

## PROGRAMS OF HOLIDAY GOVERNMENT CONCERTS – THE MUSICAL DOCTRINE OF THE USSR IN CULTURE (30S – 50S OF THE XX CENTURY)

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### Summary

In the second half of the 30s in the USSR the everyday life of the Kremlin courtyard took its shape, the tastes of which were reflected in the programs of government concerts, which were full of opera arias, duets, ballet acts and all kinds of folklore.

In totalitarian states the tastes of the leader largely determine the state's cultural policy. The ruling elite decides which areas of art are needed by the people and which are not. The musical doctrine of Soviet power was based on the musical tastes of the leader. This doctrine bore the mask of "socialist realism in music". But it was precisely the "mask", under which music gave pleasure to Stalin.

The article provides a comparative analysis of the programs of government concerts in the Kremlin and the program repertoire of the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater after T.G. Shevchenko in Kiev.

Based on the recollections of participants in government concerts in the Kremlin, a subtle connoisseur of music Y. Elagin and an outstanding Soviet ballerina M. Plisetskaya, the author recreates the atmosphere of Soviet official receptions, many of which were an important event not only in the political but also in the cultural life of Soviet society.

**Keywords:** power, politics, culture, musical doctrine, Soviet art.

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### 1. Introduction

The novelty of the research lies in the fact that a comparative analysis of the programs of Soviet government concerts and the repertoire of the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater after T.G. Shevchenko in Kiev was produced not only to study the cultural, but also the political component of the life of Soviet society.

The relevance of the work lies in the study of the problem of interaction between power and society, the formation of cultural policy in a totalitarian state.

The purpose of the study is to study the principle of building the Soviet doctrine in the field of cultural development on the basis of the analysis of concert programs of Soviet government receptions,

### 2. Classification of government concerts. Participants and guests

By the mid-30s three types of government concerts were defined:

- a big gala concert at the Bolshoi Theater. These concerts have ended government sessions, congresses, conventions;
- concerts in the Grand Kremlin Palace, which were given during New Year's celebrations, receptions, banquets, etc.;
- "intimate" concerts for some members of the Politburo, usually held in their private apartments in the Kremlin.

According to the rules of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, performers who had relatives abroad could not be allowed to participate in concerts or performances in the presence of members of the Politburo.

This rule led to the fact that the leader could not listen to brilliant musicians, for example, the cellist of the Bolshoi Theater Svyatoslav Knushevitsky. Instead of him the solo was played by another, inferior in skill to Knushevitsky, but who had no relatives abroad.

Artists who were allowed to perform at government concerts were issued special passes the day before the performance, on which the performer's name was typed. The text ended with the surname of the head of the security, for example: "State Security Commissioner of III rank Dachin. Concert participants were required to comply with the following rules:

- do not walk along the theater corridors for no particular reason;
- visit only the nearest restroom or buffet;
- arrive at the concert no later than an hour before its start.

Considering that the concerts began at about 8 pm and ended after 12 am, the artists who performed at the end of the program had to come by 7 pm and be behind the scenes for more than 5 hours.

Security at concerts in the Grand Kremlin Palace was stricter than in the Bolshoi Theater.

By the mid-1930s it had become a tradition to invite pilots, scientists, engineers, and prominent figures of art to the receptions, who gave a special glitter to such receptions. "Court" guests were rarely invited with their wives (or husbands). An exception was made if the husband or wife were equally famous, for example, Ivan Moskvina and Alla Tarasova.

Members of the Politburo also attended receptions "in a bachelor position," that is, without wives.

At receptions in the Grand Kremlin Palace Stalin often approached actors and actresses and talked with them. At the beginning of 1941 one of these conversations caused a heated discussion in the artistic circles of Moscow. In the midst of the evening, after 12 o'clock at night, Stalin approached the mezzo-soprano of the Bolshoi Theater, Davydova, a spectacular woman dressed in a silver strongly low-cut dress with jewelry around her neck and arms, with a stole made of black and brown foxes.

"The great leader, dressed in his unchanging modest khaki jacket and boots, for a while silently looked at the young woman, smoking his pipe. Then he took the pipe out of his mouth.

– Why do you dress so magnificently? What is all this for? – He asked, pointing with the pipe at Davydova's pearl necklace and bracelets. – Doesn't your dress seem tasteless to you? You need to be humble. You need to think less about dresses and work more on yourself, on your voice. Take an example from her ... – he pointed to his favorite passing by – the soprano of the Bolshoi Theater Natalia Shpiller. Shpiller was a real beauty – the perfect embodiment of the image of Anna Karenina – tall, stately, with regular facial features, full of the peculiar charm inherent in beautiful Russian women. For all the aristocracy of her manners, she dressed with deliberate modesty, always wore closed dresses in dark colors, did not wear jewelry and almost did not use cosmetics.

– She doesn't think about her toilets as much as you do, but thinks about her art... – Stalin continued. – And what great successes she made. How well she began to sing...

Both ladies stood in silence and listened to the leader. What could they say in response? It was said that Davydova could hardly restrain herself so as not to burst into tears. And there was a reason to do it...", – recalled Y.B. Elagin (*Elagin, 2020*).

Natalya Shpiller, wife of cellist Svyatoslav Knushevitsky, often took part in the so-called "intimate evenings" at the apartments of Politburo members in the Kremlin, which were not customary to talk about. About her "debut" she said that at 4 o'clock in the morning she was brought into a room in one of the Kremlin apartments, where several members of the Politburo were.

“Some of them were so drunk that they could no longer move or talk. Others were quite tipsy, but full of cheerfulness and energy. It was they who summoned Shpiller specifically so that she would sing to them several Russian folk songs. According to her, all the not quite drunk leaders were exceptionally nice and kind to her. She did not mention Stalin. It was already light when they brought her home...” (*Elagin, 2020*).

In his memoirs, a subtle connoisseur of music, violinist Y.B. Elagin calls the concerts at the Bolshoi Theater a grandiose "musical and ballet vinaigrette", which was attended by at least 400-500 artists and musicians (*Elagin, 2020*).

The concert began with a performance by the Bolshoi Theater orchestra or the State Academic Symphony Orchestra of an overture or excerpt from an opera by Russian composers, most often Glinka and Rimsky-Korsakov. On especially solemn occasions the orchestra together with the choir performed one of the "songs about Stalin."

The orchestras performed only at government concerts at the Bolshoi Theater. They were not invited to the Kremlin.

Concerts in the Grand Kremlin Palace began in most cases with a performance by David Oistrakh or Emil Gilels. The main numbers of the concerts consisted of performances by famous Soviet collectives – the Song and Dance Ensemble of the Red Army, the Pyatnitsky Russian Folk Song Choir and the Dance Ensemble of the Peoples of the USSR under the direction of Igor Moiseyev.

By the end of the 30s the Red Army Ensemble, which numbered more than 200 people, became the leader's main favorite. “And when these two hundred healthy fellows in full military uniform went on stage, they gave the impression of an impressive military unit, with the only difference that instead of rifles and machine guns in their hands they had balalaikas and accordions” (*Elagin, 2020*).

Concerts in the Kremlin were not complete without the participation of artists from the Bolshoi Theater. Singers performed arias from Russian and foreign operas, folk songs and songs of Soviet composers. Ballet performers danced character dances more often than classical ones. From the end of 1938, circus acts – jugglers and acrobats – began to be included in the programs.

### 3. Great Kremlin receptions

By type the great Kremlin receptions can be classified as follows:

- receptions of representatives of the Red Army and the Navy. In the period from 1935 to 1949 almost every year (with the exception of the period 1942–1945), receptions were given in the Kremlin for the participants of the May Day military parade and graduates of military academies;

- receptions of workers of science and art: participants of the decades of arts of the union republics; higher education workers; participants of the jubilee session of the USSR Academy of Sciences;

- receptions in honor of Soviet pilots.

In the first place in terms of the number of receptions per year are receptions for representatives of the Army and Navy (17 receptions), then – receptions for scientists and cultural workers (15 receptions) and receptions of “pilots”

(6 receptions) (*Nevezhin, 2019:433-435*). Members of the Diplomatic Corps were not expected to be present at these receptions. Foreign diplomats were the main participants in receptions at Spiridonovka-17 and at diplomatic receptions in the Kremlin, which were arranged in 1939 and in 1941 by V.M. Molotov and organized by J.V. Stalin (1941 – 1952).

Number of Kremlin receptions by year: 1935 – 3; 1936 – 5; 1937 – 7; 1938 – 8; 1939 – 8; 1940 – 7; 1941 – 3; 1945 – 3; 1947 – 1; 1948 – 1; 1949 – 1 (*Nevezhin, 2019: 436*).

In 1948, on July 22 – a reception for the participants of the All-Union parade of athletes, and in 1949, on December 22, – a reception on the occasion of Stalin's 70th anniversary.

Thus, in 1948 and 1949 the tradition of annual receptions (except for the period 1942 – 1945) for participants in the May Day military parade on the Red Square in Moscow was broken.

It should be noted that at these receptions political symbolism was brought to perfection, in terms of political propaganda and agitation.

So, on the cover of the concert program on May 2, 1938 for the participants of the military parade on the Red Square there was a color image of Stalin, the Kremlin towers, a red star, silhouettes of flying combat aircraft and moving tanks (*Nevezhin, 2019:392*). No less symbolic is the cover of the concert program on May 5, 1939, on which the Red Banner, Hammer and Sickles are painted in multi-colored paints, combat aircraft and a Red Army soldier in full gear are depicted against the background of the Red Square (*Nevezhin, 2019: 395*).

On this day (May 5, 1939) for the participants of the military parade in the Kremlin, a concert was given, consisting of three parts.

The first number of the program is "Song about Stalin" by A. I. Khachaturian, then "Cosack soul about Stalin" by M. Stavitsky; "Song of Voroshilov" by A. V. Alexandrov; "Song of the Party" by A. V. Alexandrov; "Song of the military commissar" by A. V. Alexandrov; "Don't touch us" by Y. S. Milyutin; "Rifle" (unnamed author); "Tachanka" (unnamed author); "Youth" by I. O. Dunaevsky; "Zakuvala ta syva zozulya" by P. I. Nishchinsky. Ditties and the Red Army dance performed by one of the main favorites of the Kremlin techniques – the Red Banner Ensemble under the direction of A.V. Alexandrov completed the first part of the concert.

The 2nd part began with the performance of E.G. Gilels "Hungarian Dance" by I. Brahms and "Hunt" by N. Paganini, F. Liszt.

In the second part, arias from operas and romances by A. G. Rubinstein "Night", R. Leoncavallo "Dawn", J. Massenet (Werther's aria from the opera "Werther"), W. A. Mozart (Leporello's aria from the opera "Don Juan") were sung.

After "Song of the Flea" M. P. Mussorgsky's guests saw the so-called "Partner acrobatics" and heard the "Farewell Komsomol" by brothers Dm. Y. and D. Y. Pokrass.

In the same part G. Verdi sounded (Violetta's aria from the opera "Traviata"), M. I. Glinka (Susanin's aria from the opera "Ivan Susanin"), L. van Beethoven "Drinking Song".

In the 3rd part by the Ensemble A.V. Aleksandrov, the choir from the opera by P.I. Tchaikovsky "Cherevichki", "Caucasus Mountains" by A. V. Aleksandrov, "Oryolik" (arranged by Abramov), "Bandura" (arranged by G. M. Davidovsky), "Suliko" (arranged by Y. M. Yatsinevich), "I traveled all over the universe", "Kalinka, Malinka", "Russian dance" were performed (*Nevezhin, 2019:395–397*).

Thus, the first part of the concert is the political program of the authorities, the second and third are musical doctrine built on the tastes of the leader.

#### 4. New Year's concert in the Kremlin

The invitation of the artist to the New Year's concert in the Kremlin meant that his work was personally noted by Stalin. On the eve of the concert, employees of state cultural institutions met with the artists and explained to them the rules of conduct in the Kremlin, in particular: to keep themselves restrained, not to be familiar, to pay attention to all the details of the costume, right down to the socks.

A few hours before the concert, after a thorough check of passports, the guards accompanied the artists to the Grand Kremlin Palace, where they were met by a state security officer who escorted the concert participants to the “artistic” room with tables and chairs and a city phone.

At a certain time, all the artists that evening gathered in one large hall. Among the concert participants (and there were several hundred of them) – Alexandrov’s Red Army Ensemble, the State Folk Dance Ensemble under the direction of I. Moiseyev, soloists of the Bolshoi Theater. There were no chairs in the hall, but there were a large number of employees of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs, who stood at all doors and walked between the artists.

The concert took place in the St. George Hall of the Kremlin Palace on a special stage, in front of which there were tables for members of the Politburo. The leaders sat with their backs to the stage and facing the audience, without ladies, strictly in rank.

Stalin was in the middle, Molotov to his right, Voroshilov to his left. Numerous waiters, young men with excellent military bearing, dressed in tuxedos, served guests at large tables located in the hall.

Participant of the New Year’s concert in the Kremlin Y.B. Elagin recalled: “When we (the musicians of the jazz orchestra – author’s note) enter the stage, Stalin and his neighbors turn to us and applaud. Stalin is wearing a khaki jacket, without orders <...>.

We start to play. From the entire hall only members of the Politburo are listening to us. They stop eating and turn in our direction. The rest of the audience continues to eat <...>. Plates clatter, glasses clink” (*Elagin, 2020*). That evening the orchestra performed a virtuoso piece for jazz “Jewish Rhapsody” by Knushevitsky. After the end of the number Stalin applauded, but when the soloist of the group Nina Donskaya began to sing, the leaders turned away and began to eat.

N. Donskaya imitated famous foreign jazz singers in the manner of singing. Stalin did not like the real jazz style and European look of the singer. The consequences of such an attitude appeared the very next day – Nina Donskaya had to say goodbye to her career forever.

After the performance the artists were escorted to the hall, where tables with appetizers were set for them – caviar, hams, salads, fish, fresh vegetables and herbs, as well as decanters with vodka, red and white wines and Armenian cognac.

The artists were served by the officers of the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs in uniform, who in this case did not change into tuxedos. “This was probably the only possible case when the all-powerful Bolshevik police served ordinary Soviet citizens”. (*Elagin, 2020*).

## 5. Celebrating the 70th anniversary of J. V. Stalin

In the postwar years, receptions for diplomatic representatives were arranged, as a rule, on behalf of the Minister of Foreign Affairs V. M. Molotov, who in particular gave a reception for members of the Diplomatic Corps, foreign delegations and the Soviet public on December 21, 1949 in connection with the 70th anniversary of J. V. Stalin.

Stalin’s 70th birthday was declared a national holiday in the USSR.

The heads of embassies and missions of foreign states in Moscow were invited to a ceremonial meeting at the Bolshoi Theater, where on the night of December 21 – 22, 1949, a concert consisting of five sections was held.

I. Musical works of Russian classics.

1. Glinka – Overture to the opera “Ruslan and Lyudmila”.
2. Glinka – Dancing from the opera “Ruslan and Lyudmila”.
3. Glinka – Overture to the opera “Ivan Susanin”.
4. Glinka – Dancing from the opera “Ivan Susanin”.

- a) Polonaise.
- b) Waltz.
- c) Mazurka.
- d) Krakowiak.
5. Glazunov – Concert waltz.
6. Mussorgsky – Polonaise from the opera “Boris Godunov”.
7. Rimsky-Korsakov – Overture to the opera “The Tsar’s Bride”.
8. Tchaikovsky – Waltz from the opera “Eugene Onegin”.
9. Tchaikovsky – Polonaise from the opera “Eugene Onegin”.
10. Tchaikovsky – Slavic march.
11. Tchaikovsky – Suite from the ballet “Nutcracker”.
- II. Musical works of Soviet composers.
  1. Alexandrov – Cantata about Stalin.
  2. Dunaevsky – Song of the Motherland.
  3. Dunaevsky – Concert waltz.
  4. Dunaevsky – Russian rhapsody.
  5. Dunaevsky – Waltz from the soundtrack to the film “My Love”.
  6. Dunaevsky – Overture to the operetta “Free Wind”.
  7. Musical arrangement by Listov – “Suliko” (Georgian folk song).
  8. Milyutin – Dance from the operetta “Maiden hurly-burly”.
  9. Moshkov – Waltz “Spring Serenade”.
  10. Rakov – Concert waltz.
- III. Musical works of Western European composers.
  1. Smetana – Melodies from the opera “The Bartered Bride”.
  2. Chopin – Polonaise (opus 40).
  3. Gounod – Dances from the ballet “Walpurgis Night”.
  4. I. Strauss – Waltz “On the bank of the blue Danube”.
  5. I. Strauss – Waltz “Tales from the Vienna Woods”.
- IV. Western dances written by Soviet composers.
- V. Ballroom dancing<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, the concert program, made up of works by Russian and Western European composers, testifies that Stalin gave special preference (based on the number of works) to the works of Tchaikovsky, Glinka, Dunaevsky. Folk music is represented by the composition "Suliko", arranged by Listov. It should be noted that in the concert program we do not see works by composers of the Union republics.

The jubilee concert took place in the Kremlin on December 22.

On the eve of the concert – many hours of rehearsals of the participants in the Great Hall of the Conservatory. M.M. Plisetskaya recalled: “Each number is played a hundred times. They rehearse bows, exit, leaving, curtsy <...>. Kozlovsky with Mikhailov sing a duet many times, a folk song. Voices are about to be ripped off. In full force, they will not let you shirk. Vera Davydova <...> repeats and repeats his velvet aria. They have changed a lot of arias, they are trying to pick up the very best ... Valeria Barsova, the famous coloratura of that time <...> chilly wrapped in an Orenburg shawl. The voice is tired, wheezing” (*Plisetskaya, 2020*).

Plisetskaya was to perform the jumping variation from “Don Quixote”. But the organizers decided that the hero of the day would not have time to “examine” the young talent,

<sup>1</sup> The works performed in the fourth and fifth parts are not indicated in the concert program.

to admire the jumping technique. An offer was received – the pianist should play Laurencia's jumping variation, and Plisetskaya should "jump" twice "Don Quixote".

The selection committee was interested in all the details of the performance – headdress, hairstyle, costume.

So, Plisetskaya was recommended to wear a red ballerina tutu: "It's a red day, great for mankind. Clearly, I agree. Offer to dance even in a camouflage robe, I will obey. There is no way back. They will laugh and trample you" (*Plisetskaya, 2020*).

These words of the great ballerina contain the main incentive, the main goal of participating in government concerts; the artist was given the opportunity to take place in his profession, that is, to be in demand.

For his favorites, Stalin did not spare government awards. Y. B. Elagin recalled that once two dancers from the ensemble of Igor Moiseyev, after performing the dance "Moscow region lyrics", which Stalin liked unusually, received orders. The accompanist was also awarded.

"Aleksandrov, the leader of the choir ensemble of the Red Army, had all orders and all honorary titles that exist in the Soviet Union, including the rank of an army quartermaster of the first rank" (corresponds to the rank of army general) (*Elagin, 2020*).

## 6. Repertoire policy at the Kiev Opera and Ballet Theater after T.G. Shevchenko

As an example of the influence of the tastes of the Kremlin leaders on the repertoire of the Academic musical theaters of the country, we investigated the opera and ballet repertoire of the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater of the Ukrainian SSR after T. G. Shevchenko. Analysis of programs for 14 seasons, from 1936 to 1950, showed that the composers whose works were almost constantly present in the theater's repertoire were: P. I. Tchaikovsky ("Swan Lake" (1936-1937; 1945-1946), "Mazepa", "The Sleeping Beauty" (1937-1938), "The Queen of Spades" (1939-1940; 1944-1945), "Eugene Onegin" (1942 -1943, Irkutsk; 1945-1946), "The Queen of Spades" (1944-1945)); N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov ("The Night before Christmas" (1940-194; 1944-1945), "Scheherazade" (1942-1943, Irkutsk), "The Tsar's Bride" (1947-1948), "The Tale of Tsar Saltan" (1948-1949)).

Ukrainian classical music was represented by the work of Lysenko ("Taras Bulba" (1936-1937; 1938-1939; 1944-1945; 1946-1947), "Natalka Poltavka" (1941-1942, Ufa; 1944-1945; 1948-1949)). "Zaporozhets beyond the Danube" by Gulak-Artemovskiy was staged in the seasons 1941-1942, Ufa; 1942-1943, Irkutsk; 1944-1945.

The most popular Western European composer was G. Verdi ("Rigoletto" (1936-1937; 1947-1948), "Othello" (1940-1941; 1944-1945), "Aida" (1940-1941; 1949-1950)).

Operas by Puccini ("Tosca" (1940-1941; 1945-1946), "Cio-Cio-San" (1947-1948)) were staged three times during this period. "The Barber of Seville" by G. Rossini sounded in the seasons 1942-1943 and 1944-1945. "Pagliacci" by Leoncavallo – in the 1937-1938 season. "Straussiana" by I. Strauss – in 1942-1943 and 1945-1946.

Comparative analysis of the programs of government concerts in Moscow and the repertoire of the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theater after T. G. Shevchenko showed that the Kremlin leaders and the leadership of the theater give preference to the music of P. I. Tchaikovsky and M. I. Glinka.

As for the music of N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, A. P. Borodin, N. Lysenko, Gulak-Artemovskiy, G. Verdi, G. Rossini, there is a relative independence (musically) of Kiev from Moscow. Thus, at the Kremlin concerts G. Verdi sounded in 1938, 1939 and 1941, while on the stage of the opera house his works did not leave the posters for five seasons. Figaro's aria

and Rosina's aria from "The Barber of Seville" were performed at almost every government concert, while "The Barber of Seville" was performed on the theater stage in the 1942-1943 seasons (Irkutsk) and 1944-1945 (Kiev).

In the 1941-1942 season two operas were staged in Ufa, one of them was Lysenko's "Natalka Poltavka", the other "Zaporozhets beyond the Danube" by Gulak-Artemovsky. Lysenko was one of the most performed composers in Kiev, at the same time we were unable to find his works, as well as the works of Gulak-Artemovsky, in the programs of the Kremlin concerts.

Moscow and Kiev were united not by what was being performed, but rather by what was forbidden to be performed.

## 7. Musical doctrine of the Kremlin

As Y. Elagin notes in his memoirs, in the USSR by 1930 "the liberal and tolerant atmosphere of the New Economic Policy times, which lasted throughout the country from 1922 to 1928, did not disappear" (*Elagin, 2020*).

Operas by Alban, Berg, Krshenek, Schrecker and Kurt Weil, plays by O'Neill, Ben-Hent, Oscar Wilde, Maeterlinck were staged in theaters. In Moscow one could see everything – from Aristophanes to Shakespeare, from Racine to Gozzi and Goldoni, from Merimee and Balzac to Ibsen and Strynberg. String quartets played Hindemith and Casella. Joseph Sigeti, Arthur Rubinstein, André Segovia delighted the audience on the stage of the best halls in Moscow and Leningrad. Jazz began its march across the country.

In Berlin in 1923 "Princess Turandot" was shown, in Paris in 1928 this performance won the first prize at the international theater festival.

The turning point in the history of the cultural life of the USSR took place on April 23, 1932, on the day of the publication of a government decree on the elimination of proletarian groups in art and literature. The government decided that art is an important means of agitation and propaganda, therefore all creative forces should serve the state. The process of totalization of art began. Power controlled not only the form, but also the content. In the fall of 1934, M. Gorky announced at the 1st Congress of Soviet Writers about a new style in art and literature – "socialist realism", "dictatorship over creativity" began (*Elagin, 2020*).

To pursue the policy of the party and the government, the All-Union Committee for Arts was created in 1935 under the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR (AUCA) – a kind of ministry of arts, the main purpose of which was to supervise and manage all types of arts.

In totalitarian states nothing happens without political reasons.

On December 1, 1934, the secretary of the Central Committee of the CPSU(b) Sergei Mironovich Kirov was killed in Leningrad. Ideological aggression began in all areas of culture and art. In September 1936, the chief of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs Yagoda was arrested, after the appointment of Yezhov as the head of the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs, "Yezhovism" began – a wave of merciless terror.

In November 1936 Borodin's opera "The Bogatyr" was staged at the Chamber Theater. Poet D. Bedny showed the heroes of the epic – Ilya Muromets, Dobrynya Nikitich, Alyosha Popovich in a caricature. Molotov left the hall without waiting for the end of the performance. The opera was banned, and the Chamber Theater, together with Tairov, was accused of lack of "political tact in portraying the past of our people". (*Elagin, 2020*).

D. Bedny was expelled from the Union of Soviet Writers, deprived of housing, his books were withdrawn from libraries. This is one of the first cases of political education of art workers.



In January and February 1936, the newspaper Pravda published two articles by Zhdanov against Shostakovich's music – “Muddle Instead of Music” (about the opera “Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District”) and “Ballet Falsehood” (about the ballet “The Bright Brook”).

Music became the object of violent aggression. The consequence of the publications was a discussion about formalism “as about the most harmful anti-popular phenomenon in Soviet art” (Elagin, 2020). In the theater of Vakhtangov, the hairdresser Vanya Baranov “trashed, exposed and smashed to smithereens” Shostakovich.

At the end of 1936, the Second Art Theater, the former First Studio of the Art Theater, was liquidated. The theater was closed after the artists, who had lived all their lives in Moscow, refused to move to a permanent job in Ukraine, Kiev.

On December 17, 1937, “Pravda” published the article “Alien Theater”, in which V.E. Meyerhold and his theater, which was a kind of “university” for the “left” directors of all revolutionary theaters in the world, were criticized very much.

Since 1936, after articles against Shostakovich appeared, works by contemporary composers – Hindemith, Stravinsky, Bartok, Koselli, Schoenberg and others – were excluded from concert programs.

With the coming to power of Hitler, the music of R. Strauss and all contemporary German composers was banned since 1933.

It should be noted that before the ban, Wagner's operas were included in the programs of the Kiev Opera and Ballet Theater in the 1926-1927 season – “Meistersingers”, in the 1932-1933 season – “Lohengrin” (Stefanovich, 1960:197, 200).

At the end of 1939, a pro-German musical policy begins, the reason for this phenomenon is the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact.

Symphony orchestras began to perform R. Strauss. A lot of Muscovites attended concert halls, wanting to listen to yesterday's forbidden “fascist”, “Hitlerite” music (Elagin, 2020).

It is very bold and unfair to reproach the Kremlin leaders and Stalin personally for being indifferent to art.

At the beginning of the 30s J.V. Stalin often visited three theaters in Moscow with his associates: the Bolshoi, Maly and Khudozhestvenny. These theaters were equipped with special government boxes with armored walls, with separate exits to the street and with direct dial telephones. These boxes were placed in a benoir, next to the stage, on the left side (if you look at the stage from the audience).

Stalin, sitting in such a box, was invisible from the audience.

Stalin did not go to other theaters during the thirties (in the spring of 1938, the Vakhtangov Theater was ordered to arrange a government box).

Human life is priceless. It is difficult, from a moral point of view, to talk about in which Soviet structures more or less people were repressed.

But, at the same time, losses in the army and the People's Commissariat for Foreign Affairs are incomparable with losses in art.

In the Bolshoi Theater, the singer Mikhailova, the wife of Budyonny, was shot. Tukhachevsky's wife, Natalia Sats, a talented director and head of the Central Children's Theater, was sent to a concentration camp. The wife of the Deputy Chief of the Air Force of the Red Army Malinovsky, actress Zoya Smirnova, was arrested at the Chamber Theater. One of the most beautiful Soviet actresses, Valentina Vagrina, was arrested at the Vakhtangov Theater. A few days after Meyerhold's arrest, his wife Zinaida Reich was brutally murdered in her apartment (17 stab wounds).

They tried not to destroy those artists who, with their creative works, pleased the leader.

The authorities gave preference to artists: M. D. Mikhailov, V. A. Davydova, P. M. Nortsov, I. S. Kozlovsky, V. V. Barsova, S. Y. Lemeshev, M. O. Reisen, N. D. Shpiller.

## 8. Conclusions

In the second half of the 30s in the USSR the everyday life of the Kremlin courtyard took its shape, the tastes of which were reflected in the programs of government concerts, which were full of opera arias, duets, ballet acts and all kinds of folklore.

An analysis of the concert programs of government receptions in the Kremlin in the period from 1937 to 1941 shows that Russian classical music was mostly represented by the works of P. I. Tchaikovsky, M. I. Glinka, A. S. Dargomyzhsky, M. P. Mussorgsky, N. A. Rimsky-Korsakov, A. P. Borodin, A. A. Alyabyev, A. G. Rubinstein.

Of the works of Western European composers, preference was given to the works of G. Rossini (at the concert on August 23, 1937, three works of the composer were performed in the first part – “Tarantella” performed by S. Y. Lemeshev, Figaro’s aria from the opera “The Barber of Seville” performed by P. M. Nortsov, Rosina’s aria from the opera “The Barber of Seville” performed by V. V. Barsova), I. Strauss, M. Gounod, L. van Beethoven, F. Chopin, F. Liszt, G. Verdi, L. Delibes, I. Brahms, R. Leoncavallo.

As for folk music, Ukrainian and Russian folk songs were performed at almost all concerts. The folk art of Georgia was presented during this period only once by the song “Suliko”, which was performed at the concert on May 5, 1939.

The first concerts in the late twenties and early thirties at the Bolshoi Theater were composed of the best vocal, musical and ballet acts, but gradually they began to exclude from the program works that the leader did not like, and the acts that caused his approval were included in almost all programs.

In totalitarian states, the state policy in the field of culture depends on the tastes of the leader. The ruling elite decides which areas of art are needed by the people and which are not. Thus, the government itself contributes to the formation of the so-called social duplicity in society, that is, the division of social life into two parts – official (ceremonial) and unofficial.

As a member of the Soviet labor collective, a man “stigmatized” bourgeois culture at work, and in the evening in the kitchen he listened to music, read books, watched movies banned in the USSR. This duplicity flourished in the capitals of the Union republics and in large industrial centers. The rural population was more faced with the problem of survival, the terrible famine that engulfed many regions of the country, forced people to fight for life, and not for the opportunity to watch, read and listen to what they want, and not the leader.

The musical doctrine of Soviet power was based on the musical tastes of the leader. This doctrine bore the mask of "socialist realism in music." But it was precisely the “mask” under which the music that gave Stalin pleasure, the works that acted on the leader “like a dentist’s drill or a musical gas chamber” (in the words of Zhdanov) were excluded from the repertoire.

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