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Transfiguration: Ivan Moody for Intrada and Voces8

Ekaterina Antonenko

Resumo

No presente artigo, Ekaterina Antonenko recorda a sua colaboração de dez anos com Ivan Moody enquanto musicólogo, editor e compositor. Em 2014, juntamente com Peter Phillips, convidou Ivan Moody a proferir uma palestra sobre Sir John Tavener num festival realizado no Conservatório de Moscovo em sua homenagem. Além disso, Ekaterina teve a oportunidade de avaliar o seu trabalho editorial sobre a partitura dos *Penitential Verses* de Alfred Schnittke, enquanto preparava, na qualidade de maetrina assistente de Hans-Christoph Rademann, concertos e gravações da obra com o RIAS-Kammerchor. O marco seguinte mais importante destes contactos foi a apresentação, em Moscovo, em 2020, sob a direcção de Ekaterina Antonenko, de uma das últimas grandes obras corais de Ivan Moody, *Transfiguration*, encomendada pelo Festival Opera Apriori com o apoio da Embaixada Britânica em Moscovo e dedicada ao Intrada, um *ensemble* vocal fundado por Ekaterina Antonenko, e ao Voces8. A secção final do artigo é dedicada à análise desta obra, na qual se reflecte a personalidade do Ivan Moody, que absorve a cultura europeia e a fé ortodoxa russa.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Ivan Moody, *Transfiguration*, Intrada, Voces8.

Abstract

In the present paper, Ekaterina Antonenko recalls her ten-year-long collaboration with Ivan Moody as a musicologist, editor, and composer. In 2014, together with Peter Phillips, she invited Ivan Moody to give a lecture on Sir John Tavener at a festival held at the Moscow Conservatory in his commemoration. Furthermore, Ekaterina Antonenko had the opportunity to assess his editorial work on the score of Alfred Schnittke's *Penitential Verses* while preparing, as a conductor assisting Hans-Christoph Rademann, performances and recordings of the work with RIAS-Kammerchor. The next major milestone in these contacts was the 2020 Moscow performance, conducted by Ekaterina Antonenko, of one of Ivan Moody's latest major choral works, *Transfiguration*, commissioned by the Opera Apriori Festival with the support of the British Embassy in Moscow and dedicated to Intrada, a vocal ensemble founded by Ekaterina Antonenko, and Voces8. The final section of the article is devoted to an analysis of this work, which reflects Ivan Moody's personality that imbibes the European cultural environment and the Russian Orthodox faith.

KEYWORDS: Ivan Moody, *Transfiguration*, Intrada, Voces8.

In this paper I would like to recollect my meetings with Ivan Moody as a musicologist, editor and composer and to focus on his *Transfiguration* dedicated to Intrada and Voces8.

I got acquainted with Ivan Moody in 2014 during the festival ‘Sir John Tavener In Memoriam’ which I organized at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory together with Peter Phillips, the conductor and founder of the Tallis Scholars, with support from the British Council. The culmination of the festival was a joint concert of the Tallis Scholars and Intrada Vocal Ensemble, which I founded in 2006, at the Conservatory’s Great Hall featuring the second world performance of Tavener’s ‘Requiem Fragments’ with Julia Lezhneva as a soloist. Ivan Moody was invited to give a lecture at the conference ‘From Taverner to Tavener: Five Centuries of the English Sacred Music’ held in the course of the festival. He chose a theme dedicated to his teacher—‘John Tavener: Mysticism and Mathematics’ (Moody 2014).



Figure 1. Round table ‘Contemporary Composer and Religious Tradition’. Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory, 2014. Left to right: Roman Nassonov, Ekaterina Antonenko, Peter Phillips, Ivan Moody. Photo by Denis Rylov

Then I got acquainted with Father Ivan as an editor. In 2016 I assisted Hans-Christoph Rademann in the performance and recording of the Penitential Verses by Alfred Schnittke with RIAS-Kammerchor. At that time, I found out that the only printed score of the work (Schnittke 1995) had many mistakes when I compared it to Schnittke’s autograph, which I managed to get from Edison Denisov’s widow Galina Grigorieva. I also spoke with Schnittke’s widow Irina about the score of the Penitential Verses and she told me that the work was edited by composer Viktor Suslin who always tried to ‘improve’ Schnittke’s music and that one should follow the autograph. Then I learned that Ivan Moody had conducted the *Penitential Verses*

with Cappella Romana in 2015 and was at that time occupied with a new edition of the piece. The new revision of the score by Ivan Moody together with Aleksey Vulfson was out in 2017 for Compozitor's new Schnittke Edition (see Fig. 2) (Schnittke 2017). This last choral work by Schnittke was first performed by the USSR State Chamber Choir under Valery Polyansky in 1988 and even now it is performed by Polyansky's singers of the State Symphonic Cappella Choir using copies of the authograph on stage. When celebrating Schnittke's 90th anniversary in 2024 Intrada performed the *Penitential Verses* using the new edition by Ivan Moody and Aleksey Vulfson.

In 2019 at the Conference for Orthodox Church Music in Joensuu I presented a talk 'The Turn from Baroque to Galant Style in the Russian Church Music' (Antonenko 2019) following my PhD study dedicated to sacred music by Baldassare Galuppi. The atmosphere of the conference, where reports held and questions raised by musicians and musicologists from all over the world concerned correlation of their professional work with the life of the Church, was very inspiring and special for me. And this was due to Father Ivan Moody being the founding Chairman of the International Society for Orthodox Church Music.

At the Conference Father Ivan Moody and I had a possibility to discuss his future work which he had been commissioned to write from the Opera Apriori festival with support of the British Embassy in Moscow. *Transfiguration* was first performed by Intrada and Voces8 on 8 February 2020 at St. Andrew's Anglican Church in Moscow in the composer's presence.¹ This was the last time I met Father Ivan and one of the very last concerts before the pandemic.

In *Transfiguration* Ivan Moody combines two text sources: the text of *svetilen* of Transfiguration in Old Slavonic and the text of the gospel according to St. Luke (9:28–36) in English (King James Version). This Russian–English text combination which is characteristic for Father Ivan's work was emphasized by the performers' cast of the premiere.

The piece which lasts about twelve minutes has the following structure in five sections: A B A¹ B¹ A²—where A sections are based on a chant melody in Old Slavonic and B sections are set to the English text. The conclusive phrase 'This is my beloved Son' sung by eight soloists breaks into the A² section in the very end.

The work starts from a chant melody sung in unison with a tempo marking *Luminoso* (see Fig. 3). The chant composed by Ivan Moody is a variation of the *obikhodniy znamenniy* chant² (see Fig. 4). The eight-voiced narration from the gospel with a beautiful canon by two sopranos (B) is alternated by the chant sung only by men (A¹). In another section in English the choir enters on the words 'and they feared as they entered into the cloud' and the voice of God (sung by the eight soloists) is heard from the 'cloud' (B¹). In the end of the piece the chant appears in a magnificent polyphonic setting (A²).

1 I would like to note that there was another world premiere at this concert also in the composer's presence—*Thy Will be Done* by Alexander Levine performed by Voces8. Alexander Levine was born in Moscow, but his music, which enjoys wide performance in the Western countries, is hardly known in Russia at the moment.

2 Lada Kondrashkova calls this kind of chant 'put' stolpovoy'. See Kondrashkova (2018, 13–9).

К 1000-летию Крещения Руси
СТИХИ ПОКАЯННЫЕ

для смешанного хора
без сопровождения

(1987)

На тексты второй половины XVI века
To old Russian texts, second half of the 16th century

For the Millenium of the Baptism of Rus'
PENITENTIAL VERSES

for mixed choir
a cappella

Альфред ШНИТКЕ
Alfred SCHNITTKE
(1934–1998)

Плакася Адамо,
пред раемо сядя

1

Adam sat weeping
at the gates of Paradise

3/4 Не спеша [Unhurried]

Bassi

pp М...
pp М...
pp М...
pp М...

1 *p* Пла - ка - ся А - да - мо,
p Pla - ka - s'a A - da - mo,

7 пред ра - е - мо се - дя:
pr'ed ra - ye - mo s'e - d'a:

8 «Ра - ю мо - и, ра - ю, пре - крас - ны - и мо - и ра - ю! Ме -
"Ra - yu mo - i, ra - yu, pr'e - kras - nī - i mo - i ra - yu! M'e -
[p] «Me -
"M'e -

9 [2] - не бо ра - ди, ра - ю, со - тво - ре - но бы - сте, а Ев - вы ра - ди, ра - ю, за -
- n'e bo ra - di, ra - yu, so - tvo - r'e - no bi - st'e, a Yev - vī ra - di, ra - yu, za -

B. - не бо ра - ди со - тво - ре - но бы - сте, а Ев - вы ра - ди, ра - ю, за -
- n'e bo ra - di so - tvo - r'e - no bi - st'e, a Yev - vī ra - di, ra - yu, za -

М...
М...

[Durata: ca 43']

с 6993 к

Figure 2. Alfred Schnittke, *Penitential Verses* (Kompozitor). Editors Ivan Moody and Aleksey Vulfson. Available <https://kompozitor.spb.ru/catalog/khor/shnitke-a-stikhi-pokayannye-dlya-smesh-khora-bez-soprovozhdeniya-so-br-soch-seriya-4-tom-9/>

СВѢ-ТЕ НЕ-ИЗ-МѢН- - НЫЙ СЛО- - ВЕ, СВѢ-ТА ОТ-ЦА

НЕ- РО- ЖДЕ-НА, ВЪ ІА-ВЛЕ- - - - - ННѢМЪ СВѢ- ТѢ ТВО-

ЕМЪ, ДНЕСЬ НА ДА- ВО- РѢ СВѢТЪ ВН- - ДѢ- ХОМЪ ОТ-ЦА, СВѢ-

- - - - - ТЪ И ДѢ- - ХА, СВѢ-ТОМЪ НА-СТА-ВЛА- -

Ю- ЦА ВСЮ ТВАРЬ.

Figure 3. Svetilen of *Transfiguration*, obikhodny znamenny chant. Available here: [http://znamen.ru/Give.php?ruk=\(p-k\)&id=pwex](http://znamen.ru/Give.php?ruk=(p-k)&id=pwex)

I believe that perception of this work is different for Eastern and Western listeners. For Western ears the sections based on the chant probably sound to some extent exotic. Meanwhile for a Russian listener Ivan Moody's variation of the chant sounds quite familiar and authentic, so does its harmonization in section A¹ and the polyphonic version in A², where the composer sticks to heterophony which is widely used in Russian music. At the same time the alternation of the 'archaic' chant with contemporary writing of sections B and B¹ in English is perceived by Russian ears as unusual. Thus *Transfiguration*, written for the joint performance of the Russian and British vocal ensembles, reflects Father Ivan's personality that imbibes the European cultural environment and the Russian Orthodox faith.

Transfiguration

For Intrada and Voces8

Ivan Moody

Luminoso ♩ = 90

Soprano
Sve - te - ne - iz - men - ny, Slo - ve,

Alto
Sve - te - ne - iz - men - ny, Slo - ve,

Tenor
Sve - te - ne - iz - men - ny, Slo - ve,

Bass
Sve - te - ne - iz - men - ny, Slo - ve,

5

S
Sve - ta - Ot - tsa - ne-rozh - den - na,

A
Sve - ta - Ot - tsa - ne-rozh - den - na,

T
Sve - ta - Ot - tsa - ne-rozh - den - na,

B
Sve - ta - Ot - tsa - ne-rozh - den - na,

2

S
vyav - len - nem - sve - te - Tvo - em dnes na - Fa -

A
vyav - len - nem - sve - te - Tvo - em dnes na - Fa -

T
vyav - len - nem - sve - te - Tvo - em dnes na - Fa -

B
vyav - len - nem - sve - te - Tvo - em dnes na - Fa -

13

S vo - re Svet vi - de - khom Ot - tsa, Svet i

A vo - re Svet vi - de - khom Ot - tsa, Svet i

T vo - re Svet vi - de - khom Ot - tsa, Svet i

B vo - re Svet vi - de - khom Ot - tsa, Svet i

17

S Du - ha, sve - tom na - stav - lja - ju - shja - go

A Du - ha, sve - tom na - stav - lja - ju - shja - go

T Du - ha, sve - tom na - stav - lja - ju - shja - go

B Du - ha, sve - tom na - stav - lja - ju - shja - go

Figure 4. Ivan Moody *Transfiguration* for Intrada and Voces8, 2019, pp. 1-2

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Ekaterina Antonenko studied choir conducting at the Moscow Academic Music College (Prof. Irina Usova) and Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory (Prof. Vladimir Sukhanov). In 2010-12 Ekaterina was granted a DAAD scholarship for study at the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz Köln (Prof. Marcus Creed). In 2013 Ekaterina made her Ph.D. in musicology («Church music of Baldassare Galuppi»). From 2012 Ekaterina has been teaching at the Moscow Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Founded in 2006 by Ekaterina Antonenko Intrada Vocal Ensemble has gained a reputation of ‘the best Moscow choir today’ (*Musical Life*, 2018).