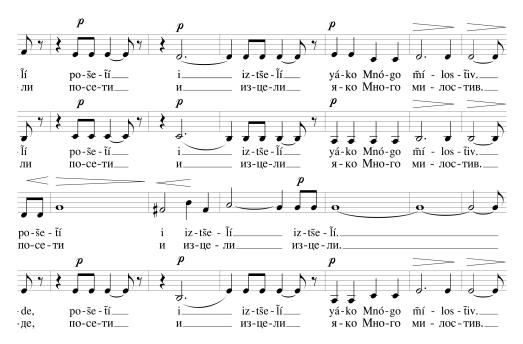
up a return to the relative g-minor.



Example 3.3. Mvt. 1, mm. 9-14

This middle section returns to homophony in m. 15, which remains until the cadence on g-minor in m. 19.

The third section of this movement begins a call and response texture. The sopranos pickup to m. 20 and the remaining voices respond with the soprano's text repeated, but each new statement in the soprano rhythmically overlaps with the completion of the prior word in the remaining voices. The tenors take the soprano role at the pickup to m. 24 with the same text, and this repetition, along with a decrease in dynamic level, leads to the final cadence on g-minor.



Example 3.4. Mvt. 1, mm. 24-30

No. 2 "О, Пресладкий и всещедрый Иисусе..." (О Most-Sweet and Most-

Compassionate Jesus)

In an anonymous review shortly after the work's publication, the reviewer seems to think the second movement is in three parts, with a "weak" middle section:

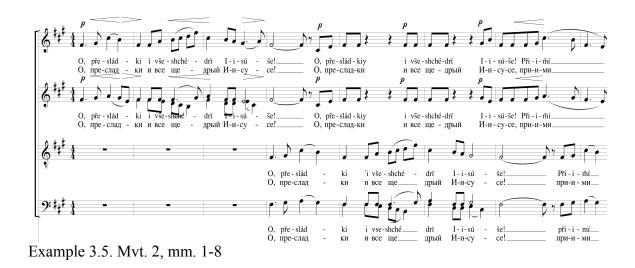
"No. 2, О Пресладкий и всещедрый Иисусе" неровен; отличное начло, очень стильное, вдохновенное, с выражением светлой, честой мольбы, иметь слабоватую среднюю часть со солв "от недуга и глада."

"O most-sweet and most-compassionate Jesus," it is uneven; an excellent beginning, very stylish and inspired with an expression of light after pleading, but the middle section is weak at the words "from disease and famine." ³⁰

20

³⁰ Anonymous, review of *Во Дни Брани*, by Pavel Chesnokov, *Хоровое и Регенсткое Дело* no. 5/6 (May-June 1916): 150-151. Translated by the author.

Based on the text, I would argue that the movement is in four sections, including an introduction. The introduction of the work is marked by voice pairings within an imitative texture from mm. 1-8.



The text of this prayer is an ancient Akathist to the Savior, and begins with the introduction of "O most-sweet and all-compassionate Jesus! Receive now this our small supplication." The text of the Akathist supports an analysis in four sections; this would also be an excellent method for the conductor to rehearse the movement.

The first section is clearly separated from the remaining three with its bookend unisons. The use of cadential unisons is another trademark of Chesnokov's compositions. They serve the text primarily, but they also serve to shift the harmonic progression in a new direction, as is the case between the unison cadence in m. 12, to the seven-part split that emerges from the unison in m. 13; the unison C# is functioning as the leading tone to the second section in D-major.

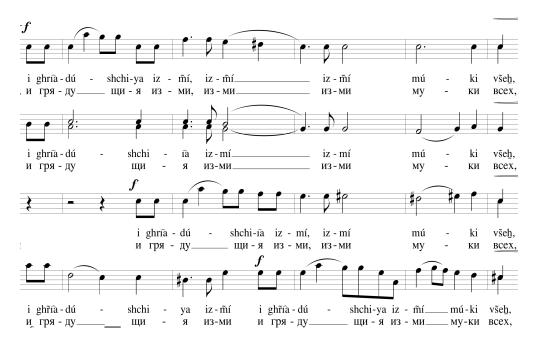


Example 3.6. Mvt. 2, mm. 11-12

It is the expansion of the voice parts and the homophonic texture that mark the strong second section. In this section, Chesnokov moves through an expanse of text and the phrases are structured entirely around the text without concern for barlines. This section remains in a seven-part split, consists of only two phrases with a breath in m. 16, and concludes with a perfect authentic cadence on D in m. 18.

The third section is a call and response texture, which, following the expansive sound of the second section, would justify the reviewer's comment about the weak middle section. The texture is very reminiscent of the middle section of the first movement with a soprano call, and the remaining voices creating a homophonic response on the word "Сохрани" ("Protect"). In this movement, however, the call and response texture is followed by an imitative passage which is prepared harmonically by the lower three voices. The voices create the harmonic instability which leads back to the tonic F#-minor.

The imitative section has a distinct motive, first introduced in the sopranos, followed by the tenors, and sequenced in the basses.



Example 3.7. Mvt. 2, mm. 23-28

The final section is the Alleluia section. This section is divided into three double statements of the Alleluia text. Each double statement of the word includes a harmonic progression of i - V with a six-part voice split and alternating between voice pairings and homophony. Further, each statement also slows the rhythmic motion toward the final cadence. The progression moves from eighth notes to dotted quarters, and the final statement is in half notes. The final statement includes a surprising IV6 chord where the listener is expecting a minor i.

Due to the expansive texture, the voice pairings, and the rather extreme ranges employed, I would tend to agree with the reviewer's comment: "Для исполнения

требуется большой хор" ("To execute this one, you need a large choir"). 31

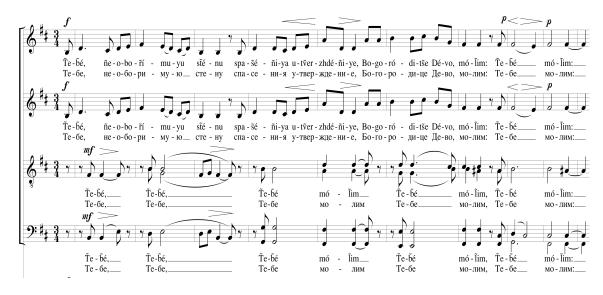
No. 3 "Тебе, Необоримую Стену" (Thee, Insurmountable Wall)

The text of this movement is one that is reserved in the Orthodox for the Service for Holy Unction. This is a service that, when properly executed, requires seven priests, and is reserved for someone who is in near-death condition. It is a prayer to the Theotokos³² to deliver the sufferer from their misfortune. The structure, harmonically speaking, is very similar to the previous two movements; it begins in b-minor, moves to the relative major in the middle, and then, through harmonic instability, returns to the minor tonic.

The first section is, as the previous, marked by voice pairings in the soprano and alto, and the tenor and bass. The soprano and alto pair are the driving melodic content through m. 10 with the tenors and basses functioning as a responsorial harmonic support. Chesnokov inserts an eighth rest in m. 7 to separate the musical sentence from the dominant continuation, where all voices come together to repeat the text "Тебе Молим" ("we pray to you").

³¹ Anonymous, ibid.

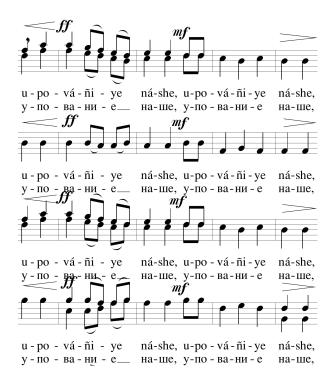
³² Theotokos is the Orthodox title for Mary, the mother of Jesus.



Example 3.8. Mvt. 3, mm. 1-10

The second section, from mm. 10-22, is similar in structure to the first section. It begins with voice pairings between the alto and bass, and tenor and soprano with tiered entrances that lead into homophony in m. 13. This section remains primarily homophonic and is where we find the shift to the relative major in m. 18. The next four measures are a declamatory homophonic statement that is characterized by harmonic instability and cadences on a Neapolitan chord in m. 22.

From m. 23 to the final cadence in m. 40, a case could be made for two separate sections. Structurally, this would not make sense. For the sake of rehearsal though, and to avoid fatiguing the singers, especially the tenors and sopranos, one could find a separation in m. 31 before the climax of the movement with the tenors and sopranos singing up to high A. The interesting aspect of Chesnokov's writing in this entire section is his alternation between a dense choral sonority and a juxtaposed sparse sonority, as is the case between mm. 31-34.



Example 3.9. Mvt. 3, mm. 31-35

The text "упование наше" ("our hope") is repeated four times from the climax in m. 32 through the end, finally cadencing on the b-minor tonic.

No. 4 "Скоро Предвари" (O Lord, Save Thy People)

Movements 4, 5, and 6 utilize texts drawn from the same source: "A Molieben to the Lord God sung in time of war against adversaries fighting against us." While there appears to be no record of the work's premiere performance, the anonymous reviewer provides us with the most evidence for the work's impetus, and its intended performance:

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³³ Trans. St. Tikhon's Monastery, *The Great Book of Needs; Expanded and Supplemented, vol. 1.* (PA: St. Tikhon's Seminary Press, 1999). Molieben is an Orthodox service of supplication.

Настоящим П. Чесноков отозвался на переживаемые нашей страной события. Прежде всего, обращают внимание самые тексты, подобранные вдумчиво и по своему содержанию подходящие для концертнаго исполнения.

With this work, P.G. Chesnokov has responded to the event this country has experienced. Foremost, pay attention to the carefully chosen texts, most appropriate for concert performance.³⁴

With movement 4, Chesnokov has combined a Troparion and a Theotokion³⁵ and removed the toned "Glory...now and ever..." which generally comes between the two within the Molieben. Musically, he recognizes the combination with a clear split in texture. The opening section is a declamatory, almost like clanging bells, seven-part statement with the first soprano, tenor, and bass remaining on F 5, 4, and 3, respectively. The F's are repeated while the second soprano, both alto parts, and second tenor and bass basically repeat a dissonant E-flat.

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³⁴ Anonymous, ibid. Translated by the author.

Troparion and Theotokion are both hymns in the Orthodox church. The Troparion is commonly a brief single-stanza musical statement. A Theotokion is a Troparion specifically to the Theotokos.



Example 3.10. Mvt. 4, mm. 1-10

Chesnokov left an interesting note for the opening section at the bottom of the first page of the movement: "Во избежание крикливости альтов (до слова *погуби*) следует заставлять петь исключительно тембром сопрано. П. Ч." ("To avoid a shrill sound, the altos [until the word *pogubi*] should sing exclusively in soprano timbre. P. Ch"). ³⁶ Interestingly, this note concurs with remarks made in his book about the various registers of each voice. For the alto, Chesnokov classifies the notes between C5 and F5 as

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³⁶ This note is found in the first edition, and was confirmed by the author on reviewing Chesnokov's manuscript. Manuscript available at *Российский Государственый Архив Литературы и Искусства*, Moscow, Russia, accessed 12/12/2011.

"difficult, troublesome, rarely good."³⁷ This section, even when executed well, will be a shock to the listener if placed in the context of the entire work. This movement is the only movement in a major key through its entirety. While the piece is notated in the key of F-major, it begins in B-flat major. The second soprano, altos, second tenor, and second bass form a voice group that sings through the text of the Troparion, under the declamatory F statements, by m. 11.

At m. 11, the second section begins with the text of the Theotokion. Chesnokov appropriately alters the texture slightly as the text shifts from addressing the Lord, to addressing the Theotokos. The texture is a common one that Chesnokov has employed throughout the other movements: a voice pairing between the alto and soprano functioning as the melodic content with the pairing of the tenors and basses forming the harmonic foundation.

The second section has three smaller sections within it. These are all related to one another and therefore do not come across to the listener as drastically different as the change in m. 11. The first sub-section utilizes the voice pairings and harmonically pivots to the notated key of F-major in m. 18 with the introduction of an E-natural. This section has a perfect authentic cadence on F-major in m. 22. In m. 22, the texture becomes homophonic, but the structure is the same, with the inverse pivot back to B-flat major in m. 28 with the return of the E-flat. In m. 33, there is a cadence on B-flat major followed by a breath and a dynamic change to piano to begin the final sub-section. The final section pivots back to F-major through the harmonics in mm. 35 and 36. At a piano

29

³⁷ Chesnokov, trans. Rommereim, 30.

dynamic, there is a brief codetta reminiscent of the shift to the Theotokion text in m. 11 with a call and response setting between the men and women.

The way that Chesnokov treats movement 4 musically could be heard as a depiction of an army marching through a town: the loud declamatory statement in the beginning depicts the regiment nearing, the middle section beginning at m. 11 represents the citizens cheering, and the fanfare fades as the soldiers march away. This movement is "the only cheerful and bright chorus" of the entire work.³⁸

No. 5 "Мати Божия" (Mother of God)

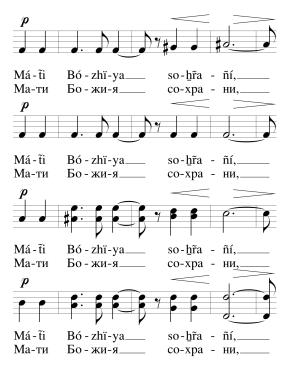
Of the entire opus, this movement contains the most intimate choral writing. At moments, it is very reminiscent of the previous movements. In fact, if you compare the structure of the first section of movement 1 to the structure and harmonies of the first section, mm. 1-14, of movement 5, you will find that they are very similar.

In the first section, the first harmony is b-minor, but the basses begin an immediate descending line that pushes the listener toward the relative D-major. The entire section is homophonic, and almost laboriously syllabic. The way that Chesnokov sets the text in this section makes the pleas of the prayer to the Theotokos much more deliberate. The way the harmony is never truly settled until the half cadence in m. 14 creates a sense of angst, but this angst is juxtaposed against a slow moving rhythmic and

30

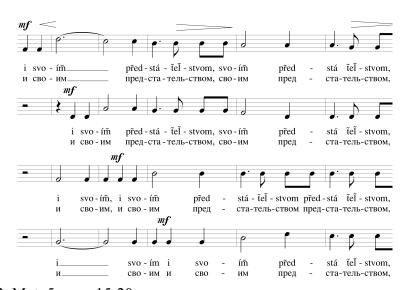
³⁸ B. As. Review of *Bo Дни Брани* by Pavel Chesnokov, *Музыка*, no. 253 10/iv -916 (1915): 236. Translated by the author. This review was rather critical of this particular work by Chesnokov, stating that he was copying Tchaikovsky in some portions, but only citing one specific moment. The reviewer admits that the opus was overall good in capturing a mood, that movement 5 was particularly nice, and that movement 4 was the "only cheerful and bright chorus" of the work.

harmonic progression. Within the first fourteen measures, the piece moves from a sense of despair and a need for help to an ethereal and hopeful tone. The opening builds in dynamics and texture to a long forte phrase from mm. 7-11. Chesnokov employs his use of sudden change of texture to accentuate the final plea following this forte phrase. In m. 11 there is an eighth rest following the declamatory forte, followed by a subito piano marking at the repeat of the text "Мати божия, сохрани" ("Mother of God, protect us"). This repeat of the text is where Chesnokov successfully moves away from the relative D-major to a half cadence from the original b-minor to a dominant F#-major. The satisfaction of this half cadence is prepared by the second tenors' A# in m. 12, followed by the sopranos' G# in m. 13 to form a half-diminished ii in first inversion, which then cadences to the F#-major on the downbeat of m. 14.



Example 3.11. Mvt. 5, mm. 11-14

The second section of this movement is also somewhat reminiscent of the first movement. The section spans from mm. 15-33 and includes two sub-sections split at the climax of the movement in m. 26. The section begins with an imitative sequential passage. The motive of two quarter notes followed by an ascending leap begins in the soprano with a leap of a sixth, followed by the altos with a leap of a perfect fifth, then the tenors with a perfect fourth, and the basses close the motive with a third in m. 19. If the choir can execute each entrance to be present above the ensemble, then this hybrid ascending/descending motive is quite effective in setting up the eventual harmonic motion toward D-major.



Example 3.12. Mvt. 5, mm. 15-20

The imitative motive moves to homophony, which strengthens the harmonic motion toward the D-major cadence at m. 24. As is typical of Chesnokov's writing, he allows the listener only one full measure of harmonic settling before moving away from the relative major. The move away is supported, again, with a descending bass line to the climax on a

B-major 7 chord, functioning as a dominant to the minor ii. From mm. 25-33, Chesnokov maintains constant harmonic instability, and this creates such a restrained tension that the D-major cadence in m. 34 becomes the most satisfying moment of the entire movement.

The final section of this movement begins with the D-major cadence in m. 34, and serves as a musical dénouement. Chesnokov pairs the sopranos and altos with a large descending motive that is followed by the tenor and bass response which provides for a constant plagal motion through the entire section over the bass' pedal D2. Chesnokov is very deliberate in his dynamics throughout this section. The tenors and basses maintain a pianissimo throughout, while the soprano and alto pairing decreases their dynamic level with each statement, but still remaining one dynamic level above the foundation at the end. With the quiet and distant sound of the tenors and basses, it is almost as if Chesnokov was depicting the painful departure of soldiers as they head off to battle, leaving mothers and wives at home.

No. 5a "Мати Божия" Arranged for men's choir and alto

This movement is a supplemental movement, and is an arrangement of the original movement 5 for a men's choir. The structure is identical, but the analysis of Chesnokov's intention in the final section is confirmed with his addition of a solo alto voice singing the same part as movement five beginning in m. 34. The effect of this line with a men's choir would be an incredible addition to any concert.



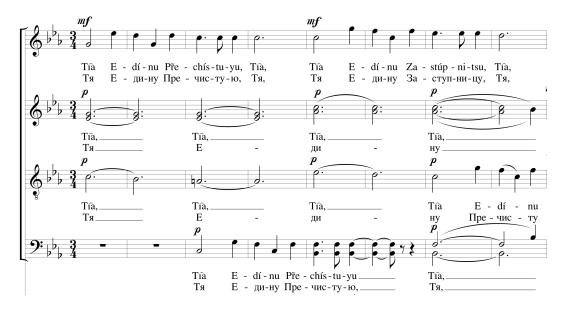
Example 3.13. Mvt. 5a, mm. 33-38

Upon viewing Chesnokov's manuscript, it is obvious that this supplemental movement was added after the original submission. The original six movements are in a finished format, while 5a is separate from the original six and is not as polished, at least in terms of submission for publication. This separation, and Chesnokov's deliberate use of an alto solo, further supports that this was the most intimate of the six movements for Chesnokov, was most likely well-received by audiences or congregations, and was a deeply personal statement.

No. 6 "Тя Едину Пречистую" (Thee, Only Protectress)

Chesnokov employs much of the same compositional devices in this movement as he did in the previous movements, but the order of their use is altered. The movement requires an ensemble with a notably higher practical range, the first soprano and tenor, often in unison, have multiple high B-flats and A-naturals. In addition to the pitch range, the movement spans the entire practical dynamic range from pianissimo to fortissimo and requires restraint from the conductor in order to execute the phrase structures without fatiguing the singers or offending the listener. This movement requires the most preparation from the conductor, and the most consideration of how it will be rehearsed. As a final plea to the Theotokos, it is an appropriately beautiful work. That said, if the work is being performed as a whole, and the conductor does not employ some restraint in the previous five movements, the choir will likely sound fatigued, which will make this movement's execution nearly impossible. In analyzing the work as a whole, it could be said that Chesnokov was aware of the demands of this movement and set movement 5 in such a manner as to provide a small "rest" for the singers.

The movement is in three sections, with the first section spanning mm. 1-24. The opening is an imitative passage beginning in c-minor. The three-measure motive is introduced in the soprano with an ascending leap of a sixth; this is sequenced in the basses, then again in the soprano, and finally the tenor which leads to the cadence on the relative E-flat major in m. 9.

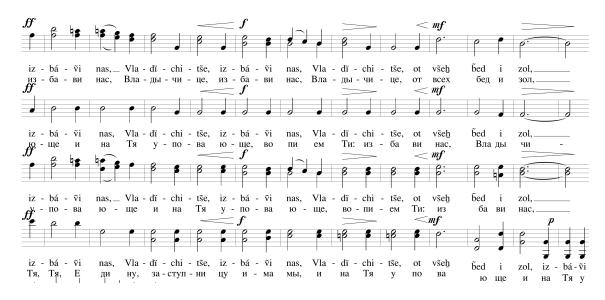


Example 3.14. Mvt. 6, mm. 1-8

The second half of this section begins with a timbral shift to the upper registers of all voice parts. This declamatory phrase extends from m. 9-13 and is then followed by the bass voice leading a call and response texture, which is a gradual descent in both pitch and dynamics to the cadence on the relative major, E-flat, in m. 23. In previous movements, we have seen Chesnokov use the bass descending line as a compositional device, but in this movement, he is more chromatic with the line, and it is drawn out over a much longer period of time. We have also seen the call and response texture, but that is usually led by the soprano, whereas Chesnokov decides to use the descending line from mm. 9-23 to not only move the harmonic progression, but to also take the leading role in the call and response on the repeated title text.

The next section is a sequential passage marked by a complete disturbance of the harmonic foundation. The harmonic instability leads to the movement's climactic moment in m. 33 and will maintain a gradual descent in register from this moment until it

cadences on a B-flat major chord in m. 43.



Example 3.15. Mvt. 6, mm. 32-44

The closing section of this final movement is similar in texture to the closing of movement 5. The text "Избави нас" ("Deliver us"), is repeated in the bass' pedal G2. This pedal creates a standing on the dominant section from m. 45-51. At m. 51, the listener and singer alike find resolution on the c-minor cadence, extended by the four-note motive in the tenor from mm. 53-55, which drives to the final plagal cadence in m. 59.

CHAPTER IV THE NEW EDITION

На Одре Болезни...

On Beds of Sickness

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 1 P. Chesnokov Ор. 45, no. 1









О, Пресладкий и всещедрый Иисусе...

O Most-Sweet and Most-Compassionate Jesus













Тебе, Необоримую Стену

Thee, Insurmountable Wall

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 3 P. Chesnokov Op. 45, no. 3















Скоро Предвари

O Lord, Save Thy People

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 4 P. Chesnokov Ор. 45, no. 4











Мати Божия

Mother of God

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 5 P. Chesnokov Op. 45, no. 5















Мати Божия

Mother of God

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 5a P. Chesnokov Ор. 45, no. 5a



















Тя Едину Пречистую

Thee, Only Protectress

П. Чесноков Ор. 45, no. 6 P. Chesnokov Op. 45, no. 6













CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

Conductors should spend significant time considering their ensemble's strengths and weaknesses before programming the work in its entirety. That said, each movement can easily stand alone, and a case could be made for performing the final three movements as a small set since the texts are all drawn from the same Molieben. What will aid the conductor is Chesnokov's structuring within each movement. He is explicit with his use of rests, and this can make rehearsing the work much more accessible to both the conductor and the singers. If Chesnokov were alive today, he would most likely agree that vowel modification is absolutely essential, especially during the climactic moments of each movement, to achieve what Chesnokov considers the three basic elements of good choral sonority: ensemble, intonation, and nuances.

Chesnokov defines ensemble as a "balance and blending within each section and of all the sections together," with the result being "unity." For intonation, "precision and accuracy in the tuning of chords," with the result being "beauty." Nuances are characterized by "the perception and fulfillment of the conductor's demands," with a result of "expressivity." In addition to these basic elements that Chesnokov puts forth, he also mentions vibrato, which we can read as a strong note for performance practice: "Note: It is also recommended that singers with a strong vibrato or wobble in the voice be

76

³⁹ Chesnokov, trans. Rommereim, ibid., 6.

avoided, since strong vibrato destroys the ensemble of the section." What many singers and conductors may find most difficult about the work as a whole is the length of phrases. For singers and audiences, the aesthetics of the work will be pleasing, but the phrases do not fit in the prescribed four- and eight-measure phrase structures that are more common in Western European traditions. The texts do not allow for such a structure, and the Orthodox tradition did not necessitate that composers fit their works within such a structure. The result is that singers will find themselves expecting a phrase to end simply because of the harmonic structure or a strong downbeat, but the text continues the phrases over barlines in a manner that almost obscures the meter. It is apparent that this may be why Chesnokov was so explicit about where he employed tutti rests. In the end, the sound is truly a blending of Western European romanticism with reverence for the traditions of the Orthodox church, resulting in a uniquely pre-revolutionary Russian choral aesthetic.

Chesnokov's op. 45 is a display of his contrapuntal mastery blended with a textual sensitivity that could only come from being immersed in the Orthodox traditions. This mastery and reverence for the texts provides for a very cohesive work. By examining the work as a whole, it is easy to hear Chesnokov's compositional identity. His shifting of textures by register, rhythm, dynamics, or the combination of all three, is a significant trademark of his non-chant-based works. Also notable is his flowing in and out of voice pairings and imitative textures without a clear separation. The strongest feature of each movement is the ability to cadence within a movement while maintaining a sense of

⁴⁰ Ibid., 21.

lacking resolution until the final cadence. This lacking resolution is not an accident, or a mere contrapuntal device; it is Chesnokov's personal statement regarding Russia's entrance into World War I. Chesnokov's use of carefully chosen texts and his choice to end the work on a minor cadence makes it clear that he feared the days of battle that Russia would soon experience.

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