Chapter 1
Introduction

Background and Context

The written history of music and the plastic arts as practised in the realm of Christian liturgy, or more generally, Christian spirituality, has, until recent times, often been characterized by the propagation of the idea of an unbridgeable divide between East and West.[2] More recently, both scholarly writing and practical activity have begun instead to see connections and cohesions, building bridges between these two apparent extremes over a large historical spectrum.[3] Apparent anomalies such as the existence of the Iberian *Cantigas de Santa Maria* dealing with Constantinopolitan themes, the collection of highly westernized icons at the

[2] See, for example, Robert Byron, *The Byzantine Achievement*, London & New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1929; Egon Wellesz, *A History of Byzantine Music and Hymnography*, second edition, Oxford 1961, or Pavel Florensky, *Iconostasis*, translated by Donald Sheehan and Olga Andrejev, Crestwood: SVS 1996; an honourable exception is Gervase Mathew, *Byzantine Aesthetics*, London: John Murray 1963. An overview of East-West conflicts as specifically related to the Byzantine chant repertories may be found in Alexander Lingas, "Performance Practice and the Politics of Transcribing Byzantine Chant" in *Acta Musicae Byzantinae* VI: 56-76, and a more modern approach to the question as it relates to Russian chant, in Dmitri Bolgarsky, "Kievo-Pechersk Chant" in *Proceedings of the First International Conference on Orthodox Church Music*, ed. Ivan Moody and Maria Takala-Roszczenko, Joensuu: ISOCM/University of Joensuu 2007, 297-391.

[3] See especially Svetlana Kujumdzieva, "Dynamics between Written and Oral Church Music" in *Cantus Planus* 1990, the recording *Lombards & Barbares*, (Katarina Livljanić) Arcana A319 2002, Francesca Flores d'Arcais and Giovanni Gentili, eds., *Il Trecento Adriatico, Paolo Veneziano e la pittura tra l'Oriente e Occidente*, Milan 2002, Alexander Lingas, "Mediaeval Byzantine chant and the sound of Orthodoxy", in *Byzantine Orthodoxies*, ed. Andrew Louth and Augustine Casiday, Aldershot: Ashgate 2006 and Ivan Moody, "Some Aspects of the Polyphonic Treatment of Byzantine Chant in the Orthodox Church in Europe", in *Musica se extendit ad omnia. Scritti in onore di Alberto Basso per il suo 75° compleanno*, a cura di Rosy Moffa e Sabrina Saccomani, Lucca: LIM 2007, 67-73.

Greek Cathedral of St George in Venice, or the existence of polyphony in Greece and Cyprus,[4] the travelling back and forth between Eastern and Western spheres of influence of artists such as Paolo Veneziano, the introduction of the feast of Corpus Christi into Uniate Ukrainian liturgy in the 18th century,[5] the development of the "baroque" icon in Serbia[6] and, later, the cross-cultural fertilization possible in the work of a deracinated composer such as Stravinsky, the paradoxical interiorization of "orientalism" by the Serbian composer Ljubica Marić (1909-2003),[7] or

---

[4] For the icon collection in Venice, see Maria Kazanaki-Lampa, *Ὀδιγὸς τοῦ Μουσεῖου, Ἑλληνικὸ Ἰνστιτοῦτο Βυζαντινῶν καὶ Μεταβυζαντινῶν Σπουδῶν Βενετίας*, Venice 2005 and Manussos Manussacas and Athanassios Paliuras (rev. Angeliki Stavropulu and Cristiano Luciani), *Guida al Museo di Icone e alla Chiesa di San Giorgio dei Greci*, Istituto Ellenico di Studi Bizantini e Post-Bizantini di Venezia, Venice 1992; concerning polyphony in the Byzantine Empire, see Γιάννης Φιλόπουλος, *Εισαγωγή στήν ἑλληνική πολυφωνική ἐκκλισιαστική μουσική*, Ἀθηναι: Νεφέλη 1990, 13-15, as well as the notes by Alexander Lingas to the recording "The Fall of Constantinople", Cappella Romana, CR402-CD, 2006; for an enlightening recent article on western influence in Russian iconography, see Alexander Musin, "Theology of the Image and the Evolution of Style", *Iconofile*, issue 7, 2005, 4-25.

[5] I am grateful to Maria Takala-Roszczenko for information on this matter communicated personally, and for her recent article on the subject, "The 'Latin' within the 'Greek': the feast of Corpus Christi in 17th-18th century Ruthenian practice", *Proceedings of the 3rd International Conference on Orthodox Church Music*, ed. Ivan Moody and Maria Takala-Roszczenko, Joensuu: ISOCM 2010, 76-87.

[6] The most comprehensive study of this phenomenon is Dejan Medaković, *Serbische Barock*, Vienna: Böhlau 1991.

[7] As a corrective discussion of "orientalism", see Maria Todorova, *Imagining the Balkans*, Oxford: OUP 2009, 162-163: "There are two main interpretations of the Ottoman legacy. One has it that it was a religiously, socially, institutionally, and even racially alien imposition on autocthonous Christian mediaeval societies (Byzantine, Bulgarian, Serbian, and so on). The central element of this interpretation is based on the belief in the incompatibility between Christianity and Islam, between the essentially nomadic civilization of the newcomers and the old urban and settled agrarian civilizations of the Balkans and the Near East. Most nineteenth-century European assessments and most assessments emanating from within Balkan historiography are based on this belief.

This view in its extremes has been dispelled from serious scholarly works, but is often unconsciously reproduced in what can be described as the mechanical (or separate spheres) approach, that is, the attempts to decompose the legacy into its supposed constituent elements: language, music, food, architecture, art, dress, administrative traditions, political institutions, and so on. Within this approach, no matter whether the research comes from the Balkans, Turkey, or outside the region, Ottoman becomes synonymous with Islamic or Turkish (and to a lesser extent Arabic and Persian) influences in different spheres, usually subsumed under the heading Oriental elements. This mechanistic division in otherwise excellent but usually exclusively empirical works is brought about by methodological constraints and lack of a theoretical framework, rather than deliberate attempts at isolating constituent elements. Within the Balkan historiographical tradition, which insists on the existence of distinct and incompatible local/indigenous and foreign/Ottoman spheres, the danger lies not so much in overemphasizing 'the impact of

a plastic artist such as her compatriot Lazar Vozarević (1925-1968), may all be seen in the light of what modern ethnomusicology has come to call acculturation.

Within the specific context of sacred art, such interactions and cross-fertilizations have generally been viewed with suspicion, especially when the Orthodox *phronema* (or philosophical framework) has seemed to be threatened by the introduction of western aesthetics (that is, essentially, from the Orthodox point of view, humanism and modernism, vaguely though these may be defined), and with them, western ecclesiastical dogma and the eventual possibility of an anthropocentric, rather than theocentric, view of the world and of creation. Informal commentary on this question is extensive; more reasoned discussion harder to come by. Indeed, given the enormous influence in the Orthodox world of commentators such as Leonid Uspensky, whose work on the icon has been both profound and widespread, it has proved difficult to begin such discussion at all,[8] but such is precisely the aim of this book.

Orthodoxy and Art

At this point it becomes necessary to discuss traditional understandings of what art is in the Orthodox Church. Firstly, it is important to understand that sacred art exists as part of a wider sacred tradition, and that it derives all its ontological presuppositions from that fact. Here is the Orthodox theologian Paul Evdokimov speaking of "culture, art and their charisms":

> Man's vocation is determined by his spiritual gifts and charisms: 'cultivate' the immense field of the world, get involved in all the arts and sciences in order to build human existence as God intended it. But this human existence can only be based on *diaconia*, whose biblical meaning is far more than just social work. Diaconia means precisely the act which heals and restores the balance. Human existence is also the *koinonia* of all men, human

the West' and overlooking continuities and indigenous institutions, but rather in separating artificially 'indigenous' from 'Ottoman' institutions and influences." For an opposite point of view, see Robert Bideleux and Ian Jefferies, *A History of Eastern Europe: Crisis and Change*, London: Routledge 1998, 32-25.

[8] For example, "In the XVIIth century the decline of Church art sets in. This decline was the result of a deep spiritual crisis, a secularisation of religious consciousness, thanks to which, despite the vigorous opposition of the Church, there began the penetration not merely of separate elements but of the very principles of Western religious art, which are alien to Orthodoxy." Leonid Uspensky, *The Meaning of Icons*, Crestwood, NY: SVS Press 1989, 47-48. See also *Theology of the Icon*, Crestwood, New York: SVS Press 1992 (2 vols), *passim*; for an unexpected example of enlightened discussion, see Alexander Musin, *op. cit*.

> community and communion, grafted onto what Revelations tells us is the absolutely new and absolutely desirable reality of the Kingdom.[9]

The Divine Liturgy, the Eucharist, *is* that absolutely desirable reality: the Kingdom. Fr Alexander Schmemann rightly noted that "The only real fall of man is his noneucharistic life in a noneucharistic world",[10] and liturgical art has no other object than the manifesting, through wood and paint, or through sound, of the sacrament of the Liturgy, which is necessarily manifest through the depiction of the Feasts and Saints of the Church. Far from any idea of embellishment, liturgical art seeks to transmit the divine, engaging not so much an appreciation of aesthetics, not an emotional response, but something quite different. Early Christian doctrine on ecclesiastical song, for example, may be found well-exemplified in *On the Benefit of Psalmody*, by the 4th-century bishop Niceta of Remesiana, in which the author specifically urges the singing (as opposed to internal reciting) of psalmody "with understanding".[11] Likewise, St John Chrysostom wrote, in his Exposition on Psalm 41, that

> When God saw that most men were slothful, that they came unwillingly to spiritual readings, and that they found the effort involved to be distasteful, wishing to make the labour more grateful and to allay its tedium He blended melody with prophecy in order, that, delighted by the modulation of the chant, all might raise sacred hymns to Him with great eagerness.[12]

The "understanding" of which Niceta speaks is, in its turn, not merely seen to be the intellect, but what St Gregory Palamas describes as the moment when "when your mind is not darting hither and thither but enters within your heart"[13]

---

[9] Paul Evdokimov, *The Art of the Icon: A Theology of Beauty*, transl. Steven Bigham, Redondo Beach: Oakwood Publications 1972, 59.

[10] Alexander Schmemann, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood, New York: SVS Press, Second revised edition 1973, 18.

[11] Partial translation in James McKinnon, ed., *The Early Christian Period and the Latin Middle Ages (Strunk's Source Readings in Music History*, Vol. 2), New York: Norton 1995, 18-21.

[12] "Exposition of Psalm 41", translated by Oliver Strunk, revised by James McKinnon, in *Strunk's Source Readings in Music History*, Volume 2, revised edition, New York: Norton 1998, 13.

[13] St Gregory Palamas, from *Early Fathers From the Philokali*a, translated from the Russian text, "Dobrotolubiye," by E. Kadloubovsky and G.E.H. Palmer, eighth edition, London: Faber 1981, 412-415; see also John Meyendorff, *A Study of Gregory Palamas*, (2nd edition, London: Faith Press 1974); Nikiphoros the Monk, "On Watchfulness and the Guarding of the Heart", quoted from the English translation in *The Philokalia*, Translated and edited by G.E.H. Palmer, Philip Sherrard and Kallistos Ware, London: Faber & Faber 1995, Vol.4, 206; and Ivan Moody, "Liturgy, Music and Silence", in *CompaRes Yearbook for Iberian-Slavic Studies*, Lisbon: CompaRes/Clepul 2011, 75-81.

– that is to say, unceasing prayer, represented at its highest level in the monastic movement known as hesychasm. Of the apophatic theological tradition underlying this, the present Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I, has said:

> Through apophatic theology, the Eastern Fathers affirm the absolute transcendence of God,while at the same time underlining His divine immanence. This ascent of the human intellect towards God may be described as a positive negativity; it is a process of elimination resembling the ascetic katharsis of the soul and rejecting all forms of intellectual idolatry.[14]

Thus it is that in traditional Orthodox art there is no room for the imagination of the individual; rather, the artist becomes a channel for the reception and transmission of divine realities. According to Fr Pavel Florensky, writing in 1920, when God-centredness in art is lost, then so is reality:

> When the certainty of theocentrism becomes suspect, and along with the music of the spheres there sounds the music of the earth (I mean 'earth' in the sense of the affirmation of the human 'I'), then begins the attempt to replace realities that are growing muddied and obscured with simulacra and phantoms, to replace theurgy with illusionistic art, to replace divine actions with theatre.[15]

While it will no doubt shock many that Florensky was referring specifically in these comments to Giotto and the development of perspective, it must also be understood that he was writing at a time when the spiritual message of Byzantine icon painting, conveyed in part by the use of reverse perspective, was not only misunderstood but despised – as Florensky himself shows by quoting a highly negative assessment of mediaeval painting from Alexandre Benois's *Istoriya zhivopisi* (History of Art), published in 1912.

In speaking of sacred traditions more broadly, the Orthodox theologian and cultural historian Philip Sherrard observed that the essential features of a sacred tradition

> are that it presupposes on the one hand a body of sacred knowledge – an immemorial Wisdom – and on the other hand a body of sacred rites and practices through the operation of which a spiritual influence is transmitted that alone makes it possible for us to

---

[14] Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, "Theology, Liturgy and Silence", lecture delivered at the Pontifical Oriental Institute, Rome, 6 March 2008, available at http://www.pontificalorientalinstitute.com/news/recent-news-and-events-at-poi/theology-liturgy-and-silence.html. *Apophasis* is a theology that arises from the recognition that God cannot be described, except in terms of what He is not, most fully expressed in the Christian tradition by Pseudo-Dionysius the Aeropagite and St Maximus the Confessor, both active in the 5th century.

[15] Pavel Florensky, "Reverse Perspective", in Pavel Florensky, *Beyond Vision. Essays on the Perception of Art*, ed. Nicoletta Misler, London: Reaktion Books 2002, 221-2.

> bring about in ourselves those inner transformations in our consciousness, and indeed, in our whole being, that put us in effective possession of the Truth, and that alone makes it possible for us to live the Truth.[16]

Here there is a clear admonition against any superficial approach to sacred tradition or sacred traditions: the artist who values the Truth must allow these transformations to take place by participating in that "body of sacred rites and practices". Similarly, with specific regard to church singing, the musicologist Johann von Gardner noted that "The liturgical singing of the Orthodox Church constitutes an autonomous realm that is guided by its own aesthetic laws and standards".[17] Consequently, such music must be performed in the appropriate spirit, as these words from the Sixth Ecumenical Council (Constantinople, 680-681) indicate:

> We wish those who attend church for the purpose of chanting neither to employ disorderly cries and to force their nature to cry aloud, nor to foist in anything that is not becoming and proper to a church; but, on the contrary, to offer such psalmodies with much attentiveness and contriteness to God, Who sees directly into everything that is hidden from our sight. 'For the sons of Israel shall be reverent' (Lev. 15:30) the sacred word has taught us.[18]

Similarly, in 1880, the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople published an encyclical dealing with liturgical innovation, in which it was observed that the Church

> chose and developed a music which suits the purpose of the people coming to church: to raise the mind from the mundane to the heavenly and to pray to our God and Father with a music that corresponds to the Church's divine hymns and has grandeur in simplicity, delight in rhythm, and modesty in clear, articulate, unaffected, melodious psalmody executed with humility, peace and compunction.[19]

It is clear, however, from the history of music in the Orthodox Church that there has been no single interpretation of just what that "autonomous realm" might signify in the creation of liturgical art. The existence of many vastly different repertories of monophonic chant throughout the Orthodox world would be enough to prove this; when the legitimacy of polyphony is brought into the

---

[16] Philip Sherrard, *Christianity: Lineaments of a Sacred Tradition*, Brookline: Holy Cross 1998, 22.

[17] Johann von Gardner, *Russian Church Singing*, vol. 1, Orthodox Worship and Hymnography, trans. Vladimir Morosan, Crestwood, NY: SVS 1980, 62.

[18] Canon LXXV of the Sixth Ecumenical Synod, The Rudder, pp. 379-380; for commentary on the possible interpretation of these words, see Ivan Moody, "The Idea of Canonicity in Orthodox Liturgical Art", P*roceedings of the Second International Conference on Orthodox Liturgical Music*, Joensuu: ISOCM/University of Joensuu 2009, 342.

[19] See Γεώργίος Παπαδόπουλος, *Συμβολαὶ εἰς τὴν Ἱστορίαν τῆς παρ᾽ ἡμίν Ἐκκλησιαστικής Μουσικής*, Ἀθηναι 1890, 421.

discussion, agreement is hardly possible. Elsewhere I have discussed the problem of the idea of "canonical" liturgical art[20] insofar as it invalidates, if taken as a binding idea, substantial amounts of the history of Orthodox liturgical art. Possible answers to these questions may be found, I suggested, by examining some recent work on iconography. Deacon Alexander Musin, in discussing Uspensky's idea that "theology and image constitute a united verbal-figurative expression of Revelation", has noted that this concept (amounting to the canonicity of the icon) "needs to be defined more exactly". He says that

> The interrelation of the word and image in the Church is significant; as an artistic image its subject cannot be contrary to a biblical or dogmatic text. Nevertheless, the ways of expressing the inner content of the image can be different and do not require the same severe regulations of terminological character as rhetorical theology.[21]

If the message for the iconographer and the historian of iconography is unmistakable, it is hardly less so for the church musician. Wider-ranging speculation on the interaction of Christian belief and art may be found in the work of the late theologian Fr Alexander Men, who wrote that

> To deprive man of creativity means to take away that attribute which makes him like God. For it is written in the Scriptures: 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' These are the Creator's words. Which image and likeness, we might ask, does not create? Which one tells us that creativity is delirium, of the devil? So we come to the following. Christ said that each person brings what he has to offer from his treasure. And you, painters and masters of other genres, express the treasures of your heart, your perceptions of the world.[22]

The reality of the existence of such phenomena as westernized Russian icons, or the Venetian collection mentioned above, or even the mere possibility of composing polyphony in Greece, Russia and elsewhere, proves that, recent commentary such as the above notwithstanding, aesthetic theory and theological exposition was not always kept pace with by reality, or, rather, that reality took its own course: theory and theology were left to catch up.

Modernisms

An opposite phenomenon may be seen in a specifically musical context, in the appearance of aesthetic elements drawn from Byzantine art (in its broadest sense) and Orthodox theology, paralleled to some extent by similar movements in the plastic arts in the work of a number of composers during the course of

[20] Moody, "The Idea of Canonicity..."

[21] Musin, "Theology of the Image...", 13.

[22] Fr Alexander Men, *Christianity and the Arts*, translated by Steve Griffin; available at http://www.alexandermen.com/Christianity_and_the_Arts.

the 20th century.[23] Such composers include the Russians Igor Stravinsky, Galina Ustvolskaya and Sofia Gubaidulina, the Estonian Arvo Pärt, the Englishman John Tavener, the Bulgarian Ivan Spassov, the Greek Michael Adamis and the Serbian Ljubica Marić; in each case, this introduction of specific reference to Eastern Orthodox sources has occurred within the broad context of modernism, and it is the investigation of this interaction that is the aim of the present study.

> The one thing that all modernists had indisputably in common was the conviction that the untried is markedly superior to the familiar, the rare to the ordinary, the experimental to the routine.[24]

If one may take this observation as being true – and Peter Gay's investigation into the phenomenon of modernism certainly, and perhaps predictably, supports such a view – how could such an attitude, arising from the humanist experiment that led to what John Carroll has called "The Wreck of Western Culture"[25], be reconciled with any recourse on the part of artists to the millennial (or apparently millennial) traditions of the Orthodox Church and its artistic culture?[26] Max Paddison, in discussing Adorno, asks the same question in a more general way when he speaks of

> the predicament faced by the artist caught between, on the one hand, the traditional demands of the art work for unity and integration (the harmonious relationship between part and whole) and, on the other hand, the loss of faith in any overarching unity on both individual and social levels in the face of the evident fragmentation of modern existence.[27]

Adorno's negative dialectics, in which thesis and antithesis occur without the "overarching unity" created by synthesis, would seem to exclude anything as profoundly engaged with synthesis – the "placing together" of the human person – as Orthodox theology, which is, of course, what the art of the Orthodox Church manifests. Any use of such a vocabulary within quotation marks, as it were, would seem to relativize, recontextualize and possibly ironize it, which at

---

[23] Cf John E. Bowlt, "Orthodoxy and the Avant-Garde", *Christianity and the Arts in Russia*, ed. William C. Brumfield and Miloš V. Velimirović, Cambridge: CUP 1991, 145-150; Jeremy Howard, *East European Art*, Oxford: OUP 2006, 204-207 and *passim*; Oleg Tarasov, *Icon and Devotion: Sacred Spaces in Imperial Russia*, London: Reaktion Books 2002, 361-382, and J.B. Bullen, *Byzantium Rediscovered*, London and New York: Phaidon 2003.

[24] Peter Gay, *Modernism*, London, Heinemann 2007, 2.

[25] John Carroll, *The Wreck of Western Culture. Humanism Revisited*, Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books 2008, *passim*.

[26] For an examination of some aspects of this question with regard to Orthodox tradition, see Ivan Moody, "The Idea of Canonicity…".

[27] Max Paddison, *Adorno, Modernism and Mass Culture: Essays on Critical Theory and Music*, London: Kahn and Averill 1996, 52.

first sight seems more a postmodernist than a modernist proceeding. However, as the work of, for example, Ljubica Marić shows, the integration of such vocabularies is possible within a broadly modernist aesthetic;[28] as Arnold Whittall has observed, "In twentieth-century compositional practice, radical modernism or avant-garde extremism has coexisted with a no less resourceful concern to explore possible accommodations between modernism's tendency to proliferate and classicism's impulse to integrate".[29] One might also, and with particular relevance in the present context, cite the overt connections of Malevich's famous black square (*Chërnyi kvadrat*) with icon painting as a truly fruitful modernist example of such a procedure; as Jeremy Howard has noted, "[...] Malevich's painted quadrilateral was not perfectly square. It related to the shape and function of Russo-Byzantine icons and simultaneously, through its negation of content and the internal relationships of its elements, was the most powerful generator of forms".[30] The work of Oleg Tarasov on the role of the icon in the aesthetics of the Russian avant-garde is also singularly revelatory in this regard (I shall return to Tarasov's writings below).[31]

Stravinsky had already established the paradigm for this paradox when he reverted to attendance at the services of the Russian Orthodox Church while in France after 1927. Of this, Gay has observed:

> This psychological turn of a modernist towards a lost emotional home should surprise only those who equate modernism with atheism. Religious belief and unbelief among modernists ranged across the widest possible spectrum, and was independent of their distance from conventionality in the arts.
>
> It does not follow, then, that Stravinsky abandoned originality while he searched, as he put it, for order.[32]

Acknowledging the breadth of the spiritual spectrum of modernism is obviously of vital importance.[33] In the first place, it recognizes the non-monolithic

---

[28] See Ivan Moody, "Aspects of Spirituality and Modernism in the Music of Ljubica Marić", in Dejan Despić and Melita Milin, eds., *Spaces of Modernism: Ljubica Marić in Context*, Belgrade: SANU 2010, 75-82.

[29] Arnold Whittall, *Musical Composition in the Twentieth Century*, Oxford: OUP 1999, 2.

[30] Jeremy Howard, *op.cit.*, 218.

[31] Oleg Tarasov, *Icon and Devotion*...

[32] Gay, *ibid.*, 262.

[33] Even though Gay himself undermines his objectivity in this matter by subsequently noting that "[Stravinsky] had grown uneasy about what had once been his supreme response to his passion for composition, his individualism. As he told a journalist not long after he had started putting icons on his piano: 'Individualism in art, philosophy, and religion implies a state of revolt against God,' and he had come to oppose this revolt.",

nature of the idea of modernism itself, and, secondly, calls implicit attention to the fact that to question the possibility of diverse spiritual contributions to modernist thought would be as absurd as questioning the possibility of contributions of an emotional, linguistic or geographical order. It is here that the notion of "moderate" modernism, or, perhaps, "moderated" modernism comes into play.[34] This term seems first to have been used by Adorno ("gemässigte Moderne"[35]), inevitably pejoratively, but has since gained wider, and more positive, currency following its use by Hermann Danuser in his 1978 article "Tradition und Avantgarde nach 1950".[36] It is a particularly useful term to describe a large amount of music written by composers who began their careers just after the Second World War and the wide acceptance of the more fundamental challenge to modernism known as postmodernism. (A challenge so successful that Richard Taruskin was able to refer to Schnittke in 1993 as a "posteverythingist".[37])

The term is, further, exceptionally useful to describe most music written after the gradual disintegration of the Socialist Realist aesthetic, as Ivana Medić's studies of the phenomenon in Russia and Serbia in particular have shown.[38] The search on the part of Russian composers for a new orientation made necessary by Krushchev's "Thaw" after 1953, for example, reflects once again what Peter Gay said of Stravinsky: "It does not follow, then, that Stravinsky abandoned originality while he searched, as he put it, for order." It is equally clear that such

Gay, *ibid.*, 262.

[34] Though further discussion of the matter would undoubtedly be of value, the present author follows Ivana Medić in her preference for the second of these terms: "(...) the adjective suggests that moderateness is in the very nature of the phenomenon, while the participle puts an emphasis on human agency." Ivana Medić, "The Ideology of Moderated Modernism in Serbian Musicology", in *Muzikologija* 7, 2007, 280n.

[35] See various essays in Theodor Adorno, *Essays on Music*, ed. Richard Leppert. Berkeley, etc: University of California Press, 2002, especially "The Aging of New Music" and "On the Social Situation in Music."

[36] In Reinhold Brinkmann, ed., *Die Neue Musik und die Tradition*, Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Neue Musik und Musikerziehung Darmstadt, 19, Mainz 1978, 22-54.

[37] Richard Taruskin, "A Posteverythingist Booms", *New York Times* (2 July 1992)

[38] See Medić, op. cit., and, by the same author, "Moderated Modernism in Russian Music after 1953" in *Rethinking Musical Modernism*, ed. Melita Milin and Dejan Despić, Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts 2008, 195-204, as well as Vesna Mikić, "Aspects of (Moderate) Modernism in the Serbian Music of the 1950s" in *Rethinking Musical Modernism*, ed. Melita Milin and Dejan Despić, Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts 2008, 187-194. For a broad survey of contemporary music in Bulgaria, up to and including the phenomenon of post-modernism, see Maria Kostakeva, "À la recherche de l'identité perdue" in Georges Kokkonis, ed., *Création musicale et nationalismes dans le Sud-Est européen*, Études Balkaniques 13, Paris: de Boccard 2006, 107-126.

searches for order were different for every composer. Medić provides a list of possible types of moderate/moderated modernism, including neo-romanticism and neo-expressionism; the last item in this list is "neo-religious/mystical wave",[39] though she does not, for reasons of space, analyse this category. The point has been well expressed by Miško Šuvaković in his discussion of modernisms in the plastic arts in Yugoslavia: "In the course of the 1950s and 1960s, socialist aestheticism evolved into 'moderate modernism', the new mainstream. [...] On the one hand this allowed artists to approach the mainstream of international Western modernism, while on the other hand it was a voice of resistance to the more radical voices of modernism (from abstraction to the neo-avant-gardes)".[40]

Mention has already been made of Ljubica Marić; her synthetic approach, absorbing into a "moderate/moderated" modern vocabulary elements of the Serbian Octoechos, certainly fits such a category; so too does the work of Galina Ustvolskaya, though it is clear that the extent of the "moderation" of her modernism is a matter for debate. Ustvolskaya's work – all of which she claimed was religious in intent – betrays an obvious preoccupation with the structure and melodic style of Russian chant (particularly Znamenny), "the essence of [her] art", according to Gerard McBurney,

> is that she neither quotes nor stylizes. There is nothing nostalgic, easily appealing or retrospective about her intentions, and her music, with its harsh and relentless processions of tone-clusters and hammer-blows, yields nothing to conventional assumptions about what makes sense or what might sound aesthetically pleasing.[41]

Dorothea Redepenning, as part of her discussion of Ustvolskaya in her Soviet context, has also written about "Ustwolskaja als religiöse Komponistin", drawing parallels with Yuri Butsko, Schnittke, Shchedrin and Andrey Petrov and relating this to the publication in 1965 of the monumental *Drevnerusskoe pevcheskoe iskusstvo* and, in 1968, *Obraztsy drevnerusskogo pevcheskogo iskusstva* by N.D. Uspensky, which revolutionized – in a manner controversial still today – the state of knowledge of the history of Russian ecclesiastical chant.[42]

---

[39] Medić, "Moderated Modernism...", 198.

[40] Miško Šuvaković, "Impossible Histories" in *Impossible Histories. Historic Avant-Gardes, Neo-Avant-Gardes, and Post-Avant-Gardes in Yugoslavia*, 1918-1991, ed. Dubravka Djurić and Miško Šuvaković, Massachusetts: MIT Press 2003, 11.

[41] Gerald McBurney, "Soviet Music after the Death of Stalin: The Legacy of Shostakovich" in *Russian Cultural Studies*, ed. Catriona Kelly and David Shepherd, Oxford, NY: OUP 1998, 135-6.

[42] Dorothea Redepenning, "Galina Ustwolskajas Oeuvre im sowjetischen Kontext", in Ulrich Tadday, ed., *Galina Ustwolskaja*, Musik-Konzepte 143, Munich: Richard Boorberg Verlag 2009, 5-20.

It is clear, then, that the various manifestations of modernism as they affected countries, or composers from countries, of Orthodox tradition, were the result of a reaction to the modernist agenda (Gay's noting of the "conviction that the untried is markedly superior to the familiar, the rare to the ordinary, the experimental to the routine"), but included an artistic stance that had room for both the innovations of that modernist agenda and the historical, aesthetic and spiritual weight of an inherited religious tradition – indeed, various religious traditions. Such a combination, "moderate" or "moderated" though its modernistic component might seem to be, in the context of the Orthodox world especially, given its adherence to the idea of creativity informed by tradition (or, more frequently, Holy Tradition, referring to the deposit of faith transmitted by Christ through the Apostles to the Church), was to prove fertile ground.

It is necessary to go no further than the three Slavonic-texted liturgical works and the Byzantinisms in the Mass and the *Symphony of Psalms* by Stravinsky to be afforded a glimpse of the rich possibilities by such an approach, but it is important to note that it is not uncommon to encounter precisely the opposite understanding of Stravinsky's rapprochement with religious belief, made under the influence of Arthur Lourié. Such is the case with Francis Maes, for example, who, in his declaredly Taruskinian *A History of Russian Music*, writes of Lourié that

> In particular, he had introduced Stravinsky to the work of the neo-Thomist philosopher Jacques Maritain, whose views helped to consolidate Stravinsky's antimodernism. Lourié's *Concerto Spirituale* of 1929 can even be considered the model for Stravinsky's *Symphony of Psalms*.[43]

While Lourié's relationship with Stravinsky is relatively well-known, as is the influence of Maritain, the unelaborated characterization of the composer's aesthetic at this period as "antimodernist" is surely an unwarranted simplification. Adorno claimed that Stravinsky had arrived at stasis in his music,[44] but Jonathan Cross convincingly argues that

> the oppositions of materials in Stravinsky's music are held in some sort of balance; discontinuous musical ideas are heard to belong together, offering a new coherence if not a new kind of unity. [...] Adorno problematizes for us the 'timelessness', the non-developmental' aspects of Stravinsky's music; we, in turn, need to recognize that these may not, in fact, be problems after all.[45]

---

43 Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music*, Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press 2002, 273.

44 Theodor Adorno, "Stravinsky: a Dialectical Portrait", in *Quasi una Fantasia: Essays on Modern Music*, trans. Rodney Livingstone, London: Verso 1992, 152-3.

45 Jonathan Cross, *The Stravinsky Legacy*, Cambridge: CUP 1998, 240.

At the same time, he wisely notes that "Stravinsky, while *anticipating* post-modernism in so many ways, is still to be understood in modernist terms"[46] – in other words, he is, in this, essentially different from genuine postmodernists who were to come after him.

If modernism, and its relationship to postmodernism, is thought of in a different way, however, one may arrive at a point of view that dispenses with the need for such violent categorization. Rather than seeing modernism exclusively as a reaction to outdated aesthetic stances, one may consider the phenomenon as what Jim Samson has described as "a cultural and intellectual response to modernity".[47] Such responses will naturally have varied in degree and character, and thus it is far more helpful to think in terms of *modernisms* rather than a single, linear *modernism*. And, just as, in accepting such a plurality of responses to modernity, the notion of a disengagement with previous tradition(s) achieved with a single swing of the axe becomes untenable, thus too does any similar break between modernism(s) and postmodernism(s), the latter possibly implying a conscious and violent reaction against the perceived dominant ideology, but also possibly being in reality a continuation of modernism.[48] In other words, one may speak, with Jonathan Cross, of "the traditions of modernism".[49]

Emblematic of the possibilities afforded by modernism to the world of Orthodoxy is the work of Fr Pavel Florensky (1882-1937), whose words have already been quoted above. A polymath, Florensky was a theoretician of the icon who had also studied modern art.[50] He it was who, with Lev Zhegin, developed the theory of "reverse perspective", after the work of Oskar Wulff.[51] Zhegin and Florensky noted that the non-realistic perspective in icons was a deliberate choice on the part of iconographers: such an observation was only possible after the expansion of space that occurred in cubism. Indeed, Moscow in the years leading up to the

[46] *Ibid.*, 234.

[47] Jim Samson, 'Either/Or', in *Rethinking Musical Modernism*, ed. Melita Milin and Dejan Despić, Belgrade: Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts 2008, 15.

[48] A remarkable defence of modernism, which in many senses turns the modern/postmodern argument on its head, was published by Susan Sontag as "Pay Attention to the World", in *The Guardian*, Saturday 17 March 2007.

[49] Jonathan Cross, 'Modernism and Tradition, and the Traditions of Modernism', *Muzikologija/ Musicology: Journal of the Institute of Musicology of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts* 6 (2006), 19-42.

[50] See Nicoletta Misler, "Pavel Florensky as Art Historian", in *P. Florensky, Beyond Vision: Essays on the Perception of Art*, London: Reaktion 2002.

[51] See Pavel Florensky, "Reverse Perspective" in *ibid.*, 200-272 and the introduction by Misler on pages 198-199.

Revolution in 1917 was a place of hugely sophisticated discussion concerning precisely cubism and icons, perspective and aesthetics.[52] As Charles Lock has said, in discussing St Andrei Rublev's famous icon of the Trinity,

> Rublev was rediscovered only recently, a little over one hundred years ago, when the modern movement in painting jolted the eye out of its habits, inverting its familiar ways of seeing by challenging the perspective to which European eyes had grown accustomed since the renaissance.[53]

A precise equivalent to this in the field of music is probably impossible to find. Nevertheless, the modernist expansion of visual space in cubism has a parallel in the expansion of aural space which occurred with the various distortions, expansions and dismantlings of the tonal system which characterize the modernist period. It would be remarkable indeed if this process had made no impact at all upon Orthodox musicians. More than one of those "traditions of modernism" mentioned above had room to accommodate the spiritual, as some of the cultural commentary I have already cited confirms, and the spiritual most certainly had room to accommodate the modern. How, specifically, this accommodation has manifested itself in the work of composers of Orthodox Christian heritage (but certainly not only in the sphere of specifically liturgical music) will be the theme of the following chapters. Though an exhaustive discussion is certainly impossible, study of the sheer richness and variety of the encounters between two such apparently disparate and antagonistic ideologies is its own reward.

[52] See Charles Lock, "The space of hospitality: on the icon of the Trinity ascribed to Andrei Rublev", *Sobornost* 30:1, 2008, 21-53 and Yu. A. Rusakov, "Matisse in Russia in the Autumn of 1911", *Burlington Magazine*, Vol. 117, No. 866, May 1975, 284-291.

[53] Lock, *op. cit.*, 22.