

Université de Montréal

Sofia Gubaidulina's violin concerto *Offertorium* : theology and music in dialogue

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Université de Montréal  
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Ce mémoire intitulé

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Présenté par

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A été évalué par un jury composé des personnes suivantes:

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## Résumé

L'objectif de ce mémoire est de comprendre comment une certaine vision du monde, basée sur des croyances théologiques, a contribué à la composition du concerto pour violon *Offertorium* de Sofia Gubaïdulina. C'est par le biais de cette œuvre qu'est explorée l'idée du dialogue musicothéologique, en proposant des façons par lesquelles la pièce musicale en question peut servir de porteuse ou d'interprète d'une pensée théologique. Afin d'appuyer cette idée, la démarche intertextuelle employée par Heidi Epstein est utilisée. Cette méthode permet de faciliter non seulement le travail interdisciplinaire, mais aussi la lecture théologique de l'œuvre musicale.

Le premier chapitre explore les sources, les questions et la problématique qui entourent le dialogue musicothéologique. La conclusion tirée est que l'étude d'*Offertorium* nécessite une approche équilibrée. Nous entendons par cela, une approche qui prend en ligne de compte la réflexion théologique autant que la recherche musicologique tout en respectant les contributions théologiques que l'œuvre musicale peut apporter en soi.

Dans le deuxième chapitre, une analyse thématique d'*Offertorium* a été tentée ainsi qu'une étude du discours théologique et spirituel de la compositrice. Il a été conclu que l'arrière-plan russe orthodoxe de Gubaïdulina a beaucoup influencé sa vision du monde et son approche artistique. Le concerto est porteur d'idées et de symboles liturgiques ou théologiques de l'Orthodoxie dans sa structure et dans sa construction thématique.

Le troisième chapitre explore les parallèles entre la pensée de Gubaïdulina et les écritures de plusieurs théologiens russes orthodoxes du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle. La conclusion de ce chapitre démontre que, même s'il est improbable que la compositrice connaisse bien ces auteurs, sa compréhension théologique et spirituelle sort du climat religieux de l'Église Orthodoxe. Cette idée explique les complémentarités et les similarités entre son discours, son œuvre et les propos des théologiens discutés.

Le quatrième chapitre évalue la validité d'*Offertorium* comme moyen d'expression théologique ainsi que de générateur de réflexion théologique.

La conclusion de la recherche est qu'*Offertorium* peut bel et bien être un espace théologique. Ce qui veut dire que des idées théologiques peuvent être communiquées par le biais de l'expérience sonore que ce soit par la mélodie ou l'ambiance générale.

Également, cela implique que la musique devient un partenaire égal, quoique différent des méthodes de réflexion traditionnelles au sein de la conversation théologique.

Mots clés : Sofia Gubaidulina- dialogue musicothéologique- liturgie orthodoxe- interdisciplinaire – théologie Russe orthodoxe 20<sup>e</sup> siècle.

## Abstract

This paper explores the musico-theological dialogue through the study of Sofia Gubaidulina's violin concerto, *Offertorium*. Its aim is to understand how theological belief and worldview have influenced and contributed to *Offertorium*'s composition, and in consequence, how the concerto serves as an interpretive conductor of theological thought. To support this idea, the intertextual method developed by Heidi Epstein is employed, which aids not only the interdisciplinary approach, but also a theological analysis of a musical work.

Chapter One explores the sources, questions and problematic concerning musico-theological dialogues. It concludes that for studying *Offertorium*, a balanced approach was in order, one that took into consideration theological reflection as much as musicological research, and that respected the music's theological contributions in its own right.

Chapter Two attempts an analysis of *Offertorium* and a study of the composer's discourse on matters of theology, religion and spirituality. It is concluded that Gubaidulina's background in Russian Orthodoxy has deeply influenced her worldview and artistic approach. Many Orthodox theological and liturgical themes and symbols are present structurally or thematically in the concerto.

Chapter Three explores the parallels between the composer's ideas and the writings of several contemporary Russian Orthodox theologians. It concludes that while it is improbable that Gubaidulina is familiar with these writers, hers is a worldview that has emerged from the experience of a Russian Orthodox climate which explains the similarities and complementarities between her work and the work of the discussed authors.

Chapter Four evaluates the validity of *Offertorium* as a means of theological expression, but also as the producer of original theological thought. It concludes that both are possible, rendering *Offertorium* its own theological ground.

The conclusion of the study is that a musical work such as *Offertorium* can be a "theological ground". This entails that theological ideas in this case are communicated through experience (experiencing sound, melody and musical ambiance) and not through traditional means of textbook or sermon. This also insinuates that music can be an equal, albeit entirely different, player in the theological dialogue.

Key words: Sofia Gubaidulina- musico-theological dialogue- Orthodox liturgy- interdisciplinary- 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox theology.

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## **Dedication**

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## Introduction

This project was born out of a desire to explore the relationship in between theological worldview and the creative musical process. How does one inform the other? This is the driving question behind the research. The framework through which this question will be explored is 20<sup>th</sup> century composer Sofia Gubaidulina's violin concerto *Offertorium*.

Sofia Gubaidulina, while less known than other 20<sup>th</sup> century composers such as Schoenberg or Webern, is nonetheless widely recognized within contemporary musicological circles as one of the more important composers to emerge from the Soviet Union. Her aesthetic and her sound are unique and masterful, and her works have been recorded by some of the most prominent orchestras and soloists in the world- Gidon Kremer with the Boston Philharmonic, for instance, or Anne-Sophie Mutter with Berlin Symphony.

Not only is Gubaidulina appreciated for her artistry, but also much attention is paid to her because of the philosophical value of her statements and reflections in her interviews and in her compositions. She is a member of the Russian Orthodox Church, and her views on spirituality, liturgy, theology and religious beliefs are widely recorded and underlined as a driving force behind her existence as a composer. Many of her works, as is the case with *Offertorium*, have references, imagery or core structures that illustrate or reflect a religious backdrop.

The two-fold problem, however, lies in *Offertorium*'s need for interdisciplinary study. All research dedicated to this concerto has so far been musicological. While musicologists have carefully underlined Gubaidulina's religious and spiritual influences, very rarely has any such research ventured further than remarks and observations. There are very few analytical studies of *Offertorium* that consider the theological weight of the concerto as important a factor as its musical elements. There is a second part to the problematic, one which lies in the lack of balance in the musico-theological dialogue. Most authors who attempt the endeavour of an interdisciplinary study of music and theology often tend to put the weight of the project on theology's side, engaging music as a mere supporting factor, or in passing remarks. There is a real need for a musico-theological dialogue that will pay true attention to both disciplines and extract from both mutual contributions that will create reflection and discovery. This project will attempt to create such a dialogue, with *Offertorium* as its vehicle.

To achieve this, I will seek first and foremost to explore *Offertorium's* religious and theological backdrop. What are the concerto's themes, images and symbols that pertain to Gubaidulina's belief system and theological worldview? And how have they translated, shaped or grafted themselves into this work? After unveiling what theological streams of thought have influenced the concerto, this project will attempt to discover how *Offertorium* itself is a carrier and interpreter of theology. In other words, how the concerto is in and of itself its own theological space.

Chapter One will explore the initial problematic surrounding the study and discuss the work of those authors relevant to musico-theological dialogue. Theologian Heidi Epstein's method of intertextuality will also be addressed, as hers will be the approach used in this thesis. Epstein is of the conviction that for a true dialogue to occur, a myriad of texts - musical, historical, philosophical and theological - must be engaged. The research will thus move in this direction. Not only in the course of chapters two through four will diverse sources and texts be studied, but of course we will study how these texts, such as the score and diverse theological writings, converge, meet, borrow and parallel each other, thus rendering *Offertorium* an intertextual meeting ground of theology and music.

Chapter two will divide itself into three parts. First, I will attempt to draw out the recurring themes of spirituality and theology within Sofia Gubaidulina's general discourse. Secondly, I will overview the main theological ideas and influences that shaped the creative process behind *Offertorium*. Lastly, I will attempt to study how the composer's ideas and concepts transcended her music, through an analysis of the concerto's thematic architecture, its form, musical phrases, aesthetic and compositional technique.

Chapter three seeks to determine what Russian Orthodox theological lines, if any, there are to be found in *Offertorium* and how Gubaidulina carried out these lines. Special attention will be given to a study of Orthodox theology and its view of sacred time, of sacrificial offering through the Eucharist, of the cross and its symbolic value in the Eucharistic service, and of the ascension. For each subject addressed, one or several authors will be discussed in an effort to give a fair and accurate portrayal of Orthodoxy's thoughts and practices. Following this, diverse elements of Gubaidulina's discourse and musical practices will be extracted and compared to those of theological writings so that we may, partially or exhaustively answer the following question: What, of Gubaidulina's ideas, musical or not, parallel or complement those of 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox theology?

After examining what parallels exist between Orthodox theology and the composer's worldview and her concerto, chapter four seeks to bring the musico-theological dialogue to another level. In view of the findings delivered by chapter 2 and 3, this last chapter will explore the possibility of *Offertorium* acting as its own theological grounds. This would entail that the concerto would not only be an illustrator or conductor of theological themes, but an actual producer and interpreter of original theological principles. In this sense, the project seeks to open up the door to a whole new level of discussion, by proposing that a wordless work of art can act as a creator of theology, rather than a mere supporter of it.

In short, this research aims to explore just how far theology and music can enter into dialogue. The interdisciplinary approach reveals that in studying a work of art from two distinct, yet complementary fields (theology and musicology) our understanding of *Offertorium* will be richer, deeper. The theological reflections can then open themselves up to broader and more unique possibilities. Thus not only the question of how do music and theology impact each other can be explored. We can bring it, finally, to another level: how can music act as a theological ground?

## Chapter 1 - Presentation of the Project

### 1.1 Presentation of project

This paper explores the relationship between theological worldview and artistic endeavours, especially in the case of one composer, Sofia Gubaidulina. I will be studying her concerto for violin, *Offertorium*, under the lens of a musico-theological dialogue. In other words, this is a study in how theological belief and worldview have influenced and contributed to creation of *Offertorium*, and in consequence, how the concerto serves as an expression and interpretive conductor of theological thought.

Sofia Gubaidulina's interviews, artistic approach and musical choices reveal a series of influences and beliefs rooted in mysticism and Russian Orthodoxy. The focus of this research is thus a study of these influences and beliefs, and how they have sculpted, dictated and aided the composer's creative process. In short, this project looks at how theology and music entered into dialogue, how they informed and affected one another through one particular work of art, the *Offertorium* concerto for violin.

#### 1.1.1. Summary of project

The hypothesis submitted is that the study of *Offertorium* through the lenses of this musico-theological dialogue, if both fields of music and theology are explored in a balanced and thorough manner, is not only helpful but necessary to fully understand this concerto and the creative process that gave birth to it. In correlation, the second part of the submitted hypothesis is that music, and in this case *Offertorium*, can act as a “theological space”, meaning that musical sound, form and images can create and interpret theological content within the limits of a non-conceptual and non-verbal language.

In Chapter Two, I will attempt to draw out the main lines of Gubaidulina's philosophical and theological worldview. Certain themes such as sacrifice and the Eucharist will be given special attention. I will then look at how these themes connected with *Offertorium*'s creative process. This will entail a structural and thematic analysis of



*Offertorium* and a study of musicological resources on the subject of the composer's discourse on matters of theology, religion and spirituality.

In Chapter Three, the elements the theological bases of the composer's discourse and in *Offertorium* will be discussed, while drawing on parallels with various contemporary Russian Orthodox authors, such as Paul Evdokimov, Henryk Paprocki and Alexander Schmemmann. The aim of this section is to verify how and to what extent the composer's religious and spiritual worldview is anchored in Orthodox liturgical life. Themes such as sacrifice, sacred time, Eucharist, the cross and ascension will be given special attention.

Finally, I will evaluate the possibility and validity of a musico-theological dialogue with *Offertorium* as its workfield. Does this genre of study enhance or enrich our understanding of the concerto? Can a work of music be a carrier or interpreter of theological viewpoints? How can a piece of music be its own theological ground? The final chapter of this thesis will be dedicated to exploring these questions.

### 1.1.2 Sofia Gubaidulina

Sofia Gubaidulina is a 20<sup>th</sup> century, Russian composer. She was born in 1931 in Christopol, in the Republic of Tatar. Gubaidulina's paternal grandfather was a Muslim mullah and her maternal grandparents were Russian Orthodox. The multi-ethnicity into which the composer was born is expressed in her 1998 interview with Gerard McBurney: "I am where the east meets the west."<sup>1</sup> Despite the abundance of religious roots within her family, her parents gave her and her sisters no religious education, no doubt a result of the communist regime in Russia. Sofia Gubaidulina discovered Russian Orthodoxy through her maternal grandparents and through Marina Yudina, a pianist from the conservatory of Moscow. Yudina brought Gubaidulina to the Orthodox Church in 1970 so that she could be baptized, and served as her godmother.

Having entered the Moscow Conservatory in 1953, the year of Stalin's death, Gubaidulina would have studied during the Khrushchev years, an era in which composers and artists experienced a minimum of freedom, or at least less repression than they did under Stalin. These years were marked by a certain political thaw which

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<sup>1</sup> MCBURNEY, G., 1998, "Encountering Gubaidulina", *Musical Times* 129 (n.1749), p.120.

was part of Khrushchev's "destalinization" process. Despite this, full artistic freedom and expression were not a reality for any Soviet musician or composer, let alone the students at Moscow Conservatory. Frequent raids of the student's dormitories were performed to confiscate any forbidden musical scores by Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Nono, Stockhausen, Boulez, Ligeti, as well as certain symphonies by Shostakovich.

Gubaidulina struggled from the onset of her career under the restrictions of Totalitarianism. The jury at her final examination deemed her compositions subversive and unsuitable. Dmitri Shostakovich, chair of the panel, defended the young Gubaidulina and said to her, "I want you to continue on your mistaken path."<sup>2</sup> In 1979, Tikhon Khrennikov, Secretary General of the Union of Soviet Composers, blacklisted Sofia Gubaidulina and six of her fellow composers under the pretext that they were too avant-garde. This denunciation brought on several repercussions for the "Khrennikov Seven"<sup>3</sup> including the denial or revocation of travel visas, and the loss of teaching positions. Despite the dishonor caused by the blacklisting, the popularity of these seven composers would only grow in the years to come.

Sofia Gubaidulina's professional success came late in her career. The premiere of *Offertorium* put her onto the international music scene in 1980. At the time, cultural communities from around the world barely knew her. The Soviet regime was not yet at its end and the Russian intelligentsia and arts communities did not have the luxury of traveling at their discretion. After the fall of communism, the world had much easier access to Gubaidulina and to her music. She became a frequent guest of honor at international music festivals and received many commissions for symphonic works from the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Berlin Philharmonic. She began presenting her work all over in Asia, North America and Europe.

Since 1980, Sofia Gubaidulina gave several interviews in which she explained her world views, which are immersed in theological reflexions and religious beliefs, especially Orthodox ones. French musicologist Frans Lemaire nicknamed her the Russian mystic.<sup>4</sup> The importance that the Eucharist and the Crucifix represent for the composer is but one example of the role that Russian Orthodoxy plays in her life. Her beliefs are not only expressed in her interviews; they seem to have influenced her

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<sup>2</sup> LUKOMSKY, V., 1998, Winter, "Sofia Gubaidulina: My desire is to rebel, to swim against the stream!", *Perspectives on New Music*, 36, No. 1, p. 5.

<sup>3</sup> KURTZ, M., 2007, *Sofia Gubaidulina: A Biography*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 145.

<sup>4</sup> LEMAIRE, F. 1994. *La Musique du XXe siècle en Russie et dans les anciennes Républiques soviétiques*, Paris, Fayard, p. 365.

artistic process as well. The titles of her works, for instance, bear the sign of religious thought: *In Croce, Sieben Worte, Offertorium, Oratorio of St. John*. As we will see in Chapter Two, Sofia Gubaidulina employs a musical aesthetic and compositional technique that serve to communicate an Orthodox idea or a biblical story. In 2003, the composer spoke about her view of art:

“Art in the twentieth century has had many good and fruitful effects, but at the beginning and at the end, it revealed two negative aspects, as I see it. At the beginning I think of Jean Cocteau [...] who was more concerned with polish and effect than with an inner truth. That is also true of today’s videos. ...And now at the end of the century they say, ‘We don’t need art, what’s it good for?’ because for many people life is all about entertainment and making money. Both strike me as errors because true art, for me, is essentially religious. Art originates in man’s spiritual essence, and it can return mankind to that origin.”<sup>5</sup>

Sofia Gubaidulina has become an important figure in the 20<sup>th</sup> century contemporary music scene. This may be for several reasons. First of all, there are very few contemporary women composers, and while Gubaidulina has always hesitated to use the gender label,<sup>6</sup> the undeniable fact is that she is a woman working in a man's world and this has certainly granted her a fair amount of attention.

Second, she survived the communist regime in Russia, and all the blacklisting and censorship that went with it. The artist's cause under a repressive political environment is of great interest to the modern researcher, and Sofia Gubaidulina, amongst so many others, is a living survivor of artistic censorship. She often speaks of the luxury, as well as the difficulty, of artistic freedom.<sup>7</sup> Michael Kurtz, in his 2007 biography of the composer, wrote about her working and living conditions under the Soviet regime:

“Sofia Gubaidulina’s life has run parallel to the phases that have marked the Soviet system: she lived in Kazan during the Stalin era; she studied in Moscow and was exploring the directions of her future life when Kruschev was in power; during the Breznev period she belonged to a small group of nonconformist composers, struggling under hardships. Not until Gorbachov was she allowed to travel, and when the Soviet Union collapsed, she emigrated and settled in Germany.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 266.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> CAMPBELL, K., 1997, “A Russian composer’s path to freedom” *Christian Science Monitor*, p.4.

<sup>8</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 266.

Today, Sofia Gubaidulina lives and works in Appen, right outside of Hamburg, Germany. She is in great demand, her works being played by some of the world's greatest orchestras, including the Berlin Symphony, the Boston Symphony and l'Orchestre Symphonique de Montréal.

### 1.1.3 Justification and pertinence of project

In recent years, musicologists have given great attention to and have discussed Gubaidulina's strong attachment to mysticism, theology and religious world view. Few researchers, however, have undertaken the task of carefully examining these views in their philosophical and theological context as a means to better grasp certain compositional techniques or choices made by the composer. A developed musico-theological dialogue in the case of *Offertorium* has not been truly explored. Musicologists may find it useful and pertinent to learn about the composer's influences and how these influences affected the creation of *Offertorium*. Furthermore, as those in the field of theology become more interested in theology's relationship to the arts, subjects of study and projects such as this one can contribute to the development of an arts and theology dialogue.

### 1.1.4 The problem

The problem lies in the challenge of achieving interdisciplinary balance between the musicological and theological fields. A musico-theological dialogue is rare within the fields of musicology and theology but it is not unheard of. Certain musicologists have taken an interest in the religious dimensions of musical works, for several reasons: To better understand compositional choices in a sacred work, for instance, or to discuss a composer's socio-historic background. However, more often than not, such analysis given by musicologists is lacking in theological rigor and understanding. This creates an interdisciplinary methodology that is unbalanced in its approach. While the musicological treatment is very strong, the treatment of theology is often weak.

An example of this can be found in the research surrounding Sofia Gubaidulina. As we shall see in the section on sources and documents pertaining to the subject of

Gubaidulina's person and work, there have been a series of masters' and doctoral theses examining the religious nuances and influences in her music. Corinne Arnaud<sup>9</sup> and Fay Neary<sup>10</sup> have each undertaken remarkable research on the composer, and offered valid and helpful musical analysis of their chosen pieces. However, while the authors enumerate the theological ideas that present themselves through her work, no one explores these ideas in depth. There is no examination of possible sources of the author's theological convictions, nor the religious and cultural influences, and there is little study as to the manner in which these beliefs and convictions translate into her work. Facts are stated, but without an explanation of them. These examples are a reflection of musicology's understanding of the composer's background. Though the importance of theology and religion in her life and music are underscored, sadly there does not seem to exist a strong enough grasp of Russian Orthodox theology, liturgy and faith to fully comprehend Sofia Gubaidulina's discourse. What follows is a shallow understanding of how these very same theological ideas and ecclesiastical practices have shaped her work.

Therefore, the questions we must ask ourselves when addressing this problematic are, 'What are these liturgical, theological and religious convictions that have shaped the composer's life and work? Where do they come from? How have they influenced her creative process?'

As for interdisciplinary dialogue in the field of theology, there also seems to be an imbalance between the musicological and theological treatments of the subject. As is stated in the following section, there are remarkable endeavors in the field of the musico-theological dialogue. However, for many authors, while the theological work is ambitious and thoughtful, their musicological work falls short. Theoretical and auditory analysis of the score (or recording) is often badly done or altogether missing, as well as familiarity with the composer's style and technique.

An exegesis of the lyrics is favored above studying the musical score. An example of this is Jean-Francois Labie's studies of sacred music in the Baroque and Romantic eras.<sup>11</sup> Theological reflections abound and very often the author makes valid efforts to explore the composer's interpretation and expression of theology through his or her

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<sup>9</sup> ARNAUD, C., 2004, "Sofia Gubaidulina's *Concordanza* (1971): Finding Balance between Freedom and Totalitarianism", *Music*, Santa Cruz, University of California.

<sup>10</sup> NEARY, F., 2000, "Symbolic Structure in the Music of Sofia Gubaidulina" *Music*, Columbus, Ohio State University.

<sup>11</sup> LABIE, J., 1992, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique baroque*, Paris, Fayard.

work. However, Labie does not undertake any musical analysis, consult exterior musicological sources, or demonstrate to any significant end the *manner* in which a theological inspiration is musically communicated. How does the author transition from musical score and sound to a conclusive theological thesis? This process is unclear. How do the sounds, style and technique articulate an idea? Neither the answer to this question, nor the validity of the question itself has been explored in Labie's work.

Another approach which results in an unbalanced interdisciplinary research exists within the use of music for apologetic ends. In other words, a musical example or work is used to clarify or support a preconceived theological notion. This type of analysis ignores the possibility that a piece of music can be in and of itself the bearer of theological ideas and thought. Theologian Jeremy Begbie, whose formidable endeavors have certainly championed the cause of a musico-theological dialogue, created a methodology in which a musical style, piece or motif is used to illustrate a theological idea. The three-tone chord, for example, is an audible illustration for the Holy Trinity. Jazz improvisation, says Begbie, can help us better reflect on the experience of communion.<sup>12</sup>

When this is the case, the question that seems to be asked is, 'What music can best support my theological argument?' While this can be a worthwhile question in its own right, I would like to favor the following question instead: 'What does this piece of music say about theology? What theological lessons does it bear?'

### 1.1.5 Hypothesis

In light of the problematic explained in the previous section, the suggested hypothesis is that a musico-theological dialogue can be achieved through the study of the *Offertorium* Concerto. For this to take place, however, a new reading of *Offertorium* is in order, one that takes into account its theological backdrop, influences and symbols. This mode of study would not only enrich our understanding of *Offertorium*, but could become necessary in order for musicologists and theologians to fully appreciate it.

For this to be possible, a methodological approach that takes into account all elements - musical, theological, historical, exegetical - of *Offertorium* will be crucial. It

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<sup>12</sup> BEGBIE, J., 2000, *Theology, Music and Time*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, p. 85.

is thus by theological and musicological rigor that a real dialogue can occur through the medium of a work of art.

Furthermore, once this is achieved, the second part of the hypothesis is that *Offertorium* can serve as a theological space. I will be exploring the possibility that musical sound, image and form act as a medium by which theological thought is created and interpreted, within the limits of non-verbal and non-conceptual language. Despite these limits, this hypothesis entails that Gubaidulina's concerto is nevertheless a terrain for theological groundwork.

### 1.1.5 Terms used

*Interdisciplinary* refers to the presence of several fields of study engaged simultaneously. In this case, music theory and analysis is executed alongside theological reflection and research.

*Theological space* or *theological ground* insinuates that original theological notions, ideas or reflections have emerged from an entity, the *Offertorium* concerto, in the case of this project.

Finally, *intertextuality* refers to a method developed by Heidi Epstein<sup>13</sup> in which several sources, or texts, are brought into dialogue so as to formulate an original and valid theology to be applied to a specific aim.

## 1.2 Documents and Sources

The following will be an overview of the authors, documents and research devoted to the subject and themes of this thesis; the overview is divided into three sections: First, the present state of academic research and biographical writings on Sofia Gubaidulina, her religious discourse and her work. This first section is largely focused in the field of musicology. In the second part, I will look at the current research centered around the musico-theological dialogue, examining its authors and their various theological viewpoints. In the third and final section, I will offer an overview of certain key thinkers

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<sup>13</sup> EPSTEIN, H., 2004, *Mounting the Venusberg: A Feminist Theology of Music*, New York, Continuum.

of 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian Orthodox theology and liturgy. The theologians addressed in this final part have been selected for the themes in their writings that best correspond to the themes in Sofia Gubaidulina's religious discourses. Among these themes we will find sacrifice, time, the cross, the Eucharist and Orthodox liturgy, all of which were significant in 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox theology.

### 1.2.1 Musicology and Sofia Gubaidulina

The analytical and biographical research on Sofia Gubaidulina is beginning to appear in relative abundance. Several musicological journals and magazines present articles and interviews with the composer in English; there exist many sources as well in German. As early as 1984, the journal *Tempo* featured an interview between Claire Polin and Gubaidulina.<sup>14</sup> Polin was in part responsible for introducing Gubaidulina to the international music scene at a time when there were still traveling restrictions for composers of the Soviet Union.<sup>15</sup>

Vera Lukomsky and Gerard McBurney both published interviews with Sofia Gubaidulina around 1998, although Lukomsky had met the composer several years earlier in San Jose and then in London. These meetings produced three interviews for *Tempo* and *Perspectives on New Music*.<sup>16</sup> Lukomsky's articles are significant and contain some key statements by Gubaidulina as to the importance of religion and spirituality in her life. Covering such topics as Orthodox liturgy, her love of the Eucharist, her disdain for the term avant-garde and the concert as a spiritual experience, Lukomsky unveils Gubaidulina's rich philosophy and worldview. She also explores with the composer how these views have affected her art, sometimes by showing excerpts of scores with their symbols or significance explained by Gubaidulina herself.

In her article, "The Eucharist in My Fantasy"<sup>17</sup> the author inquires into Gubaidulina's interest in the Holy Communion. The composer's views of the congregation, of Christ

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<sup>14</sup> POLIN, C., 1984, "Interviews with Soviet Composers", *Tempo*, No.151, p. 10-16.

<sup>15</sup> Gubaidulina said to Polin, "It is doubtful that I would be allowed to come to the USA, but still, an official invitation would be most welcome. Then we should see." POLIN, C., 1984, "Interviews with Soviet Composers." *Tempo* 151, p. 14.

<sup>16</sup> LUKOMSKY, V., 1998, "The Eucharist in My Fantasy: Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina", *Tempo*, No. 206, p.29-35. Lukomsky, V., 1998, "Sofia Gubaidulina..." *Perspectives on New Music* No.36 (1), p.5-41. LUKOMSKY, V., 1999, "Hearing the Subconscious: Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina", *Tempo*, No.209, p. 27-31.

<sup>17</sup> LUKOMSKY, V., 1998, "The Eucharist...", *Tempo*, No. 206, p. 29-35.



and of sacrifice are articulated in her answer. She also confirms that *Offertorium* is shaped around these views. This will be further explored in Chapter Two of this project, but suffice it to say that Vera Lukomsky was key in discovering and publishing much of what has allowed the musical world to view Sofia Gubaidulina as a deeply religious and thoughtful artist.

Gerard McBurney published one article on Gubaidulina in 1998,<sup>18</sup> preceding the UK premiere of her symphony *Stimmen...Verstummen...* with the BBC Symphony Orchestra. McBurney discusses Gubaidulina's originality and aesthetics, and pays attention to the composer's use of symbols both musical and gestural. He also explores her multi-ethnicity and her relationship to religion. It is in his article that we find the statement "I am where the East meets the West", now commonly used by musicologists for recordings and concert notes.

There are two recent theses by Fay Neary<sup>19</sup> and Corinne Arnaud<sup>20</sup> and which explored Sofia Gubaidulina's use of musical symbols. Both authors undertake similar projects, largely consisting of a musical analysis of the chosen works, but placing emphasis on discovering and exposing the techniques employed by the composer to emit a symbol or idea through sound.

Neary and Arnaud both argue that religious thought is ever present in Gubaidulina's art. For instance, Neary writes, "The main components of Gubaidulina's aesthetic result from the interaction of purely musical and philosophical criteria."<sup>21</sup> She also feels that Gubaidulina's religious background has contributed to her identity as an artist and to the construction of her music: "For Gubaidulina, the act of composition unites those elements in life which she holds dear - namely religious faith, spiritual survival and artistic beauty, and this combined ideology, conversely, has formed the basis for her creative inspiration."<sup>22</sup>

Neary's analysis is well-executed, as she clearly explains and demonstrates Gubaidulina's "moment form" structure of her compositions. *Moment form* consists of a series of spontaneous moments in a piece which there are "elements within the thematic and dramaturgical makeup which provide a basis for continuity."<sup>23</sup> Equally insightful is

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<sup>18</sup> MCBURNEY, G., 1998, "Encountering Gubaidulina", *Musical Times* **129** (1741), p. 120-125.

<sup>19</sup> NEARY, F., "Symbolic Structure..."

<sup>20</sup> ARNAUD, C., "Sofia Gubaidulina's *Concordanza* (1971)..."

<sup>21</sup> ARNAUD, "Sofia Gubaidulina's *Concordanza* (1971)..." p. 79.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 83.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 23-24.

Neary's exploration of Gubaidulina's "spiritual and musical dramaturgy"<sup>24</sup> which she describes as being a dynamic within the music in which there is a "dramaturgical relationship between two instruments."<sup>25</sup> Her work on the composer's use of binary form, both through structure and motifs between two instruments is rigorous and well-defended.

Neary's musical analysis and explanations are well thought out and solid. She succeeds in demonstrating Gubaidulina's strong thematic work, as well as her use of sound and notes in order to convey states of mind and spirit. However, she chooses to give an interpretation of *In Croce's* philosophical backdrop that concentrates more on psychological factors than religious or theological influences, which is not faulty per sé. But although Neary admits to the composer's strong attachment to her spiritual and theological worldview, very little of this worldview is explored. Furthermore, the basis of Neary's project is that there is an underlying current of philosophical, spiritual themes that have shaped Gubaidulina's work. These themes are but briefly explored and without much secondary research supporting them. The bridge between musical analysis and the exploration of the thought process that would have given birth to these compositional techniques is fundamentally weak.

Arnaud's research also unveils certain specific themes within Gubaidulina's work and discourse, such as freedom. The weight of her project lies in the musical analysis of Gubaidulina's *Concordanza*. This would be fine as such, except for the fact that the pretense of the project is her intention to examine spiritual themes in this musical piece. The themes are stated, but their translation into music is left unexplained and undemonstrated.

Where Neary and Arnaud succeed is in extracting the musical motifs, ideas, melodies and structures that convey an intentional message. What lacks in both Neary and Arnaud's work is an exploration of how these musical symbols came to be. What ideas gave birth to what symbols and why? These symbols exist, but how were they shaped and why? If these questions are not dealt with, then what we have is a musical analysis with side notes but not a real reflection into the creation process.

Frans C. Lemaire, a French musicologist, wrote two books on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Russian music, *La musique du XXe siècle en Russie et dans les anciennes républiques*

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<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13, p. 72.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

*soviétiques*<sup>26</sup> and *Le destin russe et la musique, un siècle d'histoire de la révolution jusqu'à nos jours*.<sup>27</sup> Having met Gubaidulina on several occasions, Lemaire dedicated a chapter in both books to the composer, depicting her as one of the more important Soviet composers that this century has known. Not only is his research pertinent and thoughtful, Lemaire demonstrates a special interest in the religious aspect of her music. Nicknaming her "la mystique russe"<sup>28</sup> he offers the reader certain precious examples and explanations as to the importance of faith and Christian philosophy in her life.

Says Lemaire of Gubaidulina, "Sofia Gubaidulina réunit à la fois un énorme savoir-faire professionnel et intellectuel, une invention sonore exceptionnelle et une motivation spirituelle très profonde. Elle est magicienne, alchimiste et prêtresse à la fois, mais sans ostentation, ni artifice."<sup>29</sup> While there is no in-depth exposure or examination of her theological beliefs or influences, he points the reader in the right direction.

Finally, the most significant written work pertaining to Sofia Gubaidulina is her biography, published in English in 2007.<sup>30</sup> Its author is the German musicologist, Michael Kurtz. In *Sofia Gubaidulina: A biography*, Kurtz retraces the genesis of Gubaidulina's life, from her childhood in the Republic of Tatar to her years at the Conservatory of Moscow, then tracing her many years as an artist working under a communist system. As her biographer, Kurtz obtained many meetings with Gubaidulina, and her family, friends and colleagues, thus allowing him to collect and publish information and anecdotes that were previously unknown. As well, Kurtz dedicates a section of his book to the composer's spirituality and religious convictions, and recounts key moments in her life that marked her faith. The information available in this biography will be of precious value to this research, and will be further discussed in Chapter Two.

Montreal-based composer Nicolas Gilbert executed a formal analysis of *Offertorium* in 2003.<sup>31</sup> There is little content as to the philosophical or theological ideas behind the concerto, but this matters not- Gilbert's reading and classification system of *Offertorium*'s structure, musical motives and symbols as well as various compositional techniques make his thesis a valuable tool for the purposes of this project. He also

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<sup>26</sup> LEMAIRE, *La musique du XXe siècle...*

<sup>27</sup> LEMAIRE, F., 2005, *Le destin russe et la musique, un siècle d'histoire de la révolution jusqu'à nos jours*, Paris, Fayard.

<sup>28</sup> LEMAIRE, *La musique du XXe siècle...*, p. 403.

<sup>29</sup> LEMAIRE, *La musique du XXe siècle...*, p. 306.

<sup>30</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*

<sup>31</sup> GILBERT, N., 2003, *Offertorium de Sofia Gubaidulina: Une analyse de Nicolas Gilbert*, Musique, Conservatoire de musique du Québec à Montréal.

proposes a series of compositional and sound symbols in the concerto that he believes represent the cross. His findings will be discussed in Chapter Two.

In July 2008, I had the fortunate opportunity to meet with Mme Gubaidulina. The verbatim of this interview can be found in the Annex of this project. I will occasionally quote and comment Gubaidulina's remarks and responses from our conversation throughout my research.

### 1.2.2 Authors of the Musico-theological Dialogue

Theologians have reflected about music for many centuries, even as far back as St. Augustine's *Confessions*. For the purposes of this research, however, I will primarily be studying the 20<sup>th</sup> Century musico-theological dialogue, and more particularly its authors of the past fifty years.

The German Protestant scholar Oskar Söhnngen was one of the first contemporary theologians to explore the possibility of theology and music in a co-existing philosophical dialogue. His aim, in fact, was to develop a theology *of* music in his 1967 book entitled *Theologie der Musik*.<sup>32</sup> Strictly systematic, Söhnngen draws from Martin Luther's writings and confers upon all forms of music three identities: music as science, music as worship and music as *creatura evangelistic*: music is meant to "seize and spread the gospel".<sup>33</sup> Oskar Söhnngen's work was instrumental in that it gave a basic musico-theological inquiry and baseline for contemporary scholars desiring to deal with this issue. Many writers have since built their hypothesis with the aid of, or in reaction to, *Theologie der Musik*.<sup>34</sup> While Söhnngen remains a trailblazer in the field of interdisciplinary studies, this project will draw very little from his thesis for two reasons. First of all, the aim of this research is not to create a theology of music but rather to study how the two fields enrich and complement each other. Second, Söhnngen's systematic approach has created three 'identities of music' that are nonetheless dependent on lyrics and words of the musical work itself. As Heidi Epstein states, "Can the gospel penetrate the body (of music) without textual domination? Clearly the answer is no, as Söhnngen's entire theory is eclipsed by the 'missionary

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<sup>32</sup> SÖHNNGEN, O., 1967, *Theologie der Musik*, Kassel, Stadtverlag.

<sup>33</sup> EPSTEIN, H., 1990, *The Nature of the Relationship Between Music and Theology According to Oskar Söhnngen and Olivier Messiaen*, Religious Studies, Montreal, McGill University, p. 81.

<sup>34</sup> Examples: Epstein, Begbie.

position' his theology of music assumes."<sup>35</sup> Thus Söhnngen's approach is a conservative one, and not applicable to this research, as we are studying a violin concerto which is void of lyrics.

Two French authors, Jean-François Labie and François Vouga, have both adopted interdisciplinary approaches to music and theology. While they have a similar mission, which is to discover how music reveals theology, their means and methodologies are distinctly separate. Labie seeks to provide an historical overview of sacred music, touching on theological or ecclesiastic ideas of each chosen work. Vouga approaches the musico-theological dialogue with a distinctly exegetical methodology.

Jean-François Labie wrote two books, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique baroque*<sup>36</sup> and *Le visage du Christ dans la musique des XIXe et XXe siècles*<sup>37</sup> in which he studies and discusses a selection of sacred musical works from a chosen era. He constructs a historical and theological reflection around each piece, looking briefly at how its form or style portrays a specific doctrine or theological idea. His purpose is clear: "L'auteur désire démontrer comment la technique musicale peut sculpter et communiquer la théologie."<sup>38</sup> The author articulates his hypothesis at the beginning of his first book: "[les musiciens] agissent comme des révélateurs. Leurs œuvres, il est vrai, restent des productions humaines où l'art a autant de part que la recherche de la vérité."<sup>39</sup>

Labie does briefly discuss two works by Sofia Gubaidulina, the *Sieben Worte* for cello and bayan and the *Passion of St. John*, an oratorio. While he offers neither a deeply musicological analysis nor a very developed theological reflection, he firmly emphasizes Gubaidulina's ability to color her compositions with her own personal interpretation of biblical narrative or theological doctrine. By this, he suggests that Gubaidulina is a theologian in her own right, and a communicator of philosophical and spiritual conviction. This is something that no other scholar had yet suggested. To support his hypothesis on Gubaidulina, Labie writes:

"La tradition baroque voulait que le récit de la Passion soit commenté par des extraits de textes liturgiques ou vétérotestamentaires. Gubaidulina, dans une vraie réflexion théologique, choisit une autre voie : elle relit le récit de la mort du Christ et la vision de la fin des temps dans

<sup>35</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg...*, p. 81.

<sup>36</sup> LABIE, J., 1992, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique baroque*, Paris, Fayard.

<sup>37</sup> LABIE, J., 2005, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique des XIXe et XXe siècles*. Paris, Fayard.

<sup>38</sup> DORÉ, J. in LABIE, J., 1992, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique baroque*, Paris, Fayard, p. 9.

<sup>39</sup> LABIE, *Le visage du Christ dans la musique baroque*, p. 17.

l'Apocalypse qu'elle complète avec quelques versets d'Isaïe prophétisant la passion."<sup>40</sup>

As is the case with his treatment of Gubaidulina, Jean-François Labie offers some interesting and often profound reflections on sacred art, but his research is neither rigorous nor methodical. His musicological analysis is unremarkable and his theological approach lacks structure. There is very little dialogue with other authors and he does not seem to follow any set of theological guidelines or structure when discussing the liturgical or biblical nuances of a work. Rather, his books are essays on the relationship the Church has had with its composers and how these composers have related to their faith.

François Vouga, a Swiss pastor, early Church historian and biblical exegete, is the second author to study sacred music in both its musicological and theological context. With his book *Résonnances théologiques de la musique*,<sup>41</sup> Vouga creates a useful and original methodological approach to interdisciplinary studies involving music and theology. Vouga argues that the composer can act as an exegete or even as a preacher of biblical passages or theological doctrine. Vouga explains his vision of sacred music:

"Les œuvres elles-mêmes nous invitent aux étapes de leur quête spirituelle et nous guident au cœur de leur polyphonie. On s'aperçoit alors que les esthétiques et les styles recouvrent des débats qui dès leurs origines traversent l'histoire de l'Occident chrétien et que toute la théologie s'élabore dans leurs portées."<sup>42</sup>

Vouga supports his hypothesis by explaining how Bach, Beethoven and Stravinsky each applied their own interpretations of a common text, the Credo, from the Latin Mass, to their respective compositions, through the means of musical structure, timbre, orchestration and rhythm. Vouga's case study demonstrates the differences between the three compositions, which stream directly out of each composer's personal approach to the Credo and transcend even the musical styles of their eras. Vouga unveils these personal choices, showing how the use of choral and recitative sections, the musical accents on certain words and omissions of others, the symmetry and form of each work display the convictions and religious sentiment of Bach, Beethoven and Stravinsky. He

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<sup>40</sup> LABIE, J., *Le visage du Christ dans la musique des XIXe...*, p. 450.

<sup>41</sup> VOUGA, F., 1983, *Résonnances théologiques de la musique*, Genève, Labor et Fides.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

offers an exegetical reading of their music, looking closely at the relationship of the note to the text.

Vouga's approach allows him to recite the tale of each composer's spiritual voyage. He seeks to shed a light on their interiority, their understanding of God. His research explores historical context, ecclesiastical questions and he also takes an interest in the personality and psychology of the composers he studies. His is a risky endeavour, carried out with artistic reflection. One cannot easily aspire to know the personal, little documented, spiritual convictions of an historical person, especially one attached to Church patronage. This being said, Vouga supports his arguments with clarity and studies each work of music exegetically, thus creating a valuable and original methodology. He defends the pertinence of his initiative:

"Un exégète va simplement se mêler de ce qui ne le regarde pas et voir comment la théologie se fait en dehors de la théologie et des théologiens. Ou plus exactement, comment une certaine théologie s'élabore et retentit dans l'œuvre d'art, comment la recherche et les témoignages de croyants s'expriment dans la culture..."<sup>43</sup>

Nicolas Lossky, author of *Essai sur une théologie de la musique liturgique*<sup>44</sup> and his article "Principes théologiques de la musique liturgique"<sup>45</sup> is one of the only contemporary Orthodox scholars to examine the musico-theological dialogue. He offers a reflection on the spiritual and practical role that music plays in the Orthodox service and Church. He equally proposes a theology of religious art, as well as certain hypothesis regarding the role of the church composer and singer. His reflections regarding the intrinsic relationship of liturgical art to the spiritual growth and religious experience of Orthodox believers are unique and interesting.

While he is the only author addressed in this section who emerges from a Russian Orthodox background, his project's aims differ from this one. Lossky's focus is on the theological defense and reflection of religious music within the Sunday service. The music discussed, therefore, is necessarily Orthodox liturgical music. Gubaidulina's *Offertorium* was not intended for the Church nor is it explicitly meant to be a vehicle of spiritual growth. Much of Lossky's writings are therefore not applicable to the study of *Offertorium*. However, Lossky develops a definition of theological worship and music

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>44</sup> LOSSKY, N., 2003, *Essai sur une théologie de la musique liturgique : perspective orthodoxe*, Paris, Éditions du Cerf.

<sup>45</sup> LOSSKY, N., 1993, "Principes théologiques de la musique liturgique", *Contacts*, No.163, p. 204-211.

that will be valuable in the fourth and final chapter of this thesis when we will explore the validity of *Offertorium* as its own theological grounds.

Perhaps one of the more influential and recent scholars to address the musico-theological question is Protestant theologian Jeremy Begbie.<sup>46</sup> Begbie is less interested than his predecessors and peers in creating a theology of music. Rather, he seeks to demonstrate how music can best serve theology, how sound and musical content can underline, clarify and support a doctrinal notion or idea. Music, under Begbie's approach, can be a metaphor for theology. Musical tension, for instance, which ends by harmonic resolution to the tonic, serves as a musical image of Christian salvation.<sup>47</sup> Says Begbie of his approach:

What would it mean to theologise not simply *about* music but *through* music? This book is a preliminary attempt to answer that question. My main aim, therefore, is not to offer a 'systematic theology of music', an account of music which situates it within a particular doctrinal environment...our primary purpose here is to enquire as to the ways in which music can benefit theology.<sup>48</sup>

Clearly an adherent of systematic theology, Begbie argues that music is a precious tool for the theologian for it is dependent on time and space. Time and space are the natural limits in which God chooses to reveal Himself. Thus, music and theological revelation not only co-exist but aid each other in their realization. Time is a leitmotif in Begbie's discourse. Music being a most revelatory art, it "takes our time and returns it, reshaped."<sup>49</sup> Music is therefore an example of how God *redeems* time.

To further demonstrate how music reveals theology through temporality, Begbie studies a series of doctrines or practices and employs musical notions or experiences to work through them. The repetition of motifs in Beethoven's sixth symphony are a metaphor for the Eucharist, for it is a liturgical act that is repetitive and yet changing.<sup>50</sup> Jazz improvisation is a musical illustration of christological liberty.

Begbie's work is unique and thoroughly executed. His approach, however, functions within a very specific frame, that of Protestant doctrine and tonal western music. There

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<sup>46</sup> BEGBIE, J., *Theology, Music and Time*.

<sup>47</sup> BEGBIE, J., 2001, "Through Music: Sound Mix", in *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation through the Arts*, ed. J.BEGBIE, Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, p. 148.

<sup>48</sup> BEGBIE, *Theology, Music and Time*, p. 4-5.

<sup>49</sup> BEGBIE, J., 1997, "Theology and the Arts: Music" in *The Modern Theologian: an Introduction to Christian Theology in the Twentieth Century*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Ford D. Oxford, Blackwell, p. 692.

<sup>50</sup> BEGBIE, *Theology, Music and Time*, p. 85.



is a risk in this genre of methodology in that preconceived Christian doctrines are simply "validated" through a musical style, piece or motif, thus rendering music little more than an agent for "text-proofing".<sup>51</sup> Within the context of this master's thesis the application of Begbie's approach would be inappropriate, seeing as its focus is not Christian doctrine, but rather the exploration of an artist's religious worldview. Begbie's "theology through music" does not deeply consider this particular angle in the musico-theological dialogue.

Heidi Epstein is the final scholar to be discussed in this section. Epstein is the author of a thesis on the musico-theological dialogue in which she applied Söhngen's theology of music to Olivier Messiaen's body of work.<sup>52</sup> In 2004, she published *Melting the Venusberg: A Feminist Theology of Music*,<sup>53</sup> in which she seeks to create a theological identity and approach to music that takes into account its carnal and sensual nature.<sup>54</sup> This identity, claims Epstein, has been long neglected by theologians but it finds its justification through Jesus Christ who is the "human song of God".<sup>55</sup> Employing the method of intertextuality, which will be further explored in the following section on methodology, Epstein engages a multitude of sources and academic studies such as technical analysis, context and feminist theology in order to discover a musical work's diverse facets and content. Her intertextual approach, by studying music through so many different lenses, allows each work to offer its own theological message, and opens the doors to a balanced dialogue.

### 1.2.3 Orthodox authors

There are a number of Orthodox authors and theologians that will be addressed in this research in order to better understand Sofia Gubaidulina's theological and religious influences and worldview. Certain musicologists mention Nicolas Berdiaev<sup>56</sup> as a

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<sup>51</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg*..., p. 87.

<sup>52</sup> EPSTEIN, *The Nature of the Relationship*...

<sup>53</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg*...

<sup>54</sup> Sensuality, explains the author, is a characteristic associated with femininity. Traditionally, scholars and theologians, as far back as the Middle Ages, have regarded this characteristic as negative. According to Epstein, music, just like women, has been marginalized by the Church, due to its sensual nature. It is one reason that sacred music's compositional guidelines have been strictly dictated.

<sup>55</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg*, p. 186.

<sup>56</sup> BERDIAEV, N., 1933, *Esprit et liberté; essai de philosophie chrétienne*, Paris, Je Sers.

BERDIAEV, N., 1979, *De la destination de l'homme: essai d'éthique paradoxale*, Lausanne, L'Age d'homme.

philosophical influence.<sup>57</sup> Berdiaev, a philosopher and theological thinker is renowned for his writings on ethics and liberty. His views on spiritual resistance are valuable, especially in light of what artists, the intelligentsia and the Church suffered under totalitarianism during a better part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century in Russia. Spiritual and artistic resistance is a common theme in Gubaidulina's discourse. They do not, however, appear to be directly linked to any of the musical or theological themes of *Offertorium*. For this reason, he will not be discussed at any length in this work.

Alexander Schmemman,<sup>58</sup> Paul Evdokimov, Irén -Henri Dalmais<sup>59</sup> and Henryk Paprocki<sup>60</sup> are all writers whose works have clarified and shaped contemporary Orthodox thought. This is not to say that Gubaidulina would have been directly influenced by these writers, but they have all been instrumental in articulating the fundamental values of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian Orthodox believer. For the purposes of clarifying certain concepts or ideas pertaining to contemporary Orthodox practice or belief, as will be the case when studying Gubaidulina's worldviews, I will discuss the writings of these authors, especially in Chapter Three.

Alexander Schmemann has offered some important reflections on Orthodox Church life in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He wrote several books on the theology of Orthodox liturgical life. With this, he sought to remind the modern Orthodox Church of the reason of its existence, and of the legitimacy and pertinence of their rites and sacraments. He refers to the "voyage towards ascension", a metaphor for spiritual development that starts when congregants leave their houses for church and ends with the Eucharist.<sup>61</sup> Schmemann's writings will be especially helpful in the sections on the Eucharist, sacrificial offering and the ascension in Orthodox liturgy. His reflections also provide some precious parallels with various elements of Gubaidulina's discourse.

The writings of Paul Evdokimov also provide some helpful insight. His book *L'Orthodoxie*<sup>62</sup> will be of great value because it discusses at length the basic and fundamental values of Orthodox theology. As is the case with Schmemann, his writings also provide parallels with elements in our composer's theological discourse, particularly in regards to a theology of sacred time. Evdokimov writes at length about

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<sup>57</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 105.

<sup>58</sup> SCHMEMANN, A. (1966). *Introduction To Liturgical Theology*, Portland, American Orthodox Press.  
SCHMEMANN, A., 1965, *Sacraments and Orthodoxy*. N.Y. Herder and Herder.

<sup>59</sup> DALMAIS, I-H., 1958, *Initiation à la liturgie*, Paris, Descl e de Brouwer.

<sup>60</sup> PAPROCKI, H., 1993, *Les mystères de l'eucharistie*, Paris, Cerf.

<sup>61</sup> SCHMEMANN, *Introduction to liturgical...*, p. 22.

<sup>62</sup> EVDOKIMOV, P., 1979, *L'Orthodoxie*, Paris, Descl e de Brouwer.

the differences of heavenly time (or God's time) during the liturgy and earthly time, which is to say the linear time we experience in everyday life. For this reason, Evdokimov will be another key reference in Chapter Three. Henryk Paprocki also offers some valuable insight into an Orthodox theology of time, and writes at some length about the Orthodox notion of an “eighth day”<sup>63</sup> in the weekly liturgical calendar.

Iréné-Henri Dalmais, Olivier Clément, Paul Verghese and Timothy Were, amongst others, have all written about basic rituals and practices in Eastern Orthodoxy. They have also explored to varying degrees the intrinsic role that liturgy, its rituals and traditions play in the lives of those who subscribe to the Orthodox faith. For this reason, they will occasionally be cited. Their writings will be useful in clarifying the relationship that Gubaidulina has with her Church.

### 1.3 Methodology

This last section is an overview and explanation of the adopted methodological approaches of this project. I will principally be employing musical analysis and Heidi Epstein's intertextual method as a background approach.

#### 1.3.1 Musical analysis

The analysis of *Offertorium* and the study of its creative process will constitute an important part of Chapter 2. The composer's technique and aesthetics will be studied along with the concerto's particular motifs, timbre, orchestration, melodies and rhythm. These musical factors are demonstrative of how Gubaidulina's philosophy and views of the metaphysical translated into sound and score. After having explored and classified the different theological and religious themes in the composer's discourse, I will attempt to extract from *Offertorium* those motifs, melodies or musical structures that seem to have been shaped by or represent Gubaidulina's ideas. I will demonstrate this by using excerpts from the score or recording.

In the more methodological section of this project (Chapter Two), approximately ten excerpts from the concerto will be analyzed and classified as such:

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<sup>63</sup> PAPROCKI, *Les mystères...*, p. 151.

Musical Excerpt
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1. Written analysis (particular harmonic structure, melody, orchestration, rhythm, timbre);
2. Comments (composer's or my own): how this excerpt manifests a theological idea or image.

The analysis and classification of *Offertorium* will therefore be executed according to the theological or religious themes that dominate it.

In chapter three, I will take into account the writings of authors and scholars who have worked on the musico-theological dialogue in order to examine the concerto's contribution to this genre of interdisciplinarity. I will equally make use of Heidi Epstein's intertextual approach so as to demonstrate *Offertorium's* different facets. In short, in chapter three, I will evaluate the possibility of a musico-theological dialogue as it presents itself in the case of *Offertorium* and in a composer as intriguing as Sofia Gubaidulina. Is such a dialogue valid? What is its pertinence? What are the criteria and indicators of the musico-theological endeavors? These questions will be explored.

### 1.3.2 Heidi Epstein's intertextual approach

Heidi Epstein proposes a methodology that counters previous theologies of music or interdisciplinary approaches to music and theology. Often, many scholars' view on the musico-theological dialogue has been too systematic, musicologically unbalanced or even closed to the possibility of music being in and of itself a bearer of theological thought. Epstein rejects these previous endeavors and seeks to discover a musico-theological marriage that is whole, balanced, and respectful of both sides. About her approach she writes, "It will not be a systematic theology of music that sequentially develops, for example, a musically informed Christology, ecclesiology [...] systematic theologies want music to begin and end a certain way." <sup>64</sup>

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<sup>64</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg...*, p. 2.

Therefore, faithful to her method of intertextuality, Epstein will study the writings of the artists, their influences, their context, their musical aesthetics, the use of different sound techniques and the integration of biblical stories and theology in the piece in order to obtain an analysis that is holistic and integral. This allows both listener and scholar to appreciate the musical work's diverse and complex existence. "To that end," she writes, "it (the intertextual method) purposely enlists myriad sources outside religious traditions. It incorporates a wide-range of non-theological (feminist) materials: literary criticism, new historicism, deconstruction, musicology, and, of course, the actual music of female composer-performer."<sup>65</sup>

Epstein's theological ideas avoid the realm of preconceived material. It is the work and the artist who speak. It is by engaging these multiple angles that an interdisciplinary reflection can be created:

"To make this model genuinely interdisciplinary and provocatively intertextual, I shall dialogue with history, literature, biblical studies, theology, and music. Such collaborations multiply creative new directions that previously narrow musico-theological discourse has foregone, while at the same time illustrating how departures from canonical sources and symbols hardly impoverishes but rather enriches musico-theological reflection. If nothing, the previous chapters have shown that music is by nature intertextual."<sup>66</sup>

Epstein insists upon a multi-faceted study of music and theology, in order to enable revisionist readings of past and present composers and writers. One example of this is Epstein's treatment of Hildegard of Bingen to whom she dedicates an entire chapter of her research. Using the intertextuality approach, which is to say the author studies Hildegard's compositions, musical practices, letters and theological writings, Epstein demonstrates how Hildegard constructs a theology of music that is a positive metaphor for sexuality and the body. It is Hildegard who refers to Christ as "the song of God", Mary's body and soul being the musical instrument that carries the divine music. The incarnation is, according to Hildegard, music made flesh.<sup>67</sup> Epstein succeeds in showing, through her study of Hildegard that music, in its intrinsic link to the body, is an element of godly communication and presence. Equally valuable is Epstein's insistence on engaging first and foremost Hildegard's writings and compositions in order to construct a theology of music and of the incarnation, instead of vice-versa.

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<sup>65</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg...*, p. 2.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126

In the case of *Mounting the Venusberg*, the author studies how music can serve as a positive metaphor for sexuality and femininity. Intertextuality, however, transcends this specific agenda and can easily be put to use in other projects. Its application will allow for an interdisciplinary inquiry that is both respectful to music while attempting a significant and valid theological reflection.

Within the framework of this project, I will appeal to the following elements: musicological research, musical examples from the concerto, complementary theological ideas (such as sacrificial offering, the cross, ascension and sacred time) and the study of Russian Orthodox liturgy and its liturgical symbolism. Considering the amount of theological and non-theological sources that will be consulted, this research will largely rely upon the method of intertextuality.

#### **1.4 Conclusion**

In this first chapter I have laid out the ground work for the thesis. Through the lenses of a musico-theological dialogue I will study and analyze *Offertorium*, in the hopes of discovering how theological convictions and religious worldviews inform, inspire and shape a work of art, and in turn how this work of art can become its own interpretive carrier of theological thought.

Contrary to most traditional musical analysis, which tend to explore only the technical side of a work, its structure, compositional techniques, orchestration and melody, I will take into account these elements while classifying and studying the different moments of the concerto that are, according to the composer's interviews and explanations, punctuated with the theological framework and ideas that have given birth to its creation. These ideas, such as sacred time, sacrifice, the Eucharist and ascension have been extracted from her discourse and from *Offertorium* itself. They are also the fruit of a contemporary Russian Orthodox experience and worldview, which will be explored and discussed through the writings of 20<sup>th</sup> century writers such as Iréné-Henri Dalmais, Paul Evdokimov and Alexander Schmemmann.

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of this research, and the numerous sources consulted, both theological and extra-theological, I will rely heavily upon Heidi Epstein's intertextuality approach which states that "such collaborations multiply

creative new directions that previously narrow musico-theological discourse has foregone [...] music is by nature intertextual."<sup>68</sup>

In the following chapter, I will be studying various elements of *Offertorium*, first through musical analysis and second through explanations offered by Gubaidulina herself. Several musical moments and passages have been selected, and these sections of the score will be included in the chapter so as to aid the analysis and discussion. I shall begin looking at the principal theological themes that seem recurrent in the composer's discourse and work, and attempt to decipher which elements or moments in the concerto are aligned, shaped by or inspired by these themes and why.

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<sup>68</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg...*, p. 119.

## Chapter 2 - The World of *Offertorium*

This chapter will be divided into three parts. First, we will draw out the recurring themes of spirituality and theology within Sofia Gubaidulina's general discourse. Second, will be an overview of the main theological ideas and influences that shaped the creative process behind *Offertorium*. Last will be a study of how the composer's ideas and concepts transcended her music, through an analysis of the concerto's thematic architecture, its form, musical phrases, and its aesthetic and compositional technique. In other words, the goal of this next section is not only to identify theological and spiritual thought within Gubaidulina's worldview, but specifically how it has been expressed and articulated through her musical score.

### 2.1 Themes in Sofia Gubaidulina's spiritual discourse

#### 2.1.1 The vertical and horizontal dimensions of life

In 1997 Karen Campbell, a journalist for the *Christian Science Monitor*, asked Gubaidulina where her inspiration came from. The composer replied, "The sky." She continued, "That joy and inspiration at the beginning is like a vertical sound of colourful, moving, clashing chords, completely mixed up and jumbled. It is wonderful and beautiful but it isn't real. My job is to turn that vertical sound into a horizontal line. Those two lines, horizontal and vertical, make a cross, and I think about that when I compose."<sup>69</sup>

This notion of the vertical and horizontal dimensions in life and art is a recurring theme in Gubaidulina's discourse. She understands her compositional process through this lens. The vertical dimension encompasses all that is feminine, intuitive and spiritually inspired<sup>70</sup> Gubaidulina's vertical consciousness, as she articulates it, is what gives birth to the rich religious and symbolic material in her work. The vertical belongs to the realm of the transcendent, the metaphysical. It is the dominant force in her art and yet, explains the composer, it needs to be sculpted

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<sup>69</sup> CAMPBELL, K., "A Russian Composer's Path to Freedom", *Christian Science Monitor*, August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1997, p. 3.

<sup>70</sup> KURTZ, M., 2007, *Sofia Gubaidulina: A biography*, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, p. 70.



and disciplined in order to produce anything of quality. Gubaidulina once explained to her biographer that for a long time she had many layers of ideas and thoughts that she was unable to use practically or meaningfully:

“All my thoughts came to me at the same time, forming something like a vertical thought structure. Instead of a line, I experienced a vertical form. I would say something and felt at the same time that it wasn’t right. It was a real tragedy for me, this pileup of disparate thoughts; I wanted to express all levels simultaneously, but, of course that was very painful.”<sup>71</sup>

She explained how she overcame this obstacle:

“Only with great self-discipline have I learned to concentrate at the uppermost layer of my verticality and to articulate it. It took me a long time to understand that it is necessary to do so, that not all layers are equally as important and that the vertical line must be transformed into the horizontal. It was only then that I began to speak coherently- even to live.”<sup>72</sup>

The horizontal dimension, described as belonging to the physical world, takes the ideas from her vertical inspiration and transforms them into compositions. The grind of the laborious task of composing and the logic and discipline required for this task are understood by Gubaidulina as being the horizontal component of her artistry. On top of this is the fact that a musical idea may come from “the sky” but in order for it to come to life, it must be written down on the score, the notes appearing on a horizontal line. It is also something she associates to a more male aspect of life and art.

“Man does not think this way - verticality is very feminine. My consciousness contains much darkness, it is not only sufficed with light. Men's thinking however, is bright logical and very clear. My vertical thinking comes from my feminine nature.”<sup>73</sup>

Time as well is viewed under the categories of horizontal and vertical. Vertical time, “referred to as essential or sacred time or 'time outside time' (vertical time) is a metaphor for a deep layer within humans, the realm of the soul, the realm of the eternal, of the divine.”<sup>74</sup> Horizontal time, on the other hand, “is the measurable time of the beat and of the clock; it is also, for her (Gubaidulina), an image of physical

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<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 175.

existence.”<sup>75</sup> As with her notion of transforming vertical inspiration into horizontal music, the act of composing involves the transformation of vertical time into horizontal sound.

“At the start there is an encompassing moment of creative inspiration in vertical time, in which the artist apprehends the idea of a work in its totality. It presents, as it were a multilayered but as yet 'undifferentiated column of sound' that cannot be expressed in musical notation (...) The first act of transforming time occurs when the composer transmutes the 'column of sound' from the vertical to the horizontal. In this process a multiplicity of layers and events are separated out of vertical totality and are horizontally arranged in the sequential order of the musical score.”<sup>76</sup>

In other words, the existence of these two dimensions can only be musically fruitful if one leads into the other, if they intermingle and transform each other. Kurtz articulates Gubaidulina's principle of vertical and horizontal by bringing it one step further, explaining its full life cycle:

“The second act of the transformation of time is enacted by musicians and audiences during performances. But it lies in the essential depth of the work and the audience is receptive to that depth. If that is the case, the score, so to speak, is released from horizontal time and undergoes a retransformation into vertical time.”<sup>77</sup>

The compositional process involving vertical and horizontal dimensions is therefore an organic or circular one; divine, metaphysical thought is transformed into music through practical, logical labour upon which it creates an experience that once more pushes the listener into a vertical and inspired space, out of the bounds of physical time. For Sofia Gubaidulina, both music and religious ritual stem from and allow for the experience of these two spheres. In an interview in 1977 she spoke of instances when vertical time was created both by art and religion:

“In sleeping we experience as time out of time [...] this is the essence of art. Art exists because this transformation, this leap in life, exists. This leap in life exists also in the Eucharistic experience in religion. There is a moment, the moment of resurrection, when man exists out of time. It is this experience which more than any other represents 'existence out of time'. We have three ways of experiencing this essential (sacred or vertical) time: in art, in sleep and in the Eucharist.”<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*p. 176

This thought brings us into the next spiritual theme in Gubaidulina's discourse, that of the crucifixion.

### 2.1.2 The crucifixion

As Gubaidulina explained in her interview with Karen Campbell, once the vertical and horizontal are joined, they form the shape of the cross: “Those two lines, horizontal and vertical, make a cross, and I think about that when I compose.”<sup>79</sup> There is a double entendre here: first of all, the horizontal and the vertical must come together in order for the composer to create. Second of all, the joining of these two spheres produces a religious symbol, or experience. Once again, art and religion stem from the same core, arise from the same essence. Musicologist Ivana Cojbasic also mentions this marriage of the vertical and horizontal, which births the image of the cross, in an analysis of Gubaidulina's Piano Sonata:

“As she composes, Gubaidulina often thinks about these two crossing lines, the ‘horizontal’ and the ‘vertical’. This is related to Gubaidulina’s religious background, in which the symbol of the cross is deeply rooted. The horizontal line symbolizes the human experience in life and the vertical line represents men's striving for full realization in God. The meeting point of these lines is crucial, for it is there that a human being undergoes transformation.”<sup>80</sup>

Much like Russian Churches or Icons, the cross is an ever-present symbol in Gubaidulina's art. For instance, a section of the score of *In Croce* is written in the shape of the cross, as we can see in Figure 1 of Annex 1.

In *Sieben Worte*, her seven-movement work for bayan (accordion), cello and string ensemble, there is also allusion to the crucifixion. The composer uses “instrumental symbolism”<sup>81</sup> to integrate the image of the cross into the piece. The bayan executes long sweeping notes, having the musician create a horizontal movement as she opens and closes her instrument. At the same time, the cellist

<sup>79</sup> CAMPBELL “A Russian composer’s...”, p.3.

<sup>80</sup> COJBASIC, I., 2000, “The Piano Sonata of Sofia Gubaidulina: Formal analysis and some interpretation issues”, *New Sound: International Magazine for Music*, n. 15, p. 108.

<sup>81</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, “Sofia Gubaidulina: My desire is to rebel, to swim against the stream!” *Perspectives On New Music*, Vol. 36, n. 1, p. 26.

slides up and down the neck of the cello, following the score's indications for long glissandos, which in turn creates a vertical movement. The two together make the shape of the cross. Throughout the movements, the cello, symbolizing Christ, plays note after note that are interrupted by sharp pizzicatos from the violin section. These notes are being “crucified” one at a time.<sup>82</sup> These explanations are, of course, based upon Gubaidulina's own analysis of her work, as explained in her 1998 interview with Vera Lukomsky. They are meant as a philosophical and symbolic backdrop to the work, and while they permeate the very essence of the compositional techniques used in *Sieben Worte*, there is no objective way of determining whether a theoretician unaware of Gubaidulina's inspiration would have perceived these same religious connotations. What matters here, however, is that this element of the composer's religious and theological thought process has created a strong symbolic language in her art. Without this language, her technique and aesthetic would have taken on an entirely different form. Michael Kurtz comments on this:

“For Gubaidulina, the symbol is not simply an expedient compositional tactic but an essential element of her philosophy. In music, it can become the meeting point between this world and the transcendent world, thereby enabling «the comprehension of a higher reality in images of the physical, material world.» The symbol as intersection between spiritual life and earthly life permeates Russian artistic expression in many different forms, from the world of icons to Malevich's Black Square, and it becomes a philosophical issue in Florensky and Berdyaev. The religious aura that had begun to infuse Gubaidulina's musical material, starting with *Concordanza* in 1971, now evolved into consciously constructed symbols through the rendition of form and the use of unconventional performance techniques.”<sup>83</sup>

The cross is perhaps the symbol that finds its way most often into Gubaidulina's work. She compares the very act of composing (that is, the materializing of an idea into music) to “a crucifixion”<sup>84</sup> because it can be painful or languorous to bring the vertical down to meet the horizontal. What is also noteworthy is that when the composer speaks of the crucifixion and of its importance to her, it is always in reference specifically to the image of the crucifixion, and not to any particular

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<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 141. N.B.: According to Kurtz, Gubaidulina's exploration of symbol and image in her music, especially religious symbols and images, occurred between 1975-1979. This is the period just preceding *Offertorium*'s creation. It is therefore safe to assume that the religious aura to which Kurtz refers is something that has permeated *Offertorium*, as well as other works equally rich in religious connotations.

<sup>84</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 175.

theology of the cross. The mental picture of Christ's death is what matters. It goes without saying that this is an image that demonstrates the composer's strong affiliation to Christianity in general, that goes beyond Russian Orthodoxy. The crucifixion, simply put, is a universal symbol of Christendom. However, her constant insertion of the cross into her music, either through the visual construct of the score or through instrumental and musical symbolism, may stem from a long tradition in Eastern Orthodox liturgical practices. The liturgical life of the Orthodox Christian is surrounded by the sign of the cross in most prayers, services, songs and icons. The sign of the cross is performed many more times in Orthodox services than, for instance, a Protestant one. To have the image or symbolic representation of the cross so present in her art is fitting for someone who has such an intimate link to the Russian Orthodox faith. The cross is also a befitting symbol of sacrifice, a theme that runs deep in *Offertorium*. While this theme will be more deeply explored in a further section, suffice it to say that the composer claimed that the concerto's score was based on the metaphysical image of the cross, and that it is, in its entirety, meant to be a sacrifice.<sup>85</sup> We can deduce from this that the image of the cross and the concept of sacrifice are, for Gubaidulina, coinciding and interlaced.

This brings us to the next spiritual theme in Gubaidulina's discourse, that of the Eucharist.

### 2.1.3 The Eucharist

There is perhaps no ritual more important to the Orthodox believer than that of the feast of the Eucharist. It is central to the liturgical life of the Orthodox Church. Alexander Schmemmann speaks of this in *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*.<sup>86</sup>

In her 1998 interview with Vera Lukomsky, Gubaidulina explains her understanding of the Eucharist:

“The feast of the Eucharist means a lot for me. I cannot live without it. I come to the church especially to experience this grace. Particularly in the Russian Orthodox Church, this grace appears not as a recollection: before

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<sup>85</sup> SMITH, J. 2008, “Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina”, see Annex A.

<sup>86</sup> SCHMEMMANN, A., 1987, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press.

that there is a portion of the mass called *Epiclesa* (The Consecration), which exists in the Catholic mass, too: It is a call for the Holy Spirit. This is the moment of Transubstantiation: bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. In that moment the congregation is prepared to die together with Christ; it is a fearful moment. The congregation is ready to die for the coming Resurrection, together with the Eucharist. For me it is most holy, most necessary in my life. In each of my works I experience the Eucharist in my fantasy.”<sup>87</sup>

The composer's words show the deep influence from Orthodox liturgical theology. The Church does not remember the Last Supper - it relives it. This concept will be further explored in Chapter Three. The death and resurrection of Christ was not a static event in past history, it is a spiritual experience that continues to happen every Eucharistic service. In this sense, religion and ritual for the Orthodox are not merely a matter of recollection - it is a question of active participation and spiritual reception through symbol and material. Gubaidulina's understanding of the feast of the Eucharist parallels this notion. Not only does she underscore the fact that this ritual is stronger than a simple remembrance ceremony, she describes the congregation as dying with Christ and awaiting his resurrection.

Through this belief, Gubaidulina once more links her art to her religion. She recreates vertical or sacred time as an active member of the congregation during the Eucharist but also through her work. The fantasy of the Eucharist, she says, is alive in her music. In other words, there are two spaces in which Gubaidulina lives out her theological convictions: in the Church and in the musical score.

## 2.2 Themes and Influences in *Offertorium*

To have *Offertorium* performed at all was a struggle. In 1980 the Russian violinist Gidon Kremer, to whom the concerto is dedicated, was at odds with the current regime because of his decision to remain in the West. Being *Offertorium*'s soloist, the tension between him and the Soviet Union fell badly upon Gubaidulina. The underlying spiritual themes in the work were also criticized by the Composers' Union<sup>88</sup>. She finally had the score smuggled out of Russia by Jurgen Kochel, her

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<sup>87</sup> LUKOMSKY, “The Eucharist in my Fantasy: Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina”, *Tempo*, n. 206, September 1998, p. 31-32.

<sup>88</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 157.

editor. It received its world debut in May 1981 at the Wiener Festwochen (the Vienna Festival), with Kremer as the soloist and Leif Segerstam as its conductor. *Offertorium*, described by the Soviet composer Alfred Schnittke as “the most important violin concerto of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”<sup>89</sup> earned Gubaidulina well-deserved recognition within the international music scene. With only Gidon Kremer as its soloist, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra under Zubin Mehta and the Boston Symphony Orchestra, the Montreal Symphony Orchestra and the Tonhallen-Orchester Zürich under the direction of Charles Dutoit performed *Offertorium* during the following years.

In the previous sections, we overviewed some of the composer's major thoughts and views on spirituality and theology. Let us now draw our attention to those themes that gave birth to *Offertorium*.

### 2.2.1 *Offertorium* as sacrifice

Sacrificial offering, in the vertical sense of the word, is what Gubaidulina most often speaks of when explaining the inspiration for the creation of *Offertorium*. She explained some of the connotations of sacrificial offering in an interview with Vladimir Agopov: “...the sacrificial offering of Christ's crucifixion...God's offering as He created the world [...] the offering of the artist, the performing violinist ... the composer's offering.”<sup>90</sup>

There were two things that inspired Gubaidulina's understanding of sacrificial offering, as it is presented in *Offertorium*. The first was seeing Gidon Kremer perform.

“The notion of sacrifice was revealed to me in its religious context...through Gidon Kremer, who inspired me and pushed me to write this work. He is the one who brought me into the spotlight with this composition. It was destiny. With his performance, his relation to his instrument, the relation of his fingers to the string, he opened to me the religious meaning of sacrifice.”<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 155.

<sup>90</sup> As cited in KURTZ, p. 149

<sup>91</sup> SMITH, see Annex A.

Gubaidulina has often spoken of Kremer in this way. His artistry is one of surrender and self-sacrifice, which she feels is the artist's vocation.

“When his finger touched the string she could sense that his entire life energy was focused on that single point: ‘In this union of the tip of the finger and the resonating string lies the total surrender of the self to the tone. And I began to understand that Kremer's theme is sacrifice - the musician's sacrifice of himself in self-surrender to the tone’.”<sup>92</sup>

Thus, Gidon Kremer played an important role in shaping the themes of sacrifice and offering in *Offertorium*, but more importantly, he inspired Gubaidulina to articulate her own definition of artistic achievement. What Kremer exemplified as a musician, Gubaidulina adopted as an approach to her own art: a total surrender of self to something higher, be it creation, a creator or art. *Offertorium* is, as she understands it, a sacrificial offering:

“And the sacrifice is made by an artist to art, from all of his soul to a sound in the moment when fingers touch the string. And this is the point of unification with the Highest, the creator. It is not important what we call it. Hegel called it 'an absolute truth'. It is the most important thing that can be achieved, and it can be expressed.”<sup>93</sup>

The second element that inspired Gubaidulina's understanding of sacrificial offering comes from theology. From what we have seen in the citations above, it is already somewhat clear that there are religious connotations in her discourse. When the composer talks of sacrificial offering, Christ's sacrificial death on the cross is mentioned, and she views creation as an offering. The cross, which she claims to be present in the concerto in a metaphysical sense<sup>94</sup>, is a symbol of sacrifice. The main musical theme of the concerto, as we shall see in the next section, “reduces itself”,<sup>95</sup> thus giving itself away in sacrifice, much like Christ who reduced himself in the crucifixion.

### 2.2.2 *Offertorium* and the Eucharistic service

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<sup>92</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

<sup>93</sup> SMITH, see Annex A.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> *Ibid.*



The title of the concerto is noteworthy, as it is taken from the Roman Catholic Proper. In his biography of Gubaidulina, Kurtz points out that *Offertorium* was the composer's second work to be named after a section of the Catholic Mass, the first being *Introitus* (the 1978 concerto for piano and chamber orchestra). The *Offertorium*, explains Kurtz, is the moment of the offering of the sacrifice, in the form of bread and wine, symbolizing the body and blood of Christ. Kurtz equates this to the Anaphora, or Eucharistic Canon, which is part of the Russian Orthodox service<sup>96</sup> (the term *anaphora* means gift or offering).

The Anaphora, it could be argued, is the centerpiece, the most sacred part, of Orthodox liturgy. This is the moment when the Holy Gifts of bread and wine are offered up to God as a sacrifice from the congregation. This is also the moment of the invocation, or Epiclesis, when the Holy Spirit is asked to descend and consecrate the offering. The worshippers are seen as active participants in the offering of the sacrifice. It is, in a way, an action of giving back what has been offered to them. When asked whether her work incorporated religious concepts from either the Catholic or Russian Orthodox Mass, Gubaidulina denied that *Offertorium* was church music at all. She did, however, acquiesce to the fact that her works are affected by her experience of the liturgical service.

“[My works] are neither Catholic nor Russian Orthodox; they are outside church liturgy. I mean they are conceptually not strictly orthodox; they are my fantasy. Actually, all my works are religious. As I understand it, I've never written non-religious pieces. But the Orthodox Church is not interested in us contemporary composers, or in our music. The Church uses only old music that has been accepted and consecrated. So we do not write new pieces for the Church. Of course, we can write religious works, but only as our own fantasy. We never aspire to bring them to the church. And I don't aspire to either. But I strongly want to participate. I feel a great desire to realize my religious needs within art. All my works are my fantasy - this is how (in the ideal) I imagine my Eucharist.”<sup>97</sup>

It may seem a paradox that the title of the concerto pertains to the offering in the Catholic mass, but it need not be so. While the composer was baptized in the Orthodox Church, and her theological leanings are seemingly aligned with this tradition, she has always demonstrated openness towards all branches of Christianity.<sup>98</sup> Her ecumenical nature may stem from the fact that her music could

<sup>96</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 305.

<sup>97</sup> LUKOMSKY, V., September 1998, “The Eucharist ...”, *Tempo*, n. 206, p. 31.

<sup>98</sup> “The chasm between the two faiths saddens me. The early Christians did not have such a chasm in

not be used in the Orthodox liturgical service and therefore she has always found herself on the fringe of organized church life. Hence the Catholic title applied to a work so closely affiliated to an Orthodox theological backdrop should not come as a surprise.

*Offertorium* can arguably be understood as a musical expression of Gubaidulina's understanding of the Eucharistic service. Can we say that her concerto is based strictly on the Anaphora section of the Orthodox service? To affirm this would be faulty. First of all, it has already been established through her own statements that she does not write church music. In fact, as she stated, the Orthodox Church does not include contemporary compositions in its services. Gubaidulina is clearly aware that her art has no place within the very institution that feeds her creative inspiration. When she was younger, she sought the advice of Father Vladimir, a priest whose progressive opinions she respected, because she was uneasy about the fact that her music, while rooted in certain Orthodox traditions, evidently diverged from strict liturgical standards. Father Vladimir encouraged her to continue her composing, regardless of its discrepancies with the Church's traditions.<sup>99</sup>

We can say, therefore, that *Offertorium* offers a point of contact with Gubaidulina's personal faith or understanding of liturgy; we cannot justifiably call it the chant or music of the Anaphora. While she talks of the impact the Eucharist has had on her life, when she has referred to specific ideas behind the concerto, "sacrifice" and "offering" have always dominantly emerged. These ideas transcend the Orthodox Eucharistic liturgy, but never has she mentioned that the concerto is specifically based on the Anaphora per se. In her interview with Lukomsky, references to the importance of the Eucharistic service are also underscored as influential, and the Anaphora and *Epiclesia* are described in particular, but nothing in what Gubaidulina has said in regards to *Offertorium's* structure and creative backdrop specifically points to one single element of the Orthodox service. The larger theological ideas of the liturgy and the overall direction of the Eucharistic service seem to have most predominantly sculpted the creation of *Offertorium*.

Interestingly, in Orthodox theology, the Eucharist is one with the liturgical service in its entirety. Alexander Schmemmann rejects the idea that the Anaphora, even though it is the chief part of the liturgy, should be in and of itself the single,

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mind." KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 250.

<sup>99</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 104.

complete, symbolic manifestation of Eucharistic theology. The Anaphora is chief, claims Schmemmann, only because it is the fulfillment of all the other sacraments of the service without whose presence the Eucharist would be lacking. “The divine liturgy is a single, though 'multifaceted', sacred rite, in which all its 'parts', their entire sequence and structure, their coordination...manifests to us...the truly divine meaning of what has been and what is being accomplished.”<sup>100</sup>

Schmemmann goes on to point out that the sacrament of the Anaphora would be impossible without all the other sacraments of the service. The Anaphora is simply the accomplishment of the liturgical elements to which they ascend. There is a wholeness and unity within the Eucharistic service that cannot be disrupted.<sup>101</sup> Thus Gubaidulina, emerging from this liturgical climate, would not compose a work based on one specific part of the service, but rather is inspired by the liturgy as a whole and offers her concerto as a participation in the liturgical life of her faith.

In conclusion, *Offertorium* shows a Christian influence, expressed in a free and creative manner. The affiliation to Orthodox liturgy is clear, and she refers to it in a very personal way. Her point of reference is Eastern Orthodoxy, though there is a regard for Catholicism as well. This demonstrates her inclusive and non-dogmatic approach to theology and ecclesiastic life, especially where her creative influences are concerned.

### **2.3 Analysis of *Offertorium***

We have briefly reviewed some of the major influences that shaped *Offertorium's* world. Certain people were influences, such as Gidon Kremer, as were theological concepts, such as sacrifice and the Eucharist. Let us now look at the concerto's thematic structure as we analyze the musical phrases, compositional techniques and general aesthetic of the work. We will especially attempt to draw out the elements of *Offertorium* that can be interpreted as a musical expression of the composer's thoughts and beliefs that were reviewed in the previous sections. We will study how the different moments of the concerto have served as expression and an interpretive conductor of theological thought.

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<sup>100</sup> SCHMEMMANN, *The Eucharist...*, p. 161.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*, p.164.

### 2.3.1 Main Theme – King Frederick and Das Musikalische Opfer

It was colleague and friend Pyotr Meschaninov who suggested to Gubaidulina to use the melody from Bach's *Das Musikalische Opfer* as the opening and base theme for *Offertorium*. It was a fitting suggestion, as Bach has always been a composer that she revered and admired above all others, along with Webern.<sup>102</sup> *Das Musikalische Opfer*, written in 1747 in honour of Frederick the Great's birthday, constructs a fugue from this 21-note phrase, otherwise known as the King's theme (Figure 1).

As a tribute to Anton Webern, Gubaidulina used the *klangfarbenmelodie* technique in her orchestration. As is typical with this genre of orchestration, every note is played by a different instrument in order to vary the timbre and texture of the sound. In the case of *Offertorium*, the melody is distributed amongst the brass and woodwind section. Thus we can observe in the score the first time we hear the theme (transposed in D) of *Offertorium*, in the eight opening measures of the concerto (Figure 2).

This orchestration of the King Frederick's theme largely imitates Webern's *Ricecare* from Op.11. The theme would normally resolve to a D, but in *Offertorium*'s case, the final D is not played. The trumpet plays the F, which is followed by the horn's E (the next to last note) and the solo violin picks up the E on a trill E-F at n.1 on the score (Figure 3).

The King's theme has now been introduced in its entirety and the soloist and orchestra have entered with the first variation. The first section of the concerto is built on this compositional technique: the reiteration of the theme and a variation. There are ten variations in all before the violin reaches its cadenza at n.56.

### 2.3.2 Sacrifice of the Main Theme

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<sup>102</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 81.

Now that it has been established that the first part of *Offertorium* is constructed as a theme with variations, we shall now analyze how the theme plays itself out.

In Gubaidulina's interviews, she explains that every time the theme returns, it has been reduced in notes. The missing notes, says the composer, have been sacrificed and offered.<sup>103</sup> The main theme, therefore, which started out with 21 notes (20 if you discount the last D) will reduce itself gradually, having two less notes (at the extremities of the theme) every time it appears. This will continue until all that remains at its final appearance (at the end of the first section of the concerto) will be the theme's two middle notes, F and E.

Looking at the score more closely, we can see how this actually plays out in the work's construction. For instance, the second time the theme reappears is at n.8 of the score. The horn (in F) enters on the F of the theme (note that the first note of the theme, D, has been dropped) with the flute, bassoon, trombone, trumpet and cellos completing the theme, minus the end E that also has been dropped (Figure 4).

The violin enters again at n.9 on a trill, this time F-G, similarly to how it entered on the previous variation (Figure 5). The theme has been reiterated, with two notes omitted (the first and the last of the initial phrase), these two notes having been offered up, or sacrificed.

The third time the theme appears, at three measures after n.17, it is the string section, supported by the brass, which carries it in unison (Figure 6). Interestingly, when the melody reaches the G flat, instead of the line being in descent, as the original theme would have it, in this case the composer has the string section leaping up a major seventh (from G to upper G flat) in double forte, creating a dramatic effect. This is perhaps one of the times in the concerto where the King's theme is most clearly heard.

As the theme gradually reduces itself, and as the work builds in its momentum towards the first climax, it becomes increasingly difficult to discern its appearance. For instance, at three measures after n.43, the theme is being played for the fifth time, but in augmentation. The starting note, A, played by flute and piccolo, is drawn out over two and a half beats. There are two and a half measures of silence before the horn plays the next note of the theme, A flat. There are two more measures of silence before the trombone plays the G (Figure 7). This specific

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<sup>103</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, "My desire...", *Perspectives of New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, p. 22.

variation of the main theme continues as such and for the audience, it can be easy to miss it altogether, considering that there is so much simultaneous movement in the string section.

Finally, the theme will have reduced itself down to the two middle notes, F and E, at three measures before n.56. These notes belong to the trumpet in B, the score indicating them to be played out in double forte sliding into a sforzando. Supporting the trumpet is the string section, bringing out F and E through quintuplets, and eventually tremolos (Figure 8).

King Frederick's theme has now been completely deconstructed down to its core two notes. The opening section of *Offertorium* is almost over, save for twelve measures in which the entire orchestra will accompany the solo violin in triple forte. I have already mentioned composers to whom Gubaidulina pays tribute through this work. In this case, the writing is clearly a nod in Gyorgy Ligetti's direction. The harmonic construction is in clusters (the first chord at n. 57 is B flat, B natural, C, D sharp, D flat). The clusters cumulate through glissandos into other clusters, in ascending and then descending motion. This is illustrated in the excerpt at n.57 of the score – we see how the initial cluster belongs to the upper string section and woodwinds (Figure 9). It will slide down an augmented eighth only to be answered by another triple forte cluster in the lower strings and brass in the following measure. This second cluster in turn slides up a major 6<sup>th</sup>.

According to Frans Lemaire, the section at 57 is the acme of this first part of *Offertorium*.<sup>104</sup> It is where the work reaches a new height of sound density; indeed the abrupt, rough nature of this work seems to reach its epitome right before the solo cadenza.

### 2.3.3 Last judgment and cross-suffering

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<sup>104</sup> LEMAIRE, F., 2005, *Le destin russe et la musique, un siècle d'histoire de la révolution jusqu'à nos jours*, Paris, Fayard p. 540.

Gubaidulina says very little about the second major section of *Offertorium*. In her 1998 interview with Vera Lukomsky, she said, “The second section is devoted to images of 'cross suffering' and the Last Judgment.”<sup>105</sup> In our 2008 interview, she spoke of the importance of the crucifix in this work, even if there is no direct referral to that image: “There is no such ‘cross’ (meaning instrumental symbolism) in this work, but nevertheless there is a metaphysical cross, when the theme brings itself as a sacrifice...If the listener is a very attentive one, he can certainly imagine the cross.”<sup>106</sup>

What could the composer mean by this? It is, at best, a vague description of the techniques and images employed in this part of the work. Frans Lemaire, for one, did not take her explanation into account when analyzing the concerto. He titled numbers 61 through 114 as “le développement pastoral (62-94) et le scherzo sacrificiel (95-114).”<sup>107</sup> The pastoral development to which Lemaire refers is principally carried out through a cello solo, which takes up most of the first part of this second movement. The cello's line intertwines with that of the violinist's, through a softer, quieter ambiance, lasting until n.70.

The orchestra gradually builds in intensity until n.95 (at which point the cello's solo has ended) and it will continue to carry this intensity, even violence, until the commencement of the third large movement at n.115. If Gubaidulina specified that there are images of the Last Judgment in this section, she certainly was imagining a terrifying, explosive judgment day, based on the breadth of volume and emotion held in this section.

There are two compositional elements used in the second movement that would support the composer's claim to the presence of religious images, based on techniques she employed in other works. The first is her consistent use of crescendo – diminuendo, as in the example at Figure 10.

In her choral work *Alleluja*, she employs this technique to portray colour and light proportions in music (the music “breathes” colour and light intensities through the various lengths and levels of crescendos and diminuendos). The musical “colours” are then chosen to symbolize the Apocalypse, and different elements of

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<sup>105</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, p. 26.

<sup>106</sup> SMITH, see Annex A.

<sup>107</sup> LEMAIRE, *Le destin russe...*, p. 540.

liturgical hymns.<sup>108</sup> In the same way, the crescendo – diminuendo musical cells (as well as the extension and narrowing of orchestral texture which often accompany these cells) create the shape of horizontal line gradually converging into a thicker vertical line before dying down into another horizontal line. In other words, they are Gubaidulina's signature sign of the cross.

The second compositional element is the indication for sliding notes (as in the example of Figure 11), which we find especially in the strings, but occasionally in the winds as well (through soundless breaths). In *Sieben Worte*, this sound effect pointed to the crucifixion of sound (cello's and bayan's notes having been cut by sliding harmonics) and it also was meant to point to a sound that was “beyond the limits of life”.<sup>109</sup> Nicolas Gilbert, in his formal analysis of *Offertorium*, found this expansion-regression of the texture as well to be a sign of the cross, based on Gubaidulina's previous uses of this technique in *Sieben Worte*.<sup>110</sup>

Gilbert, in fact, found several motifs symbolizing the cross in this concerto. Gubaidulina's famous “crucifying the note” technique that she employed in *Sieben Worte*<sup>111</sup> can be found in *Offertorium* as well. The long notes abruptly cut off by short sforzandos are an excellent example of the “crucified note technique” (see Figure 12).

Gilbert also analyzed the cello solo at the beginning of the middle section (n.61). When the notes are placed in diagram according to their height and range, we can see that the entire solo was built around the shape of several crosses (Figure 13).<sup>112</sup>

Therefore, there are several allusions to the image of the cross in this work. As for the reference to the Last Judgment, one can only assume it was the driving force behind the dramatic force and volume of the middle passages in which the orchestra reaches its heights and climax before leading into the last, more meditative final section.

The composer did not offer up a very detailed analysis of this part of the concerto. Nor is it her job to do so. The explanations offered are based on both

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<sup>108</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on new music*, vol.36, n.1, p.30-31.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>110</sup> GILBERT, N., 2003, *Offertorium de Sofia Gubaidulina: Une analyse de Nicolas Gilbert*, Musique, Conservatoire de musique du Québec à Montréal, p. 84.

<sup>111</sup> “The sound of the open A string is “cut off” by the glissando from Bb to G#, which the cellist performs on the neighbouring D string”, LUKOMSKY, 1998, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on new music*, vol.36, n.1, p. 20.

<sup>112</sup> GILBERT, *Offertorium de Sofia Gubaidulina...* p. 87.



analysis of the score, comparisons with previous works, the interviews with Gubaidulina, and the rigorous work of musicologists. What is important to remember in the context of this specific research, is that this middle section creates a bridge between two worlds: the before and the after. “Before” is the sacrifice of a theme, and “after” is the return of the sacrifice.

#### 2.3.4 Transfiguration and Reconstruction of the Theme

We have now arrived at the final section of the concerto, at n.115. Michael Kurtz refers to this third and final movement of the piece as the “Chorale”.<sup>113</sup> To his credit, this part of the work is the most distinguishable as being religiously inspired.

It is at this point that Bach's royal theme is reintroduced, but it is not recognizable. Michael Kurtz quotes Jesus' phrase to Nicodemus “You cannot be reborn until you have died”<sup>114</sup> in order to explain the religious inspiration for this reconstruction of the theme. Perhaps Kurtz is giving his own exegesis for this section of the concerto. What is more significant is Gubaidulina's own analysis of this third movement: “Frederick's theme returns in the third section...The main event of the concerto, the Transfiguration, is in the code: Frederick's theme appears in its complete shape, but in retrograde motion, and nobody can recognize it.”<sup>115</sup> In the first movement, the main theme was reduced down to nothing. Now it will reappear, but not in any original form. All of the same notes are there, but they have been transformed. Gubaidulina refers to this section as the “Transfiguration”.<sup>116</sup>

There are several elements that create this Transfiguration of the King's theme. First of all, the reappeared theme starts only at the middle of the initial melody and expands outwards. Therefore the first notes of the theme reintroduced are C sharp, B, A, D and a chord of G-D-A (F sharp and E are played by the strings in the next measure). These notes constitute the last seven notes of Bach's theme, minus the final D, which Gubaidulina did not include to her orchestration (Figure 14).

The second reason that the King's theme is unrecognizable is that it is partially retrograded. In its original form, C sharp, B and A are in descent, but the melody

<sup>113</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 150.

<sup>114</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 150. Bible passage found in John 3:1-21.

<sup>115</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on new music*, vol.36, n.1 p. 26.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

then jumps a major fourth up to D and then another major fourth to the G. In its retrograded form, the theme is entirely in descent. Kurtz draws from the Bible verse “the first shall be last, and the last shall be first”<sup>117</sup> to explain Gubaidulina's decision to write the theme out in retrograded form. Again, this may be his own interpretation of the music, for Gubaidulina has always referred more to liturgical and theological concepts as the driving themes of her work than biblical passages.

Furthermore, the rhythm of Frederick's theme has been altered. The pattern of quarter note followed by eighth notes (slow-quick-quick-slow) has been replaced by an eighth note followed by triplets.<sup>118</sup>

Finally, Webern's *klangfarbenmelodie* orchestration is no longer employed. The harp, glockenspiel and prepared piano are the principal instruments playing the new reconstruction of the King's theme. According to Frans Lemaire, there was a purpose to this instrument selection – the timbre created by their combination is that of church bells. Lemaire, of the opinion that the bell sounds act as mediator between the orchestra and the soloist, discusses their significance in his commentary of *Offertorium*: “Peu d'instruments de musique sont plus proches du silence que les cloches, sans doute parce que leur lieu est les vastes espaces où règne le silence des plaines de la nuit...” Bells, after all, the only instruments permitted in the Orthodox church, are synonymous with the parishioners' call to worship and the transcendent space.<sup>119</sup>

Similar to the first movement of the concerto, the entire third movement is built around a theme. This time, however, instead of King Frederick's theme disappearing two notes at a time, it is now gradually being rebuilt. For instance, at n.116, the harp and piano enter on a D, which adds one note to the initial five-note descending cell found at n. 115. D is also the next note in the original phrase (Figure 15).

<sup>117</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 150. Kurtz quotes Matthew 20:16.

<sup>118</sup> It can be argued, however, that the retrograded pattern still follows the slow-quick-quick-slow rhythm scheme drawn out in the King's theme. The eighth note followed by triplets simply provides a more “falling effect” for the descending retrograded melody

<sup>119</sup> LEMAIRE, *La musique du XXe siècle en Russie...*, p. 343.

### 2.3.5 Ascension

The ascension is the last element of the concerto that will be discussed in this analysis. The long ascension to the end of the concerto also commences at n.115, and is executed by the soloist (Figure 16).

As the main theme returns through the “church bells” motif, the solo violin plays the next to lowest note, the A flat below middle C. He holds this note over two beats before slowly moving up a chromatic scale over half notes. Gubaidulina then introduces into the score a distinct melodic and rhythmic motif, which will come back several times in the soloist's line. At n.116, there are three ascending quarter notes: A flat, B flat, C. The ascension motif then descends to a B flat quarter note, and then returns to the A flat for two beats, ascends to the B flat for two beats before finally reaching the middle C, to be held over six beats. The end of the motif and the long note indicate the return of the church bell combination of prepared piano, harp and percussion play with the next appearance of the retrograded King's theme (Figure 17).

The violin will continue the long ascension in this manner, built loosely around this motif, for a little over 100 measures, until n.133. This entire section of *Offertorium* claims an entrance into another world. The musical ambiance is different than from what we have experienced up till now. Kurtz declares it to be a Chorale. Lemaire calls it the “grand chant extatique”.<sup>120</sup> The combination of the church bell orchestral timbres and the hymnal held notes liken this final movement to Russian sacred music. Gubaidulina herself affirms this similarity:

“‘At the heart of *Offertorium* is an extended peroration, highly reminiscent of Russian Orthodox Church music.’ Her comments on this passage are intriguing: “This is not a quotation or stylization. The music sounds like church music because at that moment, my meaning approaches that of church music.’ If this comment sounds ingenuous, it is nonetheless typically direct and revealing of her attitude to the connection between style and idea.”<sup>121</sup>

There is a bigger presence of major chords, creating an effect of resolution in the melodic line. At n.118, for instance, a G sharp minor chord transitions to an E major chord and then proceeds to a G sharp major chord (Figure 18).

<sup>120</sup> LEMAIRE, *Le destin russe...*, p. 540.

<sup>121</sup> MCBURNEY, G., March 1998, “Encountering Gubaidulina”, *Musical Times*, vol. 129, n. 1741, p. 123.

Finally, at n.133, the solo violin is in its highest register, and the entire string section has crescendoed with the soloist, culminating on a cluster in which every note of the chromatic scale is played by a different musician. We are but 20 measures from the end of the concerto (Figure 19).

This section will be followed by a short twelve-measure cadenza for the solo violin. It is actually King Frederick's complete theme retrograded (Figure 20). In the second measure of the cadenza, the soloist reiterates the F-E trill that served as its introductory notes at the very start of the concerto.

This cadenza will stop on the F and then slide up to its highest D (the first and last note of the King's theme), which is held until the completion of *Offertorium*. Supporting the soloist's D is the cross-patterned crescendo decrescendo executed by the orchestra. This final D is significant because it is the last note of Bach's theme, the note that was never played for any of its variations. It signifies resolution. The theme has been offered up, and in return, is transformed in its entirety (Figure 22).

## 2.4 Conclusion

Steve Ledbetter writes that the entire score of *Offertorium* is based on the idea of a conversion.<sup>122</sup> If he means by this that there is transformation or change through religious or mystical experience, he is well supported in his claims. In this chapter, I have attempted to draw out the main lines of Sofia Gubaidulina's discourse on religious and theological thought. I have equally attempted to put these theoretical ideas into parallel with her artistic approach and habits. Special attention was especially given to her discourse on the vertical and horizontal dimensions of life and art.

Following this, *Offertorium* was analyzed, principally through its larger sections and thematic and motivic structure. I chose to approach the concerto in this manner because I deemed it the most direct way of drawing out those ideas and symbols from the composer's religious, liturgical and theological world view. We saw that *Offertorium* possesses some strong religious connotations, such as the cross, the Eucharist, and sacrificial offering, both in its creative inspiration and in its overall

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<sup>122</sup> LEDBETTER, S., 1989, notes in *Sofia Gubaidulina: Offertorium- Hommage to T.S. Elliot*, Deutsche Grammophon.

aesthetic. This is true not just in its most obvious similarities to Russian hymnal music in the chorale section, but also in the very core of its compositional techniques, as we saw with the sacrifice and then transfiguration of the King's theme. It is not typical church music, and was not in fact intended to be so. Paul Griffiths, one of musicology's most prominent 20<sup>th</sup> century music historians, remarks that *Offertorium* sounds like a page ruthlessly torn from a book (no doubt referring to the numerous violent, dense passages in the concerto), whose subject would have to be the spiritual life.<sup>123</sup>

In the following chapter, I will examine those themes that have emerged from this analysis and will look at how they fit into the scheme of 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian Orthodox liturgical life and theology. Parallels between the composer's thoughts and artistic endeavours and those of certain Orthodox thinkers such as Alexander Schmemmann and Paul Evdokimov will be drawn. The next part of this research will be dedicated to demonstrating how this work of wordless art is, in and of itself, a contribution to the arts and theology dialogue, by having become its own "theological ground".

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<sup>123</sup> GRIFFITHS, P., "Music; Apostle of Inner Struggle and Redemption", *The New York Times*, April 25, 1999, p. 2.

### Chapter 3: Orthodox Theology in the Work of Sofia Gubaidulina

#### 3.1 Explanation of Methodology

This chapter aims to discuss those elements in *Offertorium*, and in Gubaidulina's artistic and religious discourse that are particularly anchored in Orthodox liturgy and theology. There is no overwhelming proof that our composer is a great scholar of Russian Orthodox theology or its theologians. However, as we have seen in the previous chapter, the concerto is deeply influenced by Orthodox practices and belief structures, which logically stream from and interlace themselves with Russian Orthodox theological thought. The motivation in this study is an effort to maintain a balanced dialogue between the musical and theological material of this research. As has been discussed in the first chapter, there is a sad lack of in-depth research into the theological background of this concerto. This section aims to fill that void. A true dialogue must look at both disciplines with depth of analysis and rigour of thought.

Studying *Offertorium* in this manner is due in part to Heidi Epstein's methodology used in her book *Melting the Venusberg: a Feminist Theology of Music*. Epstein speaks of the importance in seeking out multiple resources in order to understand a musical work and the world from which it emerges. This approach, appropriately called intertextuality, incorporates historical research and theological reflection into her musical analysis, and vice-versa. In her treatment of Hildegard von Bingen, which aims at being “genuinely intertextual”<sup>124</sup>, Epstein divides her attention equally on three fronts: Hildegarde's theological writings, the musical analysis of the composer's hymn *Ave Generosa* and a comparative study of different feminist writings on the subject of Hildegarde von Bingen.

What is apparent from Epstein's approach is an intentional effort to bring into dialogue many streams of thought and disciplines so as to formulate a reflection that is both balanced and provocative, respectful and avant-garde. Her methodology is coloured by a desire to recreate a feminist musico-theological discourse. The goal of this thesis differs from Epstein's, as I am not seeking to build a feminist musico-theological discourse. However, its methodology will mirror hers. I am seeking within the framework of this chapter to introduce another angle that might help us consider

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<sup>124</sup> EPSTEIN, H., 2004, *Melting the Venusberg: A Feminist Theology of Music*, New York, Continuum, p. 119.

the theological weight of *Offertorium*: the angle of theological sources and writings that best demonstrate the composer's spiritual experience of her church and beliefs. This will inevitably depend on the use of intertextuality, as several sources from diverse fields of study will be engaged. The efforts made in this part of the research must rigorously extract those theological lines which best reflect and explain Gubaidulina's religious discourse and artistic approach. It is by this method that we can lay down the groundwork for Chapter Four, in which this piece of music will be examined as its own conveyer and interpreter of theology. *Offertorium* may very well be its own theological space, but this notion will be impossible to explore unless we first unpack the ideas and elements that are giving it this voice.

This chapter therefore seeks to determine what Russian Orthodox theological lines, if any, are to be found in *Offertorium* and how Gubaidulina carried out these lines. This aspect of the research has been divided into four sections: a study of Orthodox theology and its view of sacred time, sacrificial offering through the Eucharist, the cross and its symbolic value in the Eucharistic service, and the ascension. For each subject addressed, one or several authors will be discussed in an effort to give a fair and accurate portrayal of Orthodoxy's thoughts and practices. Following this, diverse elements of Gubaidulina's discourse and musical practices will be extracted and compared to those of theological writings so that we may, partially or exhaustively, answer the following question: Which, of Gubaidulina's ideas, musical or not, parallel or complement those of 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox theology?

## 3.2 Sacred Time

### 3.2.1 Sacred Time in Orthodox Theology

*“L’Eglise est hors de l’atteinte du temps.”*<sup>125</sup> Paul Evdokimov

The concept of time seems to be rather important to Gubaidulina and her art. As we have seen in the previous chapter, there are two spheres of time: that which is of this earth and that which is not - horizontal time and vertical time. There are parallels

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<sup>125</sup> EVDOKIMOV, 1959, *L’Orthodoxie*, Paris, Lechateaux et Niestle, p. 206.

between the composer's thoughts on time and certain streams of contemporary Orthodox theology.

The idea of time belonging to two spheres may seem peculiar at first glance, but after careful examination of contemporary Orthodox thought, we may be surprised with what we find from its authors. Paul Evdokimov examines the issue of time closely. In Orthodox theology, it is a deeply spiritual concept that has a strong impact on the Church's liturgy. He offers a definition of liturgical time, which he calls “existential”:

“C'est une forme de temps existentielle : chaque instant peut s'ouvrir du dedans sur une autre dimension, ce qui nous fait vivre l'éternel présent dans l'instant, ou le ‘présent éternel’. C'est le temps sacré ou éternel. Sa participation à l'absolument différent change sa nature. L'éternité n'est ni devant ni après le temps, elle est cette dimension sur laquelle le temps peut s'ouvrir.”<sup>126</sup>

He quotes Saint Irenaeus who said that Christ made himself temporal so that we humans could be eternal.<sup>127</sup> Indeed, in this quote alone, we have the concept of two times: earthly time and otherworldly time. Christ serves as the axis upon which the two spheres meet and intertwine.

“C'est en Christ que le temps trouve son axe. Avant le Christ, l'histoire se dirige vers lui, en est messianiquement orientée et tendue, l'incarnation, tout s'intériorise, tout s'est dirigé par les catégories du vide et du rempli, de l'absent et du présent, de l'inachevé et de l'accompli alors que le seul vrai contenu du temps est la présence du Christ dans son extension; comme sur la charnière, tout tourne visiblement ou invisiblement vers l'accomplissement final du temps lui-même, qui a la fois est déjà et sera à la Fin.”<sup>128</sup>

For the Orthodox believer, claims Evdokimov, there is this continuous movement between two “states” of time - that of historical, chronological time, and that of transcendent, eschatological, divine time, which we could also refer to as God's eternal, timeless existence. And Orthodox liturgy, while strongly anchored in the earthly, physical linear calendar (there are services, celebrations and feasts for seemingly every hour of every day of the year, rendering palpable the theological

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<sup>126</sup> EVDOKIMOV, *L'orthodoxie*, p. 206.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.



principle that all earthly moments belong to and are sanctified by God), lives also outside of human time. It belongs to another sphere of time - divine time.

### 3.2.2 Sacred Time and the Eucharist

This second sphere, which may parallel Gubaidulina's frequent referrals to vertical time, plays out strongly through the liturgical calendar and service. This is especially true of the Eucharistic service. Henryk Poprecki writes that the Eucharist is celebrated on the first and eighth day of the week. To speak of the week as holding eight days and not seven is an essentially Orthodox habit and notion.<sup>129</sup> The eighth day, say theologians, notably Evdokimov and Paprocki, is a symbolic day, the unique and timeless day of Christ's resurrection. Yes, it occurs every Sunday, and is rooted in a weekly cycle. At the same time, it is a day which occurs outside of physical time, and does not appear on any calendar. It is the day of the Eucharist, and so it is celebrated weekly. Yet it is called the eighth day and therefore it is out of earthly time. It is mystical and recurring; abstract and cyclical. Paprocki writes: “De même, le jour de la Résurrection de Jésus, c'est-à-dire le dimanche de Pâques, est considéré le huitième jour (un jour ‘unique’).”<sup>130</sup>

It is for this notion that transcendent time overlaps chronological time, that Orthodox theology refutes the theory that liturgical celebrations are commemorative ones. Past, present and future co-exist and meet in liturgy. For the Orthodox believer, sacred events are not recollected or remembered; they are relived. For instance, Evdokimov explains, the Christmas service is not one of commemoration. The congregants are actually bearing witness to the nativity event.<sup>131</sup> Even more pressing is the importance of the Eucharist, it too being an event free of the restraints of physical time. Orthodox theology is clear: this holy sacrament is not one of remembrance but of present, living action.

“Dit Saint Jean Chrysostome (*sic*), ‘c'est le même sacrifice que nous lui offrons, non l'un d'aujourd'hui et l'autre demain.’<sup>132</sup>

<sup>129</sup> CLÉMENT, O. 1961, *L'Église Orthodoxe*, Paris, Presses universitaires de France, p. 91.

<sup>130</sup> PAPROCKI, H., 1993, *Les mystères de l'eucharistie*, Paris, Cerf, p. 151.

<sup>131</sup> EVDOKIMOV, *L'orthodoxie*, p. 241.

<sup>132</sup> SAINT JEAN CHRYSOSTOME, 1867, “Commentaire sur l'épître de St. Paul aux Hébreux - Homélie XVII” *Saint Jean de Chrysostome, œuvres complètes*, dir. M. Jeannin, Bar-Le-Duc, Guérin, p. 527.

Toutes les saintes cènes de l'Eglise ne sont qu'une seule unique et éternelle cène, celle du Christ dans la chambre haute. Le même acte divin, à la fois a eu lieu à un moment précis de l'histoire et s'offre toujours dans le sacrement. Il a le pouvoir d'ouvrir le temps et de se poser au dedans de tout instant comme le vrai contenu de tous les instants.<sup>133</sup>

In these statements we see that past, present and future become one in the Eucharist. We are outside of linear time, and have entered into a spherical one. It is the historical event of Christ breaking bread and wine that is pulled into the present through the sacrament. Simultaneously, it is the eschatological promise of eternity that pulls the present forward, again through the act of the Eucharist, and consequently, to the believer's salvation. Evdokimov goes so far as to suggest that the passage in Revelations 7:9-12, when the multitude of voices glorify God, is contemporized, meaning it happens in reality, every time the Eucharist is celebrated. What could be interpreted as prophesy is actually understood to be present reality, through liturgical life.

“Pendant la liturgie, lorsque nous entendons, ‘ceci est mon corps’, ce sont les paroles même du Christ qui résonnent à travers le temps. Il ne s'agit point de la répétition humaine mais, par la contemporanéité liturgique, nous communions par delà le temps à ce qui demeure une fois pour toutes...”<sup>134</sup>

This notion of contemporaneity through liturgy, albeit abstract, is an important one. What is accomplished, what is still left unachieved and what is going on right now are held together by Christ through the gathering of the congregation around the bread and wine.

### 3.2.3 Gubaidulina, time and the Eucharist

Where does this leave us with Gubaidulina's understanding of time in the context of art, life and spirituality? First and foremost, it demonstrates that she is a Russian Orthodox congregant who adheres to this particular stream of theology. Let us review how Michael Kurtz describes the composer's views on time:

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<sup>133</sup> EVDOKIMOV, *L'orthodoxie*, p. 208.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

“Essential or sacred time or 'time outside time' (vertical time) is a metaphor for a deep layer within humans, the realm of the soul, the realm of the eternal, of the divine.”<sup>135</sup>

Horizontal time, on the other hand, “is the measurable time of the beat and of the clock; it is also, for her [Gubaidulina] an image of physical existence.”<sup>136</sup>

This is very similar to what Evdokimov was describing in theological terms. Time belongs to two realms: the realm of the clock, and the realm of the soul. Evdokimov, Clément and Paprocki speak of these two spheres, or realms, in terms of their relationship to the liturgical life of the Church. Gubaidulina speaks in similar terms: on one hand she mentions measurability; on the other hand, she talks of eternity and divinity, which are immeasurable. She is mainly referring to art. Music, for instance, is the product of vertical inspiration being transformed into horizontal sound anchored in physical time. These two spheres are present in her life, one feeding the other, both overlapping. While Gubaidulina speaks at length about the vertical and the horizontal dimensions of her art, she also speaks of its religious implications:

“[While] sleeping we experience time out of time [...] this is the essence of art. Art exists because this transformation, this leap in life, exists. This leap in life exists also in the Eucharistic experience in religion. There is a moment, the moment of resurrection, when man exists out of time. It is this experience which more than any other represents 'existence out of time'. We have three ways of experiencing this essential (sacred or vertical) time: in art, in sleep and in the Eucharist.”<sup>137</sup>

Sleep, art and the Eucharist: a surprising combination if you are unacquainted with the composer's religious background. But in this statement, she has affirmed, as an artist and a participant in Russian Orthodox liturgy, what Evdokimov, Paprocki and Olivier Clément were attempting to express as scholars and theologians. The Eucharist embodies this ‘leap of life’, this sacred action which occurs both in and out of time-centered reality. Sacred time, in Orthodox theology, has little to do with chronology, the linear or the realm of physicality.

What is of particular interest is that what Evdokimov claims to be happening through sacred or vertical time through liturgy, namely the Eucharist, Sofia Gubaidulina experiences through art and composition. She has drawn a clear parallel

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<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 241.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 176.

in this instance. Her artistic process has a whole world of theological reflection and liturgical action behind it.

Furthermore, Gubaidulina also speaks at length of the experience of the actual Eucharistic service in terms that are arguably evidence of an Orthodox theological mindset.

“The feast of the Eucharist means a lot for me. I cannot live without it. I come to the church especially to experience this grace. Particularly in the Russian Orthodox Church, this grace appears not as a recollection: before that there is a portion of the mass called Epiclesa (The Consecration), which exists in the Catholic mass, too. It is a call for the Holy Spirit. This is the moment of Transubstantiation: bread and wine become the body and blood of Christ. In that moment the congregation is prepared to die together with Christ; it is a fearful moment. The congregation is ready to die for the coming Resurrection, together with the Eucharist. For me, it is most holy, most necessary in my life. In each of my works I experience the Eucharist in my fantasy.”<sup>138</sup>

Her description of the Eucharistic service parallels Evdokimov's theological convictions that the liturgical service is not a commemorative one, but an experiential one. The congregation comes together to live the death and resurrection of Christ. She describes the 'fearful moment' that the congregation experiences through the death of Christ, pointing once more to this notion of the Eucharist happening out of time. It is in this *other* time sphere that a communion or unity with Christ occurs, which both Gubaidulina and Evdokimov describe. In a later interview with Enzo Restagno, Gubaidulina elaborates on this idea with even more clarity:

“Whereas in the Catholic or Protestant churches the believing Christian participates in the ritual only in *remembrance* of the sacrificial act, in the Orthodox Church the believer, in enacting the *epiklesis*, invokes the Holy Spirit to come and to transform in *actuality* the bread and the wine into Christ's blood and body. He truly experiences the encounter with Christ...And at the moment when the bread is broken, he actually experiences Christ's death as if it was his own death, and in order then to undergo the true resurrection, the transformation of his human essence.”<sup>139</sup>

This statement shows once again a vision that during the Eucharist, the Orthodox believer enters into a different time, out of recollection and into a living experience

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<sup>138</sup> LUKOMSKY, V., 1998, “The Eucharist in my fantasy”, *Tempo*, n. 206, p. 31-32.

<sup>139</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...* p. 247-248.

with Christ. It is in the conviction of this experience that the Orthodox believe unity with the divine is achievable. They do not remember the resurrection; they live it.

There seems to be something of a contradiction in Gubaidulina's two statements concerning her discussion of the Catholic mass. First she names the *Epiclesia*, and seemingly its significance, as belonging to both the Catholic and Orthodox services. In her second statement, however, she negates that the experiential nature of the *Epiclesia* that is so dear to Orthodox liturgy also belongs to Catholic liturgical theology. This deserves some comment. As we shall see, Gubaidulina's material is most strongly influenced by Orthodox liturgical life, but she also pays attention to Catholic and Protestant meaning and matter, especially when it comes to church rituals and services. And while she recognizes that her work extracts titles and symbols that are common to both Orthodox and Catholic masses, she later on is simply trying to nuance what the *Epiclesia* means for the Orthodox believer in the context of the bread and wine. Whether or not a Catholic theologian would agree with her reading is an entirely different matter.

Two things must be said in conclusion to this section. First, there are implicit links, but not explicit ones, between these convictions and *Offertorium*'s aesthetic and general structure. The statements made by Gubaidulina in all that concerns physical and metaphysical time and the Eucharist refer back to her artistic approach and creative process. Gubaidulina refers to the Eucharist as transforming the sphere of earthly time into the sphere of metaphysical time. The same thing, claims the composer, must take place in composition. A 'vertical' inspiration is transformed into material sound through physical, logical work. All of this explains her work process, but these ideas are not found in the actual score, nor in its motifs, phrase structure or musical symbolism.

Second, there are obvious parallel and complimentary links between the composer's discourse and those of the theologians reviewed in this section. This should not lead us to believe, however, that Gubaidulina is familiar with or influenced by these authors. What we know for sure is that she has been influenced by the experience of the Orthodox Eucharistic service. The writings of Clément, Evdokimov and Paprocki have served to clarify and reflect upon this service, its meaning and its impact on the Orthodox believer. What must be retained is that Gubaidulina's discourse and artistic person emerge from the religious climate of Orthodoxy. Her music is coloured with it. This same climate explored by the authors listed above. This is probably why similar,

if not direct or unified, lines can be drawn between her and them. Therefore, what the composer is familiar with is not Clément, Evdokimov and Paprocki, but with the liturgical experiences that fill their writings.

In the next section we will see how central this unity with Christ through the Eucharist really is to contemporary Orthodox theology.

### 3.3 Sacrifice and Offering

It would be difficult to write about themes of theology and spirituality in *Offertorium* without looking at the theme of offering, which runs parallel to that of sacrifice. No theological idea was more instrumental in *Offertorium's* creation than that of the offering: the sacrifice of God towards humanity, of humanity through liturgy, of the artist towards his art, and of art towards its audience. It was a theme that drove the composer and dictated the very essence of its structure, compositional technique and general esthetics. The concept of sacrifice and offering will therefore be explored, first in the writings of 20<sup>th</sup> Century Orthodox priest and theologian Alexander Schmemmann, and secondly in Gubaidulina's discourse and the compositional process of *Offertorium*.

#### 3.3.1 Sacrificial offering in the Orthodox tradition

We must discuss the Orthodox theology of the Eucharistic service at length, as it is intrinsically rooted in and tied to a theology of sacrifice. The term *Eucharistic service* or *Eucharist* conjures images of the sacrament of Holy Communion, but in the context of this chapter, it is referring to the series of rituals and acts involved in the consumption of bread and wine, the whole of this liturgical service which is considered by Orthodoxy the “heart and summit of all Christian worship”<sup>140</sup>. In the words of Schmemmann,

“From the standpoint of Tradition the sacramental character of the Eucharist cannot be artificially narrowed to one act, to one moment of the whole rite. We have an ‘ordo’ in which all parts and all elements are

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<sup>140</sup> DALMAIS, I., *Eastern Liturgies*, New York, Hawthorn Books, 1960, p. 75.

essential, are organically linked together in one sacramental structure. In other words, the Eucharist is a sacrament from the beginning to the end and its fulfillment or consummation is 'made possible' by the entire liturgy."<sup>141</sup>

In the Orthodox tradition, the idea of Offering is an intrinsic aspect of the liturgical service. Schmemmann comments on this in his book on the theology of liturgy, *The Eucharist*. In his analysis of the Orthodox liturgical service, Schmemmann walks the reader through the Sacrament of Offering (or the *Proskomide*, when bread and wine are brought to the altar, but before they are consumed) and discusses the theological significance of this action. "Wherever and whenever man turns to God, he necessarily senses the need to offer him the most precious things he has, what is vital for his life, as a gift and sacrifice."<sup>142</sup> Schmemmann explains the motivation for this action by reasoning that man has always thirsted after God. What the congregant brings forth as an offering stems from the profound need to become closer to God. This is rendered possible through the giving of gifts, of one's heart and of one's self, which allows the expiation of sin and guilt. "In the sacrifice," writes Schmemmann, "man gives himself and his own to his God, because, knowing God, he cannot but love him, and loving him he cannot but strive toward him and toward unity with him."<sup>143</sup> In the act of giving oneself to another, suggests the author, one achieves unity with the other, in this case, God. The Eucharistic service, therefore, serves as an axis through which the theological principle of unity with the divine comes to life through active offering.

In a certain sense, the entire Eucharistic service exists for the purpose of recognition and thanksgiving through offering and sacrifice. The congregation is offering thanks and giving back what has been offered and sacrificed for the believer:

"For if Christ's life is offering and sacrifice, then also our life in him and the whole life of the Church are offering and sacrifice - the offering of ourselves and each other and the whole world, the sacrifice of love and unity, praise and thanksgiving, forgiveness and healing, communion and unity."<sup>144</sup>

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<sup>141</sup> SCHMEMMANN, winter 1961, "Theology and the Eucharist", *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 4, p. 12.

<sup>142</sup> SCHMEMMANN, 1987, *The Eucharist: Sacrament of the Kingdom*, New York, St. Vladimir's Press p. 101.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 102.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 104.

This quote brings us into what can be described as a cycle of offering: Christ the Son has offered himself for the life of the world. The congregant, through the means of this world, in turn offers himself to God who is the Son.<sup>145</sup> This is indeed an Orthodox notion – which the congregants have received, and therefore give back, and in doing so, they receive once more. It is an organic, cyclical relationship. Christ continually gives, and therefore so must believers through the Eucharist.

Schmemmann even goes as far as suggesting that what believers are offering to God is Christ himself. The cycle runs that deep. This is what grants the Orthodox believer access to God. In Christ's ultimate sacrifice, he has given them life. It is this life that is offered to God.

“In offering our life to God, we know we are offering Christ - for he is our life, the life of the world and the life of life, and we have nothing to bring to God except him. We know that in this offering Christ is the Offerer and the Offered, the Receiver and the Received.”<sup>146</sup>

This is the essence of the Eucharist. A gift of what has already been given. This cycle of offering makes it so that congregant, Christ and the Eucharist become intertwined and joined as one through this sacrifice, achieving the unity that Schmemmann speaks of so fervently: “as we offer again and again our life and our world to God, we discover each time that there is nothing else to be offered but Christ himself - the Life of the world, and the fullness of all that exists. It is His Eucharist, and he is the Eucharist.”<sup>147</sup>

### 3.3.2 Gubaidulina and sacrificial offering

It has already been stated that the composer's motives and inspiration for *Offertorium* were rooted in the idea of offering. Sacrifice and offering are, however, rather widespread amongst Christian theological notions. The question we must ask ourselves is, What, if anything, makes *Offertorium* particularly rooted in an Orthodox theological approach to offering?

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<sup>145</sup> SCHMEMMANN, *The Eucharist...*, p. 104.

<sup>146</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 105.

<sup>147</sup> SCHMEMMANN, 1970, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood, St. Vladimir's Press, p. 35.



Let us begin by recapitulating what Gubaidulina said of sacrifice and *Offertorium*. It was violinist Gidon Kremer who was the inspiration and driving force behind the composer's understanding of sacrifice<sup>148</sup> and consequentially, for *Offertorium*'s philosophical backdrop. Gubaidulina's understanding essentially states that sacrifice and offering are an act of total self-surrender. In this surrender, unity with the creator is achieved:<sup>149</sup> "And the sacrifice is made by an artist to art, from all of his soul to a sound in the moment when fingers touch the string. And this is the point of unification with the Highest, the Creator."<sup>150</sup>

The idea that through sacrifice one achieves unity with a higher force obviously parallels Schmemmann's writings on Eucharistic offering and closeness with God. "In the sacrifice," writes Schmemmann, "man gives himself and his own over to God...he cannot but strive toward him and toward unity with him."<sup>151</sup> In Gubaidulina's case, art and music are brought into the dialogue. She offers her concerto to the world of art, to the audience and to her fellow composers who influenced her. But she also offers it to God. Christ's sacrifice on the cross was named as an inspiring factor<sup>152</sup>. Whereas Schmemmann speaks of the worship service as an offering, Gubaidulina speaks in the same manner of her concerto. Art and religion (in this case, her faith) intertwine. This sacrifice helps her attain unity - in music, the artist attains unity with the tone and with his art. In Gubaidulina's act of composing, she offers her art as a means of attaining unity with the "highest, the Creator". As is the case with the theology of sacred time, Gubaidulina's discourse on church and her discourse on art are interchangeable. What applies to her religious life also applies to her artistic process. Both are rooted in her theological convictions and experiences with liturgy. Therefore, the first notion in Gubaidulina's discourse on sacrifice and offering that parallels Orthodox theology is that of sacrifice as a means of reaching unity with God.

Then, the "cycle of offering" discussed above also seems to be loosely present in *Offertorium*'s artistic process. First in the composer's discourse: she speaks of creation being an offering from God and then says that her art is offered to the Creator. Christ's crucifixion is a sacrificial offering, serving as an inspiration for *Offertorium* which is sacrificed in return to heaven, one note at a time.

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<sup>148</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

<sup>149</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

<sup>150</sup> SMITH, J. see Annex A.

<sup>151</sup> SCHMEMANN, *The Eucharist...*, p. 102.

<sup>152</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

Now let us turn our attention to the score. Consider the composers who served as an artistic inspiration for Gubaidulina - Bach and Webern. Bach's own theme is used in a work that renders him homage. He gave to her, and now she offers back by borrowing from his own art. Bach gave, she received, she offers her work back to him. This is not foreign to Schmemmann's claims that through the Eucharist, in thanks for Christ who was given to them, the faithful offer back to God Christ himself.<sup>153</sup> Christ gave, the congregants received, Christ is offered back. This same concept can be applied to the very construct of the score. The main theme (Bach's royal theme) is offered up, little by little until it has been completely reduced. In the last part of the work, the theme has returned, has been 'given back'. The composer calls this part of the piece the transfiguration. No doubt this term alludes to the transfiguration of Jesus on Mount Tabor as told in the Synoptic Gospels.<sup>154</sup> The theme returns and all of its components are there, but in a completely different form, much as Jesus was as he descended the mountain. It is change that is intrinsically linked and made possible by a communion with heaven. What was sacrificed, or offered up, has been altered, made unrecognizable, and given back. The cycle of offering is continual.

Can we say that these factors and elements of *Offertorium* relate directly to Schmemmann's ecclesiological definition and theological approach to Eucharistic sacrifice? Can we claim that *Offertorium's* portrait of sacrificial offering stems strictly from Russian Orthodoxy? Not in an explicit sense. The concerto's ideas certainly do not contradict what Schmemmann describes. Indeed, there is complementarity and parallelism. However, while they may be inclusive of an Orthodox theology of sacrifice, it would be faulty to say they are exclusively so. Gubaidulina herself mentioned Hegel's term 'absolute truth' as a possible label for her ideas. At no point does the composer ever mention specific Orthodox theologians as a direct influence, besides her Orthodox priest, Father Vladimir.<sup>155</sup>

The deeper question is to what extent can a concerto express theological creativity? For present in *Offertorium* are not direct references to Schmemmann's work, but references to a religious ambiance. Explicit, direct ties to formal Orthodox theological writings will not be found in *Offertorium*. And still, the concerto conveys a cycle of offering, in musical form, that expresses the same experience than that described by Schmemmann. It is void of words, and yet it intentionally portrays a religious climate. It

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<sup>153</sup> SCHMEMMANN, *For the Life ...*, p. 35.

<sup>154</sup> Matt. 17: 1-9, Mark 9: 2-8, Luke 9: 28-36.

<sup>155</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 86.

is for this reason that we may conclude that the issue of sacrificial offering in *Offertorium* is not the result of theological academics, but rather theological creativity, experience and expression, stemming from the idea of offering as lived through liturgy. Gubaidulina's very insistence on the importance of offering and sacrifice as pivotal points in her art is a direct consequence of her Orthodox faith and ensuing attachment to her Church's liturgical practices. Furthermore, the way in which she approaches these notions both in her discourse and in her compositional process do not contradict Orthodox theology; in fact, her art may even be a carrier of it.

### 3.4 The cross

#### 3.4.1 The sign of the cross

As we saw in Chapter Two, the image of the cross and its meaning are of great importance to Sofia Gubaidulina, both personally and artistically. The analysis of *Offertorium* reveals the symbol and sign of the cross inserted throughout the score through various compositional strategies. The entire concerto alludes to it, desires to express it.<sup>156</sup>

In the following section the importance of the image of the crucifixion in Orthodox liturgical life will be discussed. Because we are discussing a specific image that is so crucial to Church life, the theological emphasis in this section will be very much centered on an Orthodox understanding of the symbol and its role in the liturgy. It is not so much a question of the theology of the cross; rather, an understanding of its image, and of its impact on the service. This being said, the cross *is* the universal sign of Christianity. This is one case where Gubaidulina's religious affiliations demonstrate a more ecumenical nature, as the sign of the cross is not only cherished by Russian Orthodox, but by all Churches. Much of what is stated can be applied to a Catholic or Protestant understanding of the importance of this sign. However, special attention will be accorded to the idea of the symbol in Orthodox liturgical life. This notion, as

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<sup>156</sup> There is no such 'cross' (meaning instrumental symbolism) in this work, but nevertheless there is a metaphysical cross, when the theme brings itself as a sacrifice...If the listener is a very attentive one, he can certainly imagine the cross." BYERS, A. and CHRISTENSEN, J., 2000, "Sofia Gubaidulina: into the labyrinth of the soul" in *Conversations with Composers of our Time* Surrey, Ashgate, p. 50.

we shall see further on, can be transferred to Gubaidulina's use of symbols in her score.

### 3.4.2 Orthodox liturgy and the cross

It goes without saying that the cross is probably the single most important symbol of all of Christendom. The Orthodox Church is no exception. If there is one symbol that makes its way into Russian Orthodox liturgy, it certainly is that of the cross. The cross, as was briefly discussed in Chapter Two, appears on every Orthodox Church building, in the icons, on the priest's liturgical robes and on the sacramental objects. Furthermore, the Orthodox believers make the sign of the cross at frequent intervals. Orthodox writer Frederica Mathewes-Green notes this: "To say that we make the sign of the cross frequently would be an understatement. We sign ourselves whenever the Trinity is invoked, whenever we venerate the cross or an icon, and on many other occasions in the course of the Liturgy."<sup>157</sup> This description could possibly be applied to several different churches - Catholicism, for instance, or the Coptic Church, as well. Nevertheless, Orthodox writers are insistent on the weight of the symbol that is the cross.

For the Orthodox believer, a symbol, in this instance the sign or image of the cross, is the reminder of Christ's presence amongst the congregation. Schmemmann insists on this point. The symbol, he argues, is not an illustration of a sacred person, event or concept. It is the manifestation or communication of it.<sup>158</sup> Thus, the cross is not simply an image for image's sake. The cross is the manifestation of Christ's sacrifice. The symbol makes this notion possible.

We can thus begin to understand why evoking the image of the cross is so very important. First, it is an expression of the believer's faith. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the question had been raised about altering the Russian Orthodox sign of the cross to conform to the Greek way of doing it (using three fingers instead of two). This provoked much unrest, explains Orthodox church historian Timothy Ware, despite the fact that it may seem like a trivial element: "It must be remembered how great an importance the Orthodox believers in general and Russians in particular have always

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<sup>157</sup> MATHEWES-GREEN, Frederica, "Twelve Things I wish I'd Known: First Visit to an Orthodox Church", <http://www.frederica.com/12-things>

<sup>158</sup> SCHMEMMANN, *The Eucharist...*, p. 38

attached to ritual actions, to the symbolic gestures whereby inner belief of a Christian is expressed.”<sup>159</sup> The ritual gestures serve a purpose: to participate actively in the liturgy, by expressing physically its affirmations. By doing this the liturgy comes to life. It becomes real.

Second, the image of the cross is manifest in various forms in the service because the liturgy is not meant to be uniquely word-centered. This is a basic but essential element of Orthodox liturgy, one that sets it apart from most branches of Protestantism. The five senses are fully engaged in the service as the congregation “becomes” the body of Christ. The cross, present in sight, touch and movement is very much at the centre of this notion, as noted by theologian Paul Verghese:

“The gestures of the priest and the laity, in the kiss of peace, in the bowing of heads, the signing of the cross...the colours, the sounds, all these are integral parts of the liturgical action...it is an act of Christ, through His Body. Not only among illiterate people, but even among over-literate peoples, the need for a solid, acute act of worship is acute...no true liturgy can be performed on words alone.”<sup>160</sup>

If Verghese's statement is right, the cross is one of, if not the most important, medium through which the “acute” act of worship can be lived out. The symbol of the crucifix is something that is seen, signed and touched, and not something that can be merely uttered. It enables the worshipper to engage actively in the liturgy, and therefore in the embodiment of Christ and his Kingdom.

Third, the cross is, of course, an image of the story of the crucifixion. But its significance and value supersede that of pure narrative. It evokes spiritual meaning, drama, emotion and theological concepts. This is a generally widespread notion for all Christian Churches. For the Orthodox, the image is especially linked to its icons and iconoclasm. “La croix au sommet est le couronnement de l’iconostase, car elle symbolise que, par la croix, le salut est donné au monde.”<sup>161</sup> Paprocki insists on the weight of what the cross represents, in present time. The role of the cross is similar to that of the icons. Icons rarely tell stories. They are there to symbolize the presence of God in the congregation. They show an image, express a spiritual truth or state, but rarely do they serve a narrative function. “It is not the portrayal of Christ, or of certain

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<sup>159</sup> WARE, T., 1963, *The Orthodox Church*, New York, Penguin Books, p. 122.

<sup>160</sup> VERGHESE, P., *The Joy of Freedom: Eastern Worship and Modern Man*, Richmond, John Knox Press, 1967, p. 64.

<sup>161</sup> PAPROCKI, *Les mystères...*, p. 128.

saints...but the expression of certain ideas about Christ and the Church, first and foremost the expression of sacramental experience of Baptism and the Eucharist.”<sup>162</sup> Schmemmann writes this on the subject of the icons, but the same thoughts could be applied to the sign and image of the crucifix. In the instance of the Orthodox liturgy therefore, the cross, much like the icons, communicate the conviction of the actual presence of Christ.

Thus three things are clear: first, the image of the cross displays the faith of the believer. Second, the sign of the cross holds great weight in the liturgical service, be it Orthodox or other. Third, the symbol of cross means not only to evoke narrative, but to communicate the conviction of salvation and the presence of God in the Church. Gubaidulina’s insistence on this image shows her affiliation to Russian Orthodoxy, to be sure, but mostly demonstrates the composer’s link to Christianity in general.

### 3.4.3 Gubaidulina and the cross

We have already seen, in Chapter Two, the significance that the cross holds for Sofia Gubaidulina. It is a religious element that has been mentioned over and over in her interviews, and an image that has worked its way into many of her compositions, either through instrumental symbolism (as was the case in *In Croce* or *Sieben Worte*) or through pure theological inspiration, as is the case for *Offertorium*.

In Chapter Two, it was revealed that the cross not only signified Christ's sacrifice for Gubaidulina<sup>163</sup>, but also the binding of the two realms: the vertical line with the horizontal line. In a metaphysical sense, the cross represents the joining of the earthly realm with the heavenly realm. Theologically, one is reminded of the incarnation. Christ, in his divinity, suffers a human death. The cross was the medium through which this happened. Gubaidulina explained her understanding of the symbol of the cross, and its place in her music, to Vera Lukomsky:

The crucial thing for me was the idea of the crucifixion. I like very much the idea of instrumental symbolism, when the instrument itself, its nature and individuality, hints at or implies a certain meaning. The instrument’s quality and the meaning of music join each other. The word “symbol” means “synthesis, or fusion of meanings”. I wanted to find the idea of the

<sup>162</sup> SCHMEMMANN, A., Fall 1959, “Byzantium, Iconoclasm and the Monks”, *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, Vol. 3, No. 3, p. 23.

<sup>163</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

cross in the instruments themselves. The first thing that came to mind, obviously, was the “crucifixion” of a string.<sup>164</sup>

Thus Gubaidulina affirmed both the importance of symbol in her art, and of her use of instrumentation and musical motifs to convey this symbol. As we shall see shortly, the symbol, or the meaning, of the cross in *Offertorium* takes precedence over its narrative. This is not a concerto that tells the story of the crucifixion. Rather, it is an expression of its emotion and significance.

*Offertorium*, as was previously demonstrated, holds in the score the images of the cross, through many forms. The analysis in Chapter Two revealed this. The motivic work was especially telling - the “crucified notes” motive, as in measures 258-259, for instance, or the symmetric rise and fall of the melodic line, making the shape of the cross, as in measures 386-391<sup>165</sup>. The composer also indicated that parts of the middle section evoked images of cross-suffering, and we saw from Nicolas Gilbert’s analysis that the cello solo from this middle section was constructed on a cruciform shape. The cross is present in shape and image throughout the whole piece. It dictated the musical motives, and certain structures of the score. This may not be immediately obvious to the auditor, but the sign of the cross did indeed dictate the architecture of the concerto. This being said, Gubaidulina's faith and music are immersed in her attachment to this symbol and to its theological implications. This, at least, is clear.

“The cruciform shape symbolizes for Gubaidulina the vertical heavenly realm with the horizontal earthly world, as does the liturgy and the sacrament of the Eucharist. [She explains,] ‘All I had to do in music was what had been done long before in architecture and fresco painting. In my own work I have also tried to join those two texts in such a way that the two accounts, while always retaining their identity, cross each other - events that take place in time (the Passion) and events in heaven that unfold out of time (Apocalypse).’”<sup>166</sup>

What is perhaps less clear is whether or not the intersection of the vertical with the horizontal, which seem so central to Gubaidulina’s discourse in correlation to the cross, truly stems from a Russian Orthodox theology. Kurtz goes on to further explain Gubaidulina's theological view:

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<sup>164</sup> LUKOMSKY, « Sofia Gubaidulina : “ My desire is always to rebel, to swim against the stream!”; *Perspectives on New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, p. 20

<sup>165</sup> See Chap.2 for examples from score.

<sup>166</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...* p. 249.

“The vertical realm of the divine Father, which conventional Christian dogma considers perfect and omnipotent, exists beyond time and is therefore incomplete. The horizontal world of physical creation, on the other hand is mortal. God sent his son so that he would save mankind from eternal death through the sacrifice of His own death on the cross. In this act of self-sacrifice the two worlds intersect – the divine, eternal vertical realm and the human, mortal, horizontal realm. The ‘superior plane of stasis’ in the vertical realm, however, is devoid of motion; it lacks the force of the Holy Spirit, which becomes actively effective only in the form of the cross, the intersection of the vertical and horizontal (as in Orthodox liturgy).”<sup>167</sup>

While much of Christendom would no doubt concur that the cross does represent this “intersection of two worlds”, what Kurtz and Gubaidulina are emphasizing is that Orthodox liturgy holds a certain nuanced approach to this notion. It is not excluded from other Christian theologies; every church adapts it differently, however. The Orthodox service, explains Kurtz, will choose to focus its attention on the “joy of the resurrection” which is more anchored in the vertical dimension of the crucifixion. Western Christianity, such as Protestantism, focuses on the horizontal elements of his death - the earthly, physical suffering of Christ on the cross. As for Gubaidulina, she aims to adopt a balance between the vertical and horizontal, so that both are equally represented. The second section of *Offertorium*, claims its composer, is full of images of cross-suffering. It is definitely the most violent, the most harsh and abrupt passage of the whole work. This would lead the listener to understand that the composer wanted to communicate the horizontal dimension of the crucifixion in its pain and suffering. This is in stark contrast to the section that proceeds it, the ascension passage, which is obviously closer to an imagination of the divine, the vertical. In coming back to this chapter’s original idea that Gubaidulina’s ideas stem from an experience of Orthodox liturgy, it would have to be stated that this form of liturgy incorporates a more vertical understanding of the cross. In this, the composer sets herself apart from Orthodoxy and attempts to portray the dual dimensions.

Equally interesting is Gubaidulina’s representation of the cross in her compositions. It is much more image-centered than story-centered. The composer insists that the cross is present in all her musical works, even those that contain no lyrics. The listener is not being told the story of the Synoptic Gospels. Rather, the music in its sounds, score structure and instrumental symbolism is meant to evoke a cruciform shape of the

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<sup>167</sup> *Ibid*, p. 250.



idea and emotion of a crucifixion. The cords are crucified; the musical motives are shaped like a cross. It is an image that is omnipresent in the concerto without ever telling the whole gospel story. In this sense, we are very close to what Schmemmann said about icons and symbols, and it could be suggested that what Gubaidulina has is a Russian Orthodox approach to the use of the sign of the cross. It is the symbol of a principle, a sign of the manifestation of Christ's sacrifice. The narrative is secondary. The techniques employed to portray the cross in the score of *Offertorium* do not serve to tell the story of the crucifixion, but to communicate the emotion of the event. Icons hold the same nuance. They do not illustrate an event; they manifest or communicate an idea or a divine presence.<sup>168</sup> There is a precise difference between the event and the presence of the being or emotion.

In conclusion, Gubaidulina's use of the cross, while containing nuances from Orthodox theology and liturgical practices demonstrates first and foremost the composer's attachment to Christianity in a general sense.

### 3.5 Ascension

*"For the Eucharist, we have said, is a passage, a procession leading the Church into heaven, into her fulfillment as the Kingdom of God."*<sup>169</sup> - Alexander Schmemmann

The final section of *Offertorium* consists of a 100-measure, ascending, melodic line, which is in fact the initial theme retrograded, and reconstructed one motif at a time. Considered by analysts such as Lemaire and Kurtz as the section of the concerto which most resembles sacred church music<sup>170</sup>, the "ascension" starts on the violin's lowest A flat and culminates on its highest D, played as a solo.

What is so significant about this particular section of *Offertorium*? Aesthetically, it most certainly sounds like sacred music, more than any other part of the work. This is no doubt due to the long, chant-like phrases built on major chords, supported by the prepared piano imitating the sound of resonating bells. But the ascension passage also

<sup>168</sup> SCHMEMMANN, *The Eucharist...*, p. 38.

<sup>169</sup> SCHMEMMANN, 1961, « Theology and the Eucharist », p. 20

<sup>170</sup> LEMAIRE, F., 1994, *La musique du XXe siècle en Russie et dans les anciennes républiques soviétiques*, Paris, Fayard., p. 540.

holds symbolic weight, both in its essence and in the fact that it was strategically placed at the end of the work so that the entire concerto seems to have been constructed in one long passage toward this moment of musical height and volume.

The following section will first explore an Orthodox theology of Ascension and its place in the Eucharistic service, and second, will look at this theology's correlation with the ascension passage in *Offertorium*.

### 3.5.1 Ascension and the Eucharistic service

“Throughout our study,” writes Alexander Schmemmann, on the subject of the Eucharistic service, “the main point has been that the whole liturgy is sacramental that is one transforming act and one ascending movement. And the very goal of this movement is to take us out of ‘this world’ and to make us partakers of the world to come.”<sup>171</sup>

If one of the Eucharist's aims is to achieve unity with Christ, then the partakers in the Eucharist, the congregants, will necessarily turn their attention heavenwards. According to Schmemmann, the service is one long upward movement, an “act of passage”<sup>172</sup> towards a world to come. This world is two-fold. The Church moves into it, but in the Eucharist, the Church also becomes this world - the sacred space of the liturgical building, just like the sacred time of liturgy moves out of physical limitations and into the transcendent, the non-physical, other world. “In the Eucharist, the Church transcends the dimensions of ‘institution’ and becomes the Body of Christ. It is the ‘eschaton’ of the Church, her manifestation as the world to come.”<sup>173</sup>

In this line of thinking, the ascension is not understood as a mere movement of Christ or the believer towards Heaven. The Ascension pulls the partakers of the Eucharist into an eschatological state, into the meeting with Christ, into another time sphere, beyond earthly limits. Just as the congregants relive the past, they also experience the future. They draw history into a present experience, and the liturgy pulls them into the Kingdom of God. This is a theology that is larger than a belief in the after-life. It is the conviction that the liturgy contributes to the coming of God's

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<sup>171</sup> SCHMEMANN, *For the life...*, p. 42.

<sup>172</sup> SCHMEMANN, *For the life...*, p. 42.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

kingdom. Ascension, eschaton and parousia join together in one ongoing movement out of this world and into the next. “L’Église célèbre l’eucharistie,” writes Evdokimov, “métabolise cette matière en Pain de Royaume, et c’est ce repas messianique qui donne à l’Église de se voir elle même eschatologie inaugurée et tension parousiaque.”<sup>174</sup>

These authors reveal why the Eucharist is so central to Orthodox eschatology. It is by way of this ritual and liturgy that they experience the coming of Christ. They experienced his sacrifice, and now they will commune with him:

“Up to this point the Eucharist was our ascension in Christ, our entrance in Him into the ‘world to come’. And now, in this Eucharistic offering in Christ of all things to the One to whom they belong and in whom alone they really exist, this movement of ascension has reached its end. We are at the paschal table of the Kingdom.”<sup>175</sup>

The whole of the church service, therefore, has been journeying toward this state. While many streams of theology would read eschatology on a linear timeline, it is not necessarily so for Orthodoxy. Christ's ascension into the next world, and therefore the believer's ascension into the next world, happens every Sunday during the Eucharist.

“But the liturgy of the Church is always an anaphora, a lifting up, ascension. The Church fulfills itself in heaven in that new eon which Christ has inaugurated in His death, resurrection and ascension... we must go out of this world, we must ascend to heaven in Christ in order to become partakers in the world to come.”<sup>176</sup>

Furthermore, not only does the Church journey in ascension towards the next world, it is mandated with participating in its creation. The service exists partially for the congregants to experience the coming of Christ and his heavenly kingdom. Olivier Clément, who calls the liturgy “l’expérience anticipée du Royaume”<sup>177</sup> describes the whole of the liturgical experience as a contact with the eschaton: “tous les aspects (de la liturgie), le signe de la croix, les paroles de l’Écriture, les encensements, les lumières, les chants, les icônes, sont, au sens le plus réaliste, des symboles du monde à venir.”<sup>178</sup> The church's task is in reality to be the kingdom. As we have seen previously, the liturgy is not for tradition's sake. It is not a mere question of

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<sup>174</sup> EVDOKIMOV, *L’orthodoxie...*, p. 32.

<sup>175</sup> SCHMEMANN, *For the life...*, p. 41.

<sup>176</sup> SCHMEMANN, *For the life...*, p. 43.

<sup>177</sup> CLÉMENT, *L’Église orthodoxe*, p. 86.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, p. 87

remembrance. It is an active participation for the believer to live out his or her faith. In this case, they will become God's kingdom. "L'Église," Poprecki writes, "est 'collégiale', rassemblement en un, rassemblement en Christ, du ciel et de la terre, de toutes les créatures. En ce sens, l'Église est le signe prophétique du Royaume."<sup>179</sup>

### 3.5.2 The Ascension and *Offertorium*

Numerous authors have demonstrated how much the Ascension plays into the Eucharistic service. There are certain parallels to be drawn with these writings and Gubaidulina's concerto.

First, let us consider the general musical structure of this section. From what was analyzed in the previous chapter, we know that this section holds two important components: the main theme in retrograded form and a long ascension line for the solo violin. The spiritual and theological connotations for the retrograded theme have already been discussed, but the fact that it is the musical support for the ascending melodic line may be of some pertinence. The return of the musical representation of sacrificial offering coincides with the musical representation of entering into God's kingdom. Let us not forget that the final note of the concerto is the long awaited D, the last note of Bach's theme, never executed throughout *Offertorium* until now. It is significant, because it brings completion, resolution. The fact that the ascension passage occurs at the end of the concerto is also strategically meaningful. The journey is over, ending with an upward movement. In many of her works, Gubaidulina discusses crossing over worlds, traversing the limits of life<sup>180</sup>. This is one case where the music represents just that.

The ambiance or aesthetic of the concerto during this final section of the concerto is also significant. The long, meditative melody which follows such harsh, abrupt, violent music in the previous sections of the work recalls peaceful, sacred hymnody. The combination of prepared piano, harp and glockenspiel provide resonating, echoing bell-like timbres, which, as we learned in Chapter Two, are the only non-vocal instruments allowed in the Orthodox Church. Gubaidulina does not deny the parallel with church music. In this section, she explains, "The music sounds like church music

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<sup>179</sup> PAPROCKI, *Les mystères...*, p. 119.

<sup>180</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, "Sofia Gubaidulina: My desire..." *Perspectives in New Music*, vol. 6, n. 1, p. 22.

because at that moment, my meaning approaches that of church music."<sup>181</sup> We are at a moment in the concerto where the music serves a liturgical purpose, that of recalling another world which is beyond earthly limits, and of representing the movement towards Ascension, in its spiritual sense. Gubaidulina claims a common meaning with church music. (McBurney points to her ability to connect style with idea in this instance.<sup>182</sup>)

Orthodox liturgical music has, of course, many purposes, not the least of which is to enable a meeting with God.<sup>183</sup> Likewise, "the Church's hymn is a copy of the heavenly archetype."<sup>184</sup> In the world of Orthodox liturgical music, there is the notion that such hymnody serves as an exit from this world, and an experience with the next. Ascension towards heavenly realms in order to meet the divine is a goal of such music. Georges Khodr speaks of this, when reflecting upon art and music in the liturgical service: "[l'art] est le lien qui unit le monde à la gloire qui se manifesterà le dernier jour. L'art est, essentiellement, cette tension entre le siècle présent et le siècle à venir."<sup>185</sup>

Thus Sofia Gubaidulina refers to the intentions of Church music when speaking of her own music. *Offertorium* contains the same aims as that of Orthodox hymnody, without officially belonging to that tradition. "Of course, we can write religious works, but only as our own fantasy. We never aspire to bring them to the church. And I don't aspire to either. But I strongly want to participate. I feel a great desire to realize my religious needs within art."<sup>186</sup> Gubaidulina demonstrates this same participation than that of the congregation during the Eucharist. While the believers participate in the liturgy to bring forth the Kingdom of God, so does the composer, in offering her entire work as a contribution, a participation towards this very Kingdom.

The ascension passage offers one instance in *Offertorium* when the correlation between theological conviction and musical execution is not merely hypothetical - it is clear in the composer's intent, and obvious in the concerto's structure and aesthetic. Does this mean that all theologically inspired music must necessarily imitate church

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<sup>181</sup> MCBURNEY, G., 1998, "Encountering Gubaidulina", *Musical Times*, Vol. 129, n. 1741, p. 123.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> STEFANOVIC, D., 1998, "The Theological Dimension of Liturgical Music from an Orthodox Perspective", *Studia Liturgica*, vol. 28, n. 1, 1998, p. 33.

<sup>184</sup> SCHMEMMANN, 1966, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, Portland, American Orthodox Press, p. 168.

<sup>185</sup> KHODR, G., 1990, « Art et Creation », *Contacts*, n.150, p.88.

<sup>186</sup> LUKOMSKY, "My desire is to rebel...", *Perspectives on New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, p. 31.

hymnology and sacred music traditions? Absolutely not. This is simply one instance where this correlation is irrefutable.

### 3.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, I attempted to establish common ground between contemporary Orthodox liturgy and theology and Gubaidulina's words and music. Those themes which were most predominant in *Offertorium*, specifically discussing Sacrifice, the Eucharist, Ascension, Sacred Time and the Crucifixion. Other themes were left unexplored, such as the composer's reflections on spiritual freedom, to which she accredits the writings of Berdyaev and St. Paul. In nearly 85 years of life, Gubaidulina has spoken and composed on a myriad of subjects, both spiritual and secular. In the framework of this particular research, however, the themes listed above were the ones I deemed most pertinent to the creative process and backdrop of *Offertorium*.

While Gubaidulina has dialogued with and studied other religions throughout her career, in the case of *Offertorium*, we are dealing with essentially Russian Orthodox factors. We saw this in our study of time during the Eucharist and Gubaidulina's own thoughts on this subject, which run parallel to those of Evdokimov and Schmemmann. We saw how the notion of sacrifice and offering drives the Eucharistic liturgy in the Orthodox Church, and similarly, how central this concept is to the architecture of *Offertorium*. We unveiled what is the possible motivation for the ascension passage in *Offertorium*, based on the Russian Orthodox theology of Ascension, and its role in the liturgical service. In short, there were enough factors in common between the composer's discourse, creative process, compositional techniques and Orthodox theology to suggest that the faith with which Gubaidulina is affiliated is an influential, even driving, force behind the creation of *Offertorium*'s. Orthodox theology and liturgy are the world from which *Offertorium* emerges.

While the above statement can be easily argued or supported, it must be emphasized that its particular components remain hypothetical and therefore debatable. Gubaidulina offers an informal analysis of her work and those ideas that were most influential, but the references discussed in this chapter are hypothetical in their connection to the music. Gubaidulina has never executed a rigorously detailed analysis of the concerto. Nor does she discuss which spiritual or theological concepts

dictated which musical passages and how this was accomplished. At this present moment there is no evidence that Gubaidulina has ever read the works of the authors that were discussed in this chapter. We would be going down a false road by trying to demonstrate an explicit link between *Offertorium* and academic theology- can we really expect a composer to be well versed in 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox academic theology? It is not impossible (Olivier Messiaen was a great reader of theology) but nor is it necessary.

To reiterate the statements made in previous sections, *Offertorium* expresses and creates a religious climate. It is the result of an ecclesiastical experience, more so than an acquaintance with theological writings. The writings of Evdokimov, Clément, Schmemmann and all the others serve to clarify and explain this ecclesiastical experience. They do not, however, mean to show any direct implication in the concerto's creative process. Parallels and similarities do exist in the religious, theological and spiritual lines between the music and the writings. This is because the composer and the authors emerge from common ground - the Orthodox liturgical service. The theologians experienced Orthodox liturgy and wrote about it. Gubaidulina experienced the liturgical service and composed *Offertorium*. The concerto does contain parallel elements and notions with 20<sup>th</sup> century Russian Orthodox theology. Certain quotes by the composer concerning the Eucharist contain an almost word for word similarity to those of Evdokimov.<sup>187</sup> The ascension passage is almost undeniably reminiscent of sacred hymnody. But the music does not need to correspond to the standards of discursive theology to express a religious experience in a valid and concrete way. It can be appreciated in its own right - as a work of art that attempts the same thing as our Orthodox writers - to express, reflect and even create the sacred space of the liturgical service. It is in this light that we may now venture into the fourth and final chapter, in which we will explore the notion that *Offertorium* may be its own theological ground.

We have now seen which theological and liturgical elements are present in Gubaidulina's discourse and in *Offertorium*. We have studied what contemporary Orthodox writers say about these elements, and how they have worked themselves into the concerto, either by artistic influence, or in aesthetic value and structure. In the fourth and final chapter, the musico-theological dialogue will be studied under the lens

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<sup>187</sup> McBurney, "Encountering Gubaidulina...", p. 151

of *Offertorium*. Can this concerto be a theological space in and of itself and how is it a carrier of this dialogue?



## Chapter 4 *Offertorium* as Theological Ground

### 4.1 Introduction

In the fourth and final chapter of this research paper, I will explore *Offertorium's* contribution to the musico-theological dialogue. More specifically, I will attempt to understand whether or not *Offertorium* can be its own “theological ground”.

So far, this project has argued that *Offertorium* is the musical result of a composer's theological worldview and the culmination of a strong connection to Orthodox liturgical life. Now the following question remains: Is *Offertorium* really a theological ground and how so?

To answer this question, we will return to Heidi Epstein's intertextual approach. This type of research will necessarily depend on Epstein's genre of methodology; that is, one that engages several disciplines at the same time. She creates a reflection based not on one single source, but on many sources, such as a combination of text, musical score and a composer's commentary. The intertextual method develops a thought process that does not fit into any preconceived theological system but that depends primarily upon what the music, composer and dialogue with theological writings have revealed.

First of all, the validity of *Offertorium* as a theological framework will be discussed. The idea of framework means its medium - the structure that communicates the message. *Offertorium* is a wordless concerto and yet embodies clear theological convictions and ideas that are otherwise communicated through a text. This makes *Offertorium* an unconventional messenger. The question that remains then is, can it work? Can the medium of a concerto be a legitimate carrier of theology, sufficient in and of itself? We may need to further explore a definition of sacred music and of theology. It would be false to say that all sacred music - that is, music intended for the Church service - is a sure carrier of theological content, let alone one that produces original theological thought. In the same way, it would be false to say that secular music, instrumental music, or any music existing outside of Church function is surely void of theological content. We must therefore clarify our definitions and framework in order to decide if *Offertorium* is a valid conduit of theological matter. In this section, Nicolas Lossky's work on sacred music will prove very useful. His definition of theology is inclusive of other mediums besides the text.

Second of all, compositional choices in the concerto that demonstrate Gubaidulina's clear affiliations with certain streams of theology will be reviewed. This will be done in an effort to reveal the composer's ability to create a coherent and constructed theological reflection. It is one thing to say that the music is a carrier of theology - it is entirely another matter to discuss precisely *what* theology it actually produces. Being a carrier of theology and being a creative force of original theological reflection are two different concepts. As was stated in the previous chapter, Gubaidulina's art is a reflection of the religious climate from whence she emerges. She has lived an experience through liturgy, much like the theologians who have written about it. This is why the concerto portrays certain ideas that stem from Eastern Orthodox liturgy and theology. It will also be interesting to discuss how Gubaidulina provides nuances and particularities to these ideas. This is the real endeavour of theological discussions - to dialogue with or interpret a given idea. This is where we enter into the realm of theological production. Exploring this aspect will allow us to truly examine *Offertorium's* capacity for theological creativity and interpretation. As in the second and third chapters, special attention will be given to the theology of sacrifice. However, the concerto's treatment of ascension and its imagery of the cross will not be ignored, as these are important elements of its theological world.

Following this will be a reflection on how *Offertorium* is a participative action in Russian Orthodox liturgical life. Finally, all these pieces will be assembled so that we may look at one unified picture to show *Offertorium* as a whole, complete work of theology. The concerto creates a space of theological reflection and dialogue. In other words, it is its own theological ground. If this is achieved, the musico-theological dialogue will indeed reach an interesting level: it can leave the realm of music simply serving the text, and enter the realm in which music incarnates theological conviction.

#### 4.1.1 Heidi Epstein's musico-theological dialogue-

In order to deal with the elements in *Offertorium*, supported by the composer's discourse, that shed light on its ability to be a carrier or conduit of theology, we must engage an interdisciplinary methodology. Heidi Epstein's quest for a feminist theology of music, one that can draw from music a positive metaphor for the feminine and for the

body, created just that: a musico-theological methodology which is both balanced in its approach to both disciplines and that can read original theological material in the music.

What is important to remember from Epstein's intertextual method is the following: first, Epstein draws her reflections and conclusions from diverse sources in a variety of disciplines. Obviously these disciplines include theology and music, but the author does not limit her research to these. When studying Hildegard of Bingen, the author analyzed the composer's studies of gynecology, her theological writings on sacred figures, her musical work *Ave Generosa* among other angles of study. The aim of such extensive reading was not simply to provide a comprehensive portrait of Hildegard of Bingen. It was to construct a new, complete theology that stems from Hildegard's thought and creative process. This leads us to the second important element in Epstein's methodology. The author obviously prefers not to submit a preconceived theological principle. Instead, everything depends on what musical analysis, observation and theological research reveal. Thus she was able to construct, for example, a new and original theology of the body through Hildegard's understanding of the incarnation and musical metaphor as "Christ as God's song made flesh".<sup>188</sup>

Epstein builds a case on the notion that a work of music can not only illustrate, but produce, original theological principles and ideas. The author argues, for instance, that Hildegard of Bingen relates music to theology in an incarnational way rather than a philosophico-mathematical one.<sup>189</sup> This principle of incarnation through music is taken partially from the music itself. An illustration of this is her study of Hildegard's *Ordo Virtutum*. In this work, writes the author, Hildegard's theological metaphor of human beings as God's musical instruments really comes to life: "Harmony, symphony and song are aural lenses through which Hildegard reads the significant events in salvation history. Thus, before the Fall, Hildegard characterizes Adam, the prototype of all human beings, as heavenly music incarnate".<sup>190</sup> In *Ordo Virtutum*, Adam is thus accorded this musical characterization. Interestingly, Satan never sings in this work. Epstein explains the composer's choice: "Hildegard depicts Satan as utterly incapable of song. She blames Satan, *not Eve*, for destroying the original divine-human harmony (...) It is as if

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<sup>188</sup>EPSTEIN, H. 2004, *Melting the Venusberg: A Feminist Theology of Music*, New York: Continuum, p. 122.

<sup>189</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 122.

<sup>190</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 123.

the *Ordo* underlines her conviction - voiced in her appeals to the prelates, and in her music - that only Satan silences bodily song.”<sup>191</sup>

This is but one example of how Epstein's methodology and analysis allows the reader to draw on new theological metaphors and constructs not only through other textual sources (albeit, she uses these extensively as well) but through the actual musical work in question. The absence of the devil's voice in the *Ordo* demonstrates a new take on incarnation and human salvation. Satan is the only one incapable of song, as song is something that stems from a divine source. As Epstein had previously explained, this is indeed an unusual notion for Hildegard's era, theologically speaking. That song is no longer the destructive means of seduction, but rather a source of divine purity and belongs as much to woman as to man. Satan, not Eve, was blamed for the fall in the *Ordo*.<sup>192</sup> Through Epstein's reading of this musical work, she was able to extract from it a new and original theological principle.

As was the case with Epstein's various case studies (Hildegard of Bingen's musical corpus, for instance) *Offertorium* will not depend upon systematic theology to act as its interpretive tool. Rather, this research will depend on what music and writing reveal, either simultaneously or in complementarity.

The various media engaged for the next aspect of this research, therefore, include the concerto itself, Gubaidulina's writings, musicological sources such as notes from the composer's biography and interviews in journals of musicology, Eastern Orthodox theology and theologians who specialize in the fields of arts and theology, such as Nicolas Lossky.

Similarly to the method employed in Chapter Three, parallels and common threads between *Offertorium*'s score, Gubaidulina's discourse and various Orthodox theologies will be drawn out and discussed. Hopefully, just as Epstein accomplished in *Mounting the Venusberg*, this project will be able to respectfully and thoroughly explain the theology that was composed in Gubaidulina's violin concerto. Furthermore, just as Epstein did with Hildegard's *Ordo*, it will seek to find out how *Offertorium*, in the music itself, not only illustrates certain theological ideas, but actually creates and interprets them, rendering this concerto a ground for unique and reflected theology.

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<sup>191</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 124.

<sup>192</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 122.

#### 4.2 Music and the non-word: The transition from theology through word to theology through sound.

If nothing else, *Offertorium* has demonstrated an ability to be a conduit of theological ideas without the presence of words. This is perhaps due to an artistic approach that is distinctly Eastern Orthodox and partially stems from Eastern Orthodox thought. This will be further explored in the next section with Nicolas Lossky's writings, which claim that theology is, in its core, “une expression d’une expérience ecclésiastique de Dieu”.<sup>193</sup> When Michael Kurtz analyzed Gubaidulina's *St. John's Passion*, he wrote the following:

“In Orthodox tradition the art of experience is more important than the art of representation. There is even an aspiration to transcend everything temporal and material in order to achieve a ‘superior plane of stasis’ that triumphs utterly over time and space. In this sense the passion was to be static and not dramatic.”<sup>194</sup>

While Kurtz's statement does not directly address the issue of words versus sound or image, he certainly reflects upon the aims of Orthodox art which, according to him, are to create an experience rather than tell a story, to incarnate an idea rather than express it in words.

This same notion may be true for many of Gubaidulina's works, including *Offertorium*. Gubaidulina has already stated that her music is more about holding symbols than it is about telling a story or portraying an image.<sup>195</sup> This would explain Kurtz's comment about her work not being “dramatic”, meaning it is not a narrative. It conveys experience and idea. In this sense, it is safe to say that, like Russian Orthodox art, *Offertorium* is not representational, it is incarnational. For instance, it does not wish to portray sacrifice, it wishes to *be* a sacrifice. Gubaidulina herself said that the entire concerto was an offering<sup>196</sup> In this same optic, the concerto does not speak of Ascension; it is itself an act of ascension.

What we have in Gubaidulina's music, therefore, is not a musical sermon or Oratorio as we find, for example, in Handel's *Messiah*. In the latter, the text claims a hierarchy

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<sup>193</sup> LOSSKY, N., “Principes théologiques de la musique liturgique”, *Contacts*, n.163, 3rd Semester, 1993, p. 205.

<sup>194</sup> KURTZ, M., 2007, *Sofia Gubaidulina : a biography*, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, p. 248.

<sup>195</sup> “(In *Sieben Worte*) there is nothing to suggest a picture; it's only an instrumental symbol”, BYERS, A., CHRISTENSEN, J. (ed.), “Sofia Gubaidulina: Into the Labyrinth of the Soul”, *The Voice of Music: Conversations with Composers of our Time*, p. 50.

<sup>196</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 149.

over the music. The notes serve the words – they underline, emphasize, omit or illustrate them. In the case of *Offertorium* however, there is no text. There is intent to communicate or portray a religious message, as is the case for most sacred music. However, *Offertorium's* medium is quite different for it is not a musical work that is based on or uses a prescribed written passage. It is not a piece that has been formally written for a liturgical service (Divine Liturgy or other). Nor is it a representative or narrative work. If *Offertorium* was inspired by a long tradition of liturgical and sacred music, it has nonetheless remained utterly outside of any given framework of this same tradition, due to its unconventional form.

If *Offertorium* is neither an art of narrative, a work that belongs to the corpus of Russian Orthodox liturgical music, nor a musical sermon, then where is its logical place in the realm of the musico-theological dialogue? If Michael Kurtz's statement, as cited above, is right, then in an Eastern Orthodox spirit, *Offertorium* creates a space that enables a religious experience for the listener through sound, instead of learning or absorbing it through words. The listener witnesses a musical sacrifice; he or she hears the Ascension. As we shall see further on with Lossky, this creation of a spiritual experience through the non-word is in fact a theological endeavour.

Let us return to an essential idea from Chapter Three. *Offertorium* has emerged from a religious climate and is a reflection of the liturgical service of the Russian Orthodox Church. The parishioners are not simply taught about the events of the Gospels; they are meant to relive them. In this, *Offertorium* truly reflects the liturgy's aims: to capture, experience and relive the events of death, sacrifice and ascension in Christ's life. In the same way, the concerto is the artistic result and reflection of the composer's emergence from the Russian Orthodox liturgy.

*Offertorium* therefore serves to *express*, not tell, a religious experience. The sacrifice motif, for example, while emerging from a long liturgical and theological tradition of writings, reflections and ecclesiastical practice, does not communicate these writings per se. It communicates or reenacts the actual act of sacrifice, as note by note the work is offered up. The listener is allowed to hear the sacrifice, audibly experiencing it. It is for this reason that the concerto could be said to incarnate theology and liturgy (and as we shall see later on, the concerto may very well *produce* its own theology). *Offertorium* becomes a space that lives out theology, and allows the listener to witness a spiritual journey, either of the composer or of the music itself. Theology happens through sound, not word. This is *Offertorium's* first contribution to the musico-

theological dialogue: *how* it is being communicated is of equal importance to *what* is being communicated.

Can we put a concerto and a theological text on the same level? Does the medium of wordless music succeed in communicating as strongly and clearly as writings do? This is a difficult question to answer. Typically in Western tradition, the music must serve the text. Text is placed in hierarchy over sound. Epstein comments on this in her work:

“Both Greek and Christian authorities describe musical harmony and order metaphorically in terms of purity and impurity, virtue and sin, carnality and spirituality. To sustain cosmic, human and social harmony, a system of taboos in the realm of musical practices develops. One disciplinary measure at composers' and auditors' disposal would be to assert the primacy of the text. This musico-theological imperative is another hangover from the treatment of music and text as an inseparable unity. Text bridles music's ‘body’, sublimating its erotic pull to higher intellectual ends.”<sup>197</sup>

Epstein proceeds to quote theologians throughout the ages whose works exemplify the quote above. Writers such as Lactantius,<sup>198</sup> Augustine<sup>199</sup> and Luther<sup>200</sup> all assert the advantages and pleasures of sacred music, on the *condition* that it is subservient to the text. It must not omit the text, nor mask it with complicated melodic patterns. According to Epstein, the historical relationship between western academic theology and music is therefore a strained one. Theologians never treat music and theology as equal partners. To suggest that music without words is a valid, complete form or carrier of theology is risky. In the context of this research it is fair to assert that *Offertorium* is rich in theological and liturgical ideas and images, and to this end, without any words at all. However, we have depended on words and text to clarify and deepen our understanding of the music.

<sup>197</sup> EPSTEIN, *Melting the Venusberg...*, p. 15.

<sup>198</sup> “But we have already spoken of spectacles: there remains one thing which is to be overcome by us, that we be not captivated by those things which penetrate to the innermost perception. For all those things which are unconnected with words, that is, pleasant sounds of the air and of strings, may be easily disregarded, because they do not adhere to us, and cannot be written.” LACTANTIUS, *Divine Institutions* 6.21, Skeris, *Chroma Theou*, p. 52.

<sup>199</sup> “Now I confess that I repose just a little in those sounds to which your words give life, when they are sung by sweet and skilled voices...When it happens to me that the song moves me more than the thing sung, I confess I have sinned blamefully and then prefer not to hear the singer.” AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, 10.33, p. 49-50.

<sup>200</sup> “Thus it was not without reason that the fathers and prophets wanted nothing else to be associated as closely as possible with the Word of God as with music...After all, the gift of language combined with the gift of song was only given to man to let him know that he should praise God with both word and music, namely, by proclaiming the Word through music and by providing sweet melodies with words.” LUTHER, M., “Preface to *Symphonie Juncundae (1538)*”, 2007, *Music in the Western World*, eds. WEISS and TARUSKIN, London: Schirmer, p. 103.

The question posed in the above paragraph, therefore is the wrong one. We should not be asking ourselves whether a concerto and a written text could be on the same level of theological communication. Rather, the question should be whether or not a concerto could be a valid and equal player in the theological conversation? The answer is inevitably yes. This is especially clear if we keep in mind the principle that art conveys a theological and liturgical *experience*. This, of course, differs from the text's aims which often mean to explain and discuss a theological idea and principle. *Offertorium* does not explain - it reenacts, it creates imagery. The two aims, while different, depend upon one another. They complement each other. This is why we can look at *Offertorium* as a valid conduit of theology - it is simply not the same type of conduit as a book. Its aims are different.

Nicolas Lossky's thoughts on theology and music will contribute to this dialogue towards answering the question of music and theology.

#### 4.2.1 *Offertorium* as theology incarnate

Interestingly, Russian Orthodox priest and writer Nicolas Lossky speaks of the various sacred art forms (architecture, icons, and music) as having an incarnational role for the Church. He quotes the Second Council of Nicaea in 787 C.E. which states that icons are in accord with the preaching of the Gospels, while insisting that the arguments if Nicaea apply to all art forms of the Church: “(l'icône) est utile pour rendre plus croyable l'Incarnation réelle et non fictive, du Verbe de Dieu...l'Évangile et les icônes ont...la même signification.”<sup>201</sup> If the role of the sermon, writes Lossky, is to announce the Gospel's message, then the sacred arts, more specifically music, are a parallel partner to this mission.<sup>202</sup> Lossky constructs his logic: “la prédication est théologie par excellence”. But there are other forms of theology, writes the author, aside from preaching and teaching. Why does he say this? The answer lies in his Eastern Orthodox definition of theology: “En tenant compte des différentes formes de la théologie, on pourrait en proposer la définition suivante: la théologie est une tentative d'exprimer, pour les besoins de la communication et de l'édification, l'expérience ecclésiale de Dieu.”<sup>203</sup> This definition allows the author to expand theology's medium beyond those

<sup>201</sup> LOSSKY, N., “Principes théologiques...”, *Contacts*, n.163, 3rd Semester, 1993, p. 205.p. 205.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 206.

<sup>203</sup> *Ibid.*



of words, sermon and text. The icons, according to Lossky's logic, are theology incarnate. Therefore, so is music, because it is an expression of the ecclesiastical experience of God.

“Il s'agit d'une 'tentative' à cause de l'inadéquation de toute parole humaine à la plénitude du mystère et de son incapacité à faire autre chose qu'orienter vers le mystère. D'où la nécessaire économie de paroles, la réserve s'impose.”<sup>204</sup>

In the previous section, it was shown that *Offertorium* serves as a space where theology and liturgy are both expressed and experienced. After studying Lossky's reflection on music and theology, we can see that Gubaidulina's may well be a distinctly Orthodox approach to sacred art, differentiating it from other genres of Western sacred art, which are primarily representational and subordinate to the text. In Gubaidulina's case, the problem is that her music does not belong to Russian Orthodox liturgy, and Lossky is clearly speaking of music that does. Nevertheless, just because *Offertorium* was not intended for the Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Eucharistic service, this does not exclude its composer from adopting the artistic and theological approach as described by Nicolas Lossky. After all, *Offertorium* stems from that religious climate, even if the Church did not commission it. In this, Gubaidulina is somewhat akin to Olivier Messiaen's approach - many of his works are deeply theological, and quite steeped in Catholic liturgy even though they are not officially part of the Church's musical corpus. In *Offertorium* there are specific theological and liturgical notions, which stem directly from the ecclesiastical experience and tradition of Russian Orthodoxy. Even without a text, *Offertorium* creates a space for the incarnation of theological principles.

We have seen that Russian Orthodox art aims to incarnate an experience as does *Offertorium*. Lossky's propositions help affirm what was discussed in the previous section - that *Offertorium* is a valid and coherent conduit of theology, and that in the optic of a musico-theological dialogue, this art form, much like the icon, acts as a presence of a spiritual idea.

The next section will explore the specificities of this thesis through the concerto's main theological ideas, that is, sacrifice and ascension.

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<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

### 4.3 *Offertorium* and theology

In Chapter Three, we saw that it was very unlikely that contemporary Orthodox writers directly influenced the composer. However, much like these writers, she was influenced by a liturgical experience. Evdokimov, Schmemmann and Dalmais wrote books about it; Gubaidulina wrote music.

Compositional choices made by the composer demonstrate theological preferences, making Gubaidulina a theologian, and *Offertorium* her message and reflection. While it has been stated that the “how” of *Offertorium* (its ability to become a space where theological and liturgical notions are incarnated and experienced) is already of theological significance, the “what” of the concerto cannot be ignored. There are various elements pertaining to theology, liturgy, ritual and ecclesiology in *Offertorium*. This has already been firmly established. What will now be discussed are the specificities of the theological content of *Offertorium*, and how Gubaidulina's artistic approach and compositional choices have given to the concerto its own interpretive nuances. This is the next step in our exploration of *Offertorium* as its own theological ground.

#### 4.3.1 *Offertorium* and a theology of sacrifice

As was explored in the first two sections, the idea of sacrifice in *Offertorium* is not simply stated, it is experienced or incarnated. The following section will review what this entails, theologically.

Following Heidi Epstein's method of intertextuality, the composer's words, complementary theological material and the music itself are pulled into dialogue. This three-way conversation reveals *Offertorium*'s roots in Russian Orthodox liturgical life and theological worldview.

In Chapter Two, the sacrifice motif was analyzed and explained. As Bach's Royal Theme is reduced, note-by-note, the entire theme is eventually “offered up”. It returns, in the final section of the concerto, “transfigured”, in the words of the artist. The theme is unrecognizable, having been retrograded and its rhythm patterns altered. From the

musical analysis and from Gubaidulina's interviews, it was possible to deduce that there was a strong spiritual and religious backdrop to *Offertorium's* architecture around the theme of sacrificial offering. In Chapter Three, we saw how an Orthodox definition of sacrificial offering parallels that of *Offertorium's* approach to sacrifice. Alexander Schmemmann's definition of a cycle of offering through the Eucharist describes what is happening theologically during the liturgical service. Christ is offered, Christ is given back.<sup>205</sup>

There are two things which remain to be said regarding the concerto's theology of sacrifice. First, compositional choices reflect the composer's theological affiliations. Schmemmann spoke in theological terms of a cycle of offering during the Eucharistic service. Musically, *Offertorium's* sacrificial motif also undergoes a cycle: it is offered up and then it is given back to the score. Compositional choices in this concerto parallel theological principles. If we return to Nicolas Lossky's definition of theology, which claims that theology is an expression of an ecclesiastic experience of God, we clearly see that Gubaidulina's compositional choices do just this. The musical elements and construct of the score reflect an understanding and reading of a particular line of sacrificial theology. The concerto delivers a stream of thought that emerges from an Eucharistic experience of sacrifice. *Offertorium* is the interpreter, the conduit of this experience; the music retrieves its definition of sacrifice from this Orthodox ritual, and its theological affiliations lie therein.

Second, that the composer's intent is for *Offertorium* to be a sacrifice supports the argument that this work of music is an incarnation of theological principle. The concerto does not simply portray sacrifice; the theme is actually sacrificed, one note at a time. The work was born out of a desire to make an offering. Because it does not serve a text, but an idea, the music can actually become the idea that it serves. The entire construct of *Offertorium* demonstrates that the theology behind it is not simply a source of inspiration, but a real, living organism within the music, present in every measure, phrase and section. Thus, the dialogue of musical practice and theological knowledge and intent contributed to *Offertorium's* creation. But what we have within the concerto is not a simple dialogue of practices and disciplines. In this case music and theology feed one another, and one exists through the other. It is because of this coexistence of the two media that we can argue that *Offertorium* is its own theological ground.

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<sup>205</sup> SCHMEMMANN, A. 1970, *For the Life of the World*, Crestwood, St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, p. 35.

Therefore, *Offertorium*, through its reflection of and affiliation with an Orthodox theology of sacrifice, and its incarnation of this sacrifice, demonstrates the concerto's actual becoming its own theological space.

#### 4.3.2 Images of Cross-sufferings

It could be difficult for some auditors to fully accept *Offertorium* as being full of sacred meaning, such as the composer claims, for aesthetic reasons. The work is full of harsh, tearing sounds, violent passages, abrupt unresolved chords and a middle section in which a long cello solo evokes a melancholic, almost tragic melody. Only in the last section, the ascension passage, does the music begin to sound remotely similar to that of the familiar church hymnody. This “problem” could evoke a series of questions: for instance, what exactly defines sacred music? Must music sound a certain way just because it derives from the realm of the sacred? For the intentions of this project, those questions will not be discussed at length. Let it suffice to say that music that is theologically-oriented need not necessarily correspond to a specifically sacred style. It is not because *Offertorium*'s ideas stem from a religious climate that the concerto must imitate religious music. This being said, the “cross-sufferings” section (as named by Gubaidulina) of *Offertorium* deserves our attention both for its aesthetic and theological value.

The middle passage, as was observed in both Chapters Two and Three, is full of symbols of the crucifixion. Chapter Two analyzed the various images and symbols both in musical motif work and in the architecture of the score. Chapter Three revealed that though the cross has a specific significance and place in the Orthodox liturgy, it is very much a universal symbol in all of Christendom. This is one area where Gubaidulina demonstrates a nuanced reading of the crucifixion, one that is not entirely typically Orthodox. In doing so, she demonstrates her ability for theological independence and creativity. Michael Kurtz discusses Gubaidulina's approach to her works, *St. John Easter* and *St. John Passion*, and its parallels to *Offertorium*.

“What Gubaidulina presented in *Offertorium* as the central issues of Christianity - sacrifice; submission of individual will and ego to a higher purpose; a life of suffering and pain - was to be rendered more completely in her new composition based on the Passion and Resurrection. The Orthodox Church's celebration of the mercy and joy of the Resurrection vanquishing death contrasts rather sharply with the

Western (especially Protestant) emphasis on suffering, sacrifice and death. For Gubaidulina, both traditions are of great importance, with sacrifice and suffering possibly placed more in the foreground. Her balanced approach made it impossible for her to compose a work of dogmatic Orthodoxy. As she later explained, ‘The chasm between the two faiths saddens me deeply. Jesus lives in our hearts, not in dogmatic systems. That's why I decided to write a work that transcends divisions over dogma. As an artist, because I am responsible only to myself, all that matters is that I am true to myself.’<sup>206</sup>

Kurtz's statements are very pertinent. First of all, we can see that the composer not only desires, but is capable, of creating a balanced approach to certain theological issues, drawing from more than one Christian tradition. This supports the argument that Gubaidulina's compositional choices reflect theological preferences. She has not only sculpted a work of art - she is the architect of an original, unique theological construct.

Second, the quotes above support what was discussed in Chapter Three on the issue of Gubaidulina's understanding of the cross and crucifixion. For Gubaidulina, the element of suffering, which falls under the “horizontal” category, is of great musical and theological importance. It is present in more than one work (*Sieben Worte* and the *St. John Passion*, to name only two). In *Offertorium*, it takes up a great part of the score. The images of cross-suffering are rooted not in mysticism but in a very physical, earthly element of the Christ narrative. The Orthodox liturgy, while never denying this aspect, is focused heavenward and therefore more interested in the mystical, otherworldly realm.

It is not as important to debate the implications of Gubaidulina's theology of the cross so much as it is to consider that she never fully affiliated herself with one specific dogma or system of theology. While this thesis has maintained from the beginning that *Offertorium* emerges largely from an experience of Orthodox liturgy, this does not omit the possibility that Gubaidulina's work moves beyond the framework of any one theological tradition, thus proving once again the composer's creative and unconventional approach to the musico-theological dialogue. No passage in *Offertorium* demonstrates this better than the middle one. The music is rooted in liturgical tradition and religious climate, but it is not a slave to it. Gubaidulina's music holds in it surprise elements that do not belong to any one tradition, but a combination of them. This shows us that the composer has truly thought about her beliefs.

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<sup>206</sup> KURTZ, *Sofia Gubaidulina...*, p. 250.

The roughness of the cross-suffering section, as discussed above, could be explained by the same arguments. Just as the composer showed originality in her theological construct, so her approach to her music that is meant to be religious. It is not full of typical, familiar “church” sounds, except for the end. Once again this tells us that Gubaidulina does not obey the conventional rules of any dogmatic system. A concerto that is full of theological influences and sacred meaning is at the same time abrupt, densely harsh and languidly sad. It is atypical, but it conveys a profoundly unique understanding and an original reading of Christian principles and Orthodox liturgy.

#### 4.3.2 *Offertorium* and a theology of ascension

As is the case with a theology of sacrifice, this research relies heavily upon an intertextual method so as to unveil the concerto's theology of ascension. Much like sacrifice, *Offertorium* does not simply state ascension, it becomes an ascension. The following section will look at its theological significance.

In Chapter Two, the analysis revealed a long ascending line expanding over more than 100 measures. Furthermore, the retrograded sacrifice motif returns as the supporting base for this ascending melody. Of equal interest is the presence of the bell-timbre (through prepared piano and glockenspiel), which points to a strong musical influence from the Russian Orthodox Church.

In Chapter Three, we studied an Orthodox theology of ascension. The writings of Alexander Schmemmann once again provided valuable insight. The Eucharistic service, wrote Schmemmann, is one long act of passage<sup>207</sup> towards a world to come and commune with Christ. Chapter Three also discussed the conviction, as explained by Olivier Clément, that the liturgy participates in the *parousia*, the coming of the kingdom of God. In this sense, the movement towards Heaven is two-fold, and cyclical: the partakers of the Eucharist are pulled into the Kingdom of God, and as they participate in the liturgy, the Kingdom is moved down amongst them.

The research so far has argued that Gubaidulina's theological affiliations lay primarily within an Orthodox vision of ascension, as demonstrated through its liturgical life. Several elements in the concerto demonstrate this. First, the architecture of the

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<sup>207</sup> SCHMEMMANN, “Theology and...”*St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No. 4, Winter 1961, p. 18.

concerto is significant, as the ascension passage is placed at the end of the work. The music builds up to this point, ending on an upward movement. This is similar to the Orthodox liturgical idea - that the congregants are moving to the *eschaton*, the meeting of Christ in Heaven. It is an upward movement. Second, the presence of the bells (an important sound for Eastern Orthodox culture), or at least the combination of instruments made to sound like bells, matched with the hymnal lines held by the solo violin constitute an important moment in the concerto as its form and aesthetic resemble Russian Orthodox hymnody. The fact that the concerto is made to sound like Church music supports the composer's claim that its meaning is that of church music<sup>208</sup>: a meaning, which, in Russian Orthodoxy, lies with its desire for communion with Christ through the Eucharist and in the Ascension. Music, for the Orthodox parishioner, is an enabler for a meeting with God.<sup>209</sup> In this sense, it aids the liturgical agenda, which is to pull the partakers of the Eucharist into the kingdom of God so as to commune with Him. Therefore, this section of *Offertorium* is rather important both musically and theologically because of how much it aligns with the mission of the Russian Orthodox Eucharistic service.

As was the case with a theology of sacrifice, there are significant theological elements to underscore from this study, which can contribute to the musico-theological dialogue. First of all, similarly to what was stated in the previous section, Gubaidulina makes a clear theological preference in her ascension passage. It is an interpretation of ascension that lies within the realm of Orthodox liturgy. With the examples listed above, we can see that *Offertorium's* musical body stems from a distinctly Orthodox theological comprehension of a liturgical experience of the ascension. By this very fact - that the concerto embraces a specifically Russian Orthodox nuance of the theology of ascension - the validity of *Offertorium* as a conduit of theological thought is demonstrated. Compositional choices in this concerto were a reflection of theological ones. In this, we see that a theological knowledge and reflection were necessary in order for this musical creation to exist.

Second, the last section of *Offertorium* is concerned with creating a musical space, an ambiance. There is an obvious rupture with the violent, abrupt passages of the previous sections, which Paul Griffiths likened to the “ruthless tearing of a page from its

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<sup>208</sup> MCBURNEY, G., March 1998, “Encountering Gubaidulina”, *Musical Times*, vol. 129, n. 1741, p. 123.

<sup>209</sup> STEFANOVIC, D., 1998, “The Theological Dimension of Liturgical Music from an Orthodox Perspective”, *Studia Liturgica*, vol. 28, n. 1, p. 33.

book”.<sup>210</sup> As the ascension passage begins, the listener is brought into another world. With this, the composer not only creates a piece that is inspired by the meaning of the Orthodox liturgical ceremony, but that actually seeks to reproduce its same effect. The concerto's form and content run parallel to that of Orthodox liturgy, so much that it eventually imitates and creates the same ascending space, through sound and notes, that influenced its creative process in the first place. This is perhaps the most significant, or most obvious, element from Gubaidulina's creative process that stems from her Orthodox worldview. There is both conviction and intent in her art: conviction because there is a specific worldview (in this case Orthodox liturgy and theology) at work in her creative process, and intent because this worldview is not only an influence but also an actor in the concerto. There is an effort to contribute to the liturgy's mission, to create alongside it, to expand its presence beyond the church building to the concert hall. Chapter Three explored a theology of Church music as a contributor to the ascending journey toward a meeting with God. Schmemmann writes that Church hymnody is a copy of the heavenly archetype<sup>211</sup>. With this, he affirms that one of the purposes of church music is to become an actor in the experience of the eschaton. When Gubaidulina said that contemporary music was not accepted within the context of traditional church services, yet she still wanted to participate,<sup>212</sup> it is fair to claim that this desire to participate was a driving force behind the aesthetic of the ascension passage in *Offertorium*. The concerto aligns itself with the purpose described by Schmemmann. Without belonging to the body of Orthodox hymnody it seeks the same end - to participate in the Kingdom of God as experienced in the Eucharist.

Finally, much like the case of the sacrificial offering, this final section in *Offertorium* does not simply represent an idea; it incarnates it. The entire 100 final measures are built on the violin's solo ascending line. The listener is pulled into this different sound space. In this case, the concerto does not simply state the ascension, it becomes an ascension. It pulls the listener into the experience, without explanation or theological rhetoric. Once again, Lossky's definition of theology, as an expression of the liturgical experience of God, allows for music to actually be theology, not just to support it. *Offertorium* proves just this: through the various elements of Russian Orthodoxy that were pillars in its creative process, and through the conviction and intent in the

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<sup>210</sup> GRIFFITHS, P., “Music: Apostle of Inner Struggle and Redemption”, *The New York Times*, April 25<sup>th</sup>, 1999, p. 2.

<sup>211</sup> SCHMEMMANN, A. 1975, *Introduction to Liturgical Theology*, New York: St. Vladimir's Press, p. 168.

<sup>212</sup> LUKOMSKY, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, 1998, p. 31.



ascension passage, this work of music becomes a living entity of the theology of ascension.

#### 4.4 *Offertorium* and the participation in liturgy

While the concept of *Offertorium* as an act of liturgical participation was stated in the previous section, it is worth being further explored. Dimitrije Stefanovic, Orthodox priest and theologian, explains his view of participation of the Orthodox parishioner:

“Someone unfamiliar with the Orthodox Church may think that since the liturgy is sung by the clergy and the choir, the remaining congregation does not participate in the service. Participation need not always be active. The opposite of active is not passive; it can be contemplative.”<sup>213</sup>

As Stefanovic stated, the liturgical service may outwardly seem like it requires no great participation from the congregation because the priests and choirs carry so much of it. This perception would be theologically unfounded however, as ideologically the liturgy depends greatly upon the congregation's appropriation of it. As the theologians cited in Chapter Three argued, the liturgical life is not meant to be static, but dynamic. Schmemmann's theology of liturgy supports this. His ideas regarding sacrifice in the liturgy are entirely dependant upon the Russian Orthodox parishioner taking ownership of it. This entails that the service's elements and rituals are meant to be constantly renewing their relevance for the Orthodox believer, which brings us back to the initial argument in the previous chapter that the purpose of liturgy is not for tradition's sake. It is rooted in history but it is not obsolete, (or at least it should not be so). The liturgy, while pulling in elements and events that happened in history, does not simply reminisce, but relives, in present time and context. For this principle to be rendered possible, the participation of the congregants is necessary, both in body and imagination. This is where Stefanovic's idea of contemplative participation is especially relevant. The rituals are given life through the Orthodox believer's presence, comprehension and reflection. For Stefanovic's and Schmemmann's desires to become a reality, the congregants must understand and be aware of what they are doing in the service. This is why Schmemmann had a personal mission to educate parishioners on the

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<sup>213</sup> STEFANOVIC, 1998, “The Theological Dimension...”, *Studia Liturgica*, vol. 28, n. 1, p. 42.

theological weight and significance behind liturgy and ritual, and why Stefanovic pleaded for contemplation as a contribution to ecclesiastical life.

Gubaidulina's concerto, and perhaps even her entire musical corpus may be regarded as a theological contribution to this contemplative participation as described by Stefanovic. *Offertorium* has demonstrated a strong link to Eastern Orthodox liturgy, whose elements are intrinsic to the very structure and aesthetic of the concerto. The composer necessarily had to have a grasp of and an affiliation with the liturgical service and its more complex theological overtones. The concerto is a result of these elements having been appropriated, reflected on and transmitted through an original work. It was a personal, individual offering which joins a larger tradition of liturgical life in an unconventional manner.

There is a somewhat strange tension in *Offertorium* in regards to its relationship to the tradition of church music. As has already been stated, there is ample evidence that the concerto is rooted in sacred thought and activity, and yet it is a work that does not and cannot belong to the Church. Gubaidulina has commented on this:

“Of course, we can write religious works, but only as our own fantasy. We never aspire to bring them to the church. And I don't aspire to either. But I strongly want to participate. I feel a great desire to realize my religious needs within art.”<sup>214</sup>

Throughout her various interviews, Gubaidulina often speaks of two things: a contemplative or imaginative participation in the liturgy, much in the spirit of Stefanovic's or Schmemmann's definitions of participative presence, and of an appreciation for the liturgical service that translates into her creative process and in the very aesthetics of her music. The concerto is therefore both an offering and an act of participation. Gubaidulina, as a parishioner and partaker in the Eucharist, equally demonstrates her ability as a thinker and actor in the Eastern Orthodox liturgy and theological conversation. The congregants participate with their bodily presence at the Eucharist. Gubaidulina does so with her music. Her motivation may also stream from her desire to recreate a definition of religion through her music.

“I understand the word ‘religion’ in its direct meaning: as *re-ligio* (*re-legato*), that is, a restoration of *legato* between me (my soul) and God. By means of my religious activity [and my musical activity] I restore this

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<sup>214</sup> LUKOMSKY, 1998, “My desire...”, *Perspectives on New Music*, vol. 36, n. 1, p. 31.

interrupted connection.”<sup>215</sup>

This thought underlines the composer's view of religious practice through music. If one of the purposes of religion is restoration, then music and liturgy find common ground through a common mission. What is accomplished through the liturgy, that is, a connection with God, Gubaidulina also seeks to accomplish through her concerto. In this sense, *Offertorium* has a double task. First, it is a participative action in the liturgy on the part of the composer. Second, it imitates the intention of the liturgy, which is, according to the composer, to restore a broken connection with God.

#### 4.5 Conclusion

This chapter opens up many questions, and ventures into many fields of discussion in an effort to evaluate *Offertorium's* potential of incarnating a theological ground. This implies that this work of music could be in and of itself a space for communicating theological principles and generating theological dialogue.

To aid this final step, the research depended on Heidi Epstein's method of intertextuality, using a variety of different sources to formulate a complete reflection. From these sources, we drew theological reflection and conclusions, by judging what the music and the composer were demonstrating. Epstein's critique of the traditional musico-theological imperative of text dominating music was also very useful.

First, we addressed the issue that the *Offertorium* is to convey theological principles and notion despite the fact that it is a concerto, and that it works with no words or text. The point was made that art forms, particularly Russian Orthodox art forms, fulfill a purpose in expressing and symbolizing, rather than telling or preaching theology. Thus the concerto, while it does not retell the Gospel story nor does it preach a sermon, is nonetheless a valid and equal actor in the theological conversation because it expresses liturgical action and musically incarnates biblical and religious events and principles. Equally helpful was Nicolas Lossky's work on the functions of sacred music. Lossky opened up the definition of theology, claiming that it is in fact the expression of an ecclesiastical experience of God. In this sense, the icons incarnate theology, and so does

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<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 33.

the music. Even if Lossky was referring to music intended for the liturgical services, this definition can be applied to *Offertorium* for its creation is due to an emergence from an ecclesiastical experience with God, much like the creation of written works by theologians.

Following this, specific theological matters treated in the concerto were addressed. Concepts such as sacrifice, the cross and the ascension were discussed. Two things of interest arose in this section. First, as to *Offertorium* actually incarnating theological principle, there are certain concepts in the concerto that are brought to life, acted out and experienced through the musical score. This is obvious with the sections of sacrifice and ascension. The music does not state sacrifice, or talk about sacrifice, the music actually is sacrificed. This is not a case of explaining a theological idea; we are experiencing a theological idea. The listener also experiences a musical ascension. Instead of learning of it, he or she could live it, over a 100-measure-long section of the concerto. Thus *Offertorium* exemplifies Lossky's conviction that theology could manifest itself under the form of music, as it is an expression of an ecclesiastical experience. This is a different type of theological conduit. It is experiential rather than narrative or explanatory.

Second, it was argued that Gubaidulina's specific compositional choices reflect theological ones. This demonstrates the composer's ability to interpret, create and communicate an original theological construct, and that *Offertorium* could be one of these original constructs. In analyzing the images of cross-sufferings of the concerto, this was an example of Gubaidulina's strengths not only as a composer but as someone capable of thinking theologically. It was revealed that the composer's interest in the physical pain and suffering of Christ have more to do with personal conviction and a desire to connect to the 'horizontal' (earthly and human) aspect of life than it does with Church dogma. This is not an element that is inspired from Orthodox teachings or liturgy. Rather Gubaidulina draws from other Christian traditions out of a desire to create a balanced theological approach to her music and to express what is important to her own personal spirituality. In this case, expressing Christ's sacrifice on the cross means giving attention to his suffering. The middle section of *Offertorium* underscores this and demonstrates clear preferences and specific interpretations on the composer's behalf. It is because of these nuances and compositional choices that we can appreciate *Offertorium* as being a carrier of a particular and original theological content.

Finally, it was argued that *Offertorium* is an act of participation in the liturgy for two reasons. First, participation in the liturgy need not happen during the service. As Dimitrije Stefanovic pointed out, it could be participation in a larger scope. Gubaidulina verbalizes a desire to participate in the life of the Church, even though her music could not be played there. Hers is an offering that transcends the Sunday service. Second, the intention of the concerto mirrors that of the liturgy - to create a connection with God, where there is brokenness. These two elements give to the concerto its driving force behind its creative process.

As all of these elements come together, the driving question must still be whether or not *Offertorium* can be its own theological ground. My answer is yes; but only with the understanding that theology can manifest itself under more than one form. *Offertorium* will not and cannot convey, in academic detail and rigour, what *The Eucharist* by Alexander Schmemmann or *L'Orthodoxie* by Paul Evdokimov does. Nor was it meant to. The works by contemporary theologians were engaged in this dialogue so that we could fully grasp the concerto's various influences and elements. But *Offertorium* has neither the same intentions, audiences, nor medium as a theological text. Music and book should not be compared as to how capable each medium is of adequately communicating an idea. What can be stated is, that based on the findings of this research, *Offertorium* contains unique and creative theological content, musically expresses spiritual experiences, offers itself as a work of art, in participation with a liturgical life. Its theological work expands beyond the ecclesiastical realm. It is, in its own space, an initiator of reflection and conversation in the musico-theological dialogue.

## Conclusion

This thesis set out to explore the musico-theological dialogue through Sofia Gubaidulina's discourse and art. *Offertorium* provided a medium that is rich in both theological and musical material. This aided the objectives of the project, which were to verify how music and theological worldview inform one another and to explore the capacity of a concerto being able to act as its own theological space.

Chapter One introduced the musico-theological dialogue. We reviewed its authors, its problematic and some recent endeavors surrounding it. As far as studies pertaining to Sofia Gubaidulina and *Offertorium* were concerned, the research was found to be unbalanced. While musicologists are interested in the religious backdrop of her works - which by all standards is impossible to ignore - there was, so far, a real lack of theological depth and research when her compositions are studied. Thus the need for an interdisciplinary analysis was articulated - an approach that would be rigorous and balanced, one that accorded as much attention to the musicological factors as the theological ones. As a result, it was decided that Heidi Epstein's method of intertextuality would be engaged for the purposes of this project. There were two reasons for this: first, Epstein offered an approach that was rigorous and interdisciplinary. Second, she demonstrated, the possibility of extracting and exploring original theological principles in the music itself using an intertextual method, rather than establishing a theological notion beforehand and using the music to support or prove it.

Chapter Two divided its focus in two ways. First, a study of the religious, theological and liturgical themes in Sofia Gubaidulina's discourse (through her writings and interviews), and second, an analysis of *Offertorium* - its thematic work, core structure, musical imagery and symbols which were especially tied to the theological streams of thought in the composer's discourse. Many things came out of this study: for instance, Gubaidulina's profound sense of attachment to the notions of sacred time and to the Eucharist. The analysis of the concerto also revealed many interesting elements, not the least of which was a musical theme of sacrifice upon which the entire structure of *Offertorium* was built. Also remarkable was the long ascension passage in the final third of the concerto, which holds many nuances of sacred Orthodox music. It was concluded that *Offertorium* is a work that is profoundly influenced and shaped by a theological worldview rooted primarily in Russian Orthodoxy and its liturgical life.

Chapter Three ventured into an exploration of contemporary Eastern Orthodox theology and drew out from its writings similar themes to those of *Offertorium* that were discussed in Chapter Two. Parallels were proposed between those authors' discourses and those of the composer. It was concluded that it is unlikely that Gubaidulina was directly influenced by 20<sup>th</sup> century Orthodox theologians. However, her concerto emerged from a religious climate - that of Russian Orthodox liturgy - just as Evdokimov, Schmemmann or Lossky have emerged from this climate, thus the many points of similarity between the theological themes in *Offertorium* and those in the writings of these authors.

Chapter Four had two aims. The first was to explore the validity of *Offertorium* as a conductor of theological thought and the second as a creator of original theological material, rendering the concerto its own theological grounds. From the research, much of which was executed in Chapter Two's analysis brings the conclusion that this concerto is indeed capable of portraying theological themes. This was demonstrated clearly through the concerto's sacrificial motif, for instance, as well as through the ascension section.

Furthermore, what is especially remarkable is what Gubaidulina was capable of communicating through music in terms of unique theological principle. *Offertorium's* depiction of the crucifixion, for instance, is much more rooted in a physical, material understanding of Christ's death (focusing on the sufferings of Christ) than what is usually emphasized through Russian Orthodox theology. In this sense, some of *Offertorium's* theology clearly differentiates itself from the mainstream Orthodox tradition in which it is rooted.

At the very least, *Offertorium* demonstrates that it is possible to communicate theology through other means than the textbook. The theological ideas in this concerto are experienced, not spoken or explained. In fact, all of *Offertorium's* theological content depends on communication through experience (the sound, the concert, the creative process), for the concerto has no lyrics and therefore cannot be communicated through words or narrative.

This may be the concerto's most valuable contribution to the musico-theological dialogue: the notion that theology can be a question of experience instead of a textually transmitted medium. In Gubaidulina's music, ascension, sacrifice and cross-sufferings are experienced through sound and the ritual of the concert; not preached, told or narrated in writing. As was revealed in Chapter Four through the writings of Nicholas

Lossky, this principle may well correspond with a Russian Orthodox view of art, liturgy and its theological value: that theology, writes Lossky, may be an expression of an ecclesiastic experience of God. How this experience or encounter is expressed need not limit itself to one single medium or material.

To be sure, such a statement has its limits. For one thing, this entire process required the use of non-musical medium. Theological writings, texts, interviews with the composer and musicological notes were absolutely vital to understanding not only the musico-theological dialogue, but the concerto itself. It would be faulty, therefore, to assume that one could extract the same epistemological, philosophical and detailed reflections from a work of music as from a written work of theology. To do so would be missing the point. As was underlined in the above paragraph, *Offertorium*'s theological contributions are those of expression, experience and climate. They are different from those communicated in books, but arguably as important.

If we are to accept this notion, then the musico-theological dialogue can open up very new and interesting directions. Works of music may be valued as contributors and actors in the theological forum. This can be true regardless of whether or not the piece has lyrics, as *Offertorium* demonstrated, for its philosophical and theological content traversed even its core structure, instrumentation and musical motives. This also pulls into question the tradition of rendering the melody subservient to the text. In this line of musico-theological dialogue, music and text are equal (yet different) players.



## Annex A – Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina

Paris. July 11<sup>th</sup> 2008.

Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina, transcription and translation by Nathalie Kourscheva.

**Jenna Smith:** Religion is a theme that comes back over and over again in your work and in your interviews. Could you explain the importance of religious themes in your life?

**Sofia Gubaidulina:** *Religion is the fundamental moment in my life, because religiousness gives us a chance to obtain a constant measurement in life. I have my own specific definition for this - the horizontal and the vertical. The religious symbol of the cross is very important to me. A cross appears in almost all of my compositions.*

*With the loss of religion, human society gradually loses this ability. Human society becomes flat - that is, it can only move along the horizontal line in causative-consecutive direction. This is not enough to be a human. One has to have a vertical line in life, and religion plays a fundamental role in allowing humanity to rise to an absolute truth, to some moment of perfection. A human cannot reach perfection, and he is not perfect, but the vertical dimension constantly calls on a human to be perfect. And it is important for a human being to have this second dimension in life. Without religiousness it is very difficult and gradually one loses this “vertical” of his existence. From my point of view it is very important for humans to preserve this vertical.*

**JS-** When did these thoughts begin for you? Was it during your childhood?

**SG:** *With regards to my personal approach to this question, I myself still don't know from where this religiousness came to me. I was born into a non-religious family and in a God-fighting country, that is, in an absolutely secular country with a totalitarian regime where religiousness of any kind, not only Russian Orthodoxy, but any religiousness was almost forbidden and even dangerous. In my country, at the time when I was growing up, churches existed but they existed for elderly people.*

*In that society it (religion) was a dying structure. For a young person who had children, it was dangerous if a child revealed religious inclinations, and this is what happened in my family. From somewhere, and I don't know where, because nobody took me to church, nobody spoke to me about God, but from somewhere, my musical ability came to me together with religiousness. I imagined the divine substance through sound, through my observation of the sky.*

*I remember something that happened to me at a very early age, five or six years old, and it was very dangerous for my family. I was attending a music school and we were renting a small apartment in a small house for the summer. In the corner there was an icon. And it was amazing - I recognized God's image on the icon. I told my biographer of this: I did recognize the face of God. In my childlike imagination it existed somehow as a mystery, and I still cannot understand how I was able to recognize God's image. I asked my parents, my mother in particular, and she got very scared that a child would show such interest for an icon, to the point that my family and I moved out of that apartment. We rented another apartment and I understood that I was no longer to talk about these things.*

*But that theme (religiousness) went on existing in my soul and it was combined for me with musical practice. And the sky was very present for me. The thing is, my family was very poor. My father was an engineer and the son of a mullah, so he lived in constant fear of losing his job. My family was poor and our environment was rather colourless, unattractive. We lived in a big city; there were no trees, no flowers in our yard, just a bare yard. There were no toys, not enough books that could give a child inspiration or spiritual food. And so all my imagination turned to the sky. In the sky, in its clouds and stars I have found life. It was life in its higher sphere, where I could rise. And this was salvation. I now view this as "gaining richness from poverty".*

*I compare my experience with a child now who has everything. He has so many toys that they no longer bring him joy and so many books that he cannot read them all. "Poverty from richness" occurs.*

*Richness from poverty happens, but in my case, from poverty, richness arose: richness of the sky, from the sound of the piano. Nothing was overshadowing this highness. I think it was my luck to be born in a poor family and not a well-off one.*

**JS:** How did your spirituality influence *Offertorium*?

**SG:** *By all means, it is a spiritual work. I won't hide that here the notion of sacrifice was revealed to me. Guidon Kramer was an inspiration for this work, he gave me the push to do it. He is the one who brought me into the spotlight with this composition. It was destiny.*

*I saw him perform, and with his performance, his relation to his instrument, his fingers to the strings, he opened up to me the religious meaning of "sacrifice". For a long time I didn't understand why a human in ancient times could offer the most beautiful girl as a sacrifice to God. What was it? And then I realized that a sacrifice was ultimately necessary for the highest subject.*

*The sacrifice is made by an artist to art, from his soul to a sound in the moment fingers touch the string. And this is the point of unification with the highest, the creator. It is not important what we call it. Hegel called it an "absolute truth". It is the most perfect thing that can be achieved. And it can be expressed. This is the kind of spirituality in this composition.*

**JS:** How does this spiritual understanding of sacrifice translate into the specific musical and technical elements of the concerto?

**SG:** *The theme of sacrifice is created here structurally, as if Bach's theme gives itself away as a sacrifice: it reduces itself. This is a symbol of sacrifice. It is expressed not through sound but in structure, in the formation of the work. In the course of the first part of the variation, where the theme brings itself as a sacrifice in order to give the composition its order, "cross" is used in a metaphysical context. The theme offers itself as a sacrifice to bring order and then to reappear in the third part again in another form, and this is a "cross".*

*In many works, I returned to the theme of the cross and I could demonstrate it - in *Sieben Worte* (1979), for instance, or *In Croce* (1982) the cross is realized through sound. In my composition *Music for Flute, Strings and Percussion* (1994), there was also the symbol of the cross, through the tuning. The upper strings were tuned a quarter of a tone higher than the lower strings. They meet and pass through each other, thus crossing each other. That is one of the variations of the theme of the cross as realized in later works.*

*There is no such "cross" in *Offertorium*, nevertheless there is a metaphysical cross, when the theme brings itself as a sacrifice to provide an order to a creative work.*

**JS:** Do you think the audience, the listener, can hear what you are describing? For you are offering very rich and deep explanations of the world behind *Offertorium*, its structure and symbolism. Do you believe the auditor can grasp all of this? And does it even matter whether or not he can?

**SG:** *If a listener is a very attentive one, he can certainly imagine the cross. But he can listen to this work without being able to understand this, because a work consists of not only this structural idea which holds the whole work together from the inside, but of many connotational layers.*

*In a similar way, oriental people speak about the seventy layers of the Koran. Certainly not a single person, not even a religious one, will perceive the sixty-seventh layer of the Koran, but the first layer, the first layer he will grasp very well. And this is sufficient for entering the sphere of the divine revelation.*

**JS:** You have mentioned in the past Berdiaev as an influence.

**SG:** *Berdiaev is a very important figure for me in philosophy, especially Russian philosophy. He has a particular work about relation to art. His perception of the notion of freedom is of utmost importance to me. I cannot say he directly influenced *Offertorium*, but rather my keenness on religion, philosophy and poetry.*

**JS:** What other influences or elements are important to your creative process?

**SG:** *I have many different influences which are combined into one unity and help me produce my individual approach.*

*At this moment (the moment of composition) I forget everything - all the philosophers and all the composers. At the moment when I begin to compose I forget it all. I am alone, as if all my impressions, from life and from art, from religion - they are distant to me. It's like they are a ladder leading me up to a higher floor. And I climbed that ladder up to that floor and stopped there, and the ladder then disappears, everything disappears. I am left in a risky situation, all by myself, alone, vis-à-vis the universe itself. Maybe I hear the universe and I hear myself at this moment. I have to forget everything in order to compose a piece.*

**JS:** You are presently working on a piece<sup>216</sup> - could you talk about it?

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<sup>216</sup> *Glorious Percussion*, 2008, work for percussion and orchestra.

**SG:** *This is a very important piece to me. Many of my new perceptions, ideas are in this work. It is built around pulsation. Pulsation links music together. I have discovered a particular moment, which can link music to the universal order. Each interval brings to life a different tone. This tone pulsates and a simple acoustic resonance takes place. A million structural ideas emerge from this interrelation of tones and intervals.*

*My composition produces this concept. This means it is possible for a particular interval to pulsate and for us not to hear it. It exists in nature, it exists in the universe, and the projection of this pulsation in a work of art is, in my opinion, an amazing phenomenon and one which exists and connects us to the universe.*

*A solo group of percussionists perform this piece. I bring them in front of the orchestra and they sit in the front. There are three episodes where the orchestra stops, and only one chord resonates. Before that, the orchestra played the chord and it was very accentuated. Then everything stops and it is carried out in pianissimo, and suddenly the chord pulsates in vibrations that were in the chord. The link between the pulsation and the chord for me is a revelation that wants to be developed, continued. There are so many possibilities, it is incredible.*

*Besides that, there are many other ideas. There is the idea of accelerating and retarding. If we accelerate the tempo very gradually, for example, just taa-ta-ta (sings the tempo going faster and faster) and then faster and faster. Acceleration happens consequently, and then we obtain an “overtone row”. It’s an amazing phenomenon that links music to space. If we use the ritardando further and further, it creates the “undertone row”.*

**JS:** Thank you so much for taking the time to meet with me.

## Annex B- Illustrations

Figure 1. *In croce*. Score in shape of the cross.

The image displays a musical score for the piece "In croce". The score is arranged in a cross shape, with the vertical staffs on the left and the horizontal staffs at the top. The instruments listed on the left are: Vc. solo, Bajan, Vni I (Violin I), Vni II (Violin II), Vle (Viola), Vc. (Violoncello), and Cb. (Contrabasso). The top staff is labeled "Vc. solo" and includes a tempo marking of  $J = 48$  and a rehearsal mark "21" with a boxed "2". The score consists of multiple staves for each instrument, with dynamic markings such as *p* (piano), *mp* (mezzo-piano), and *f* (forte) indicating volume changes. The music is written in a single system, with the vertical staves on the left and the horizontal staves at the top, creating a cross-like layout.

Figure 2. First eight measures of *Offertorium*.

Musical score for the first eight measures of the *Offertorium*. The score is in 2/4 time with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 54$ . The woodwind section consists of 2 Flauti (Flutes), 2 Fagotti (Bassoons), 3 Corni (F) (Trumpets in F), 3 Trombe (B) (Trumpets in B), and 3 Tromboni (Trombones). The brass section consists of 3 Corni (F), 3 Trombe (B), and 3 Tromboni. The woodwinds play a melodic line starting with a half note, followed by quarter notes. The brass section provides harmonic support with sustained notes. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *mf* with a fermata. Performance instructions include "I solo" for the flutes and bassoons, and "I solo con sord." (I solo with mutes) for the trumpets and trombones.

Musical score for the entrance of the violin at n.1. The score shows the first measure of the violin part, which begins with a trill on E-F. The woodwind section (Cor. and Tr-be) provides accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Poco più mosso" with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 69$ . The violin part starts with a trill on E-F, followed by a series of notes. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano). Performance instructions include "I" (first ending) and "v" (vibrato).

Figure 3. Entrance of violin at n.1 on E-F trill (last notes of Royal Theme).

Musical score for the entrance of the violin at n.1. The score shows the first measure of the violin part, which begins with a trill on E-F. The woodwind section (Cor. and Tr-be) provides accompaniment. The tempo is marked "Poco più mosso" with a tempo marking of  $\text{♩} = 69$ . The violin part starts with a trill on E-F, followed by a series of notes. Dynamics include *mf* (mezzo-forte) and *p* (piano). Performance instructions include "I" (first ending) and "v" (vibrato).

Figure 4. Second appearance of the Royal Theme at n.8.

Figure 4 shows the musical score for the second appearance of the Royal Theme at measure 8. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Flute (Fl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Cor Anglais (Cor.), Trumpet (Tr-be), Trombone (Tr-ni), and Violoncello (V.c.). The tempo is marked "Tempo I" with a metronome marking of quarter note = 54. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score features various dynamics such as *mf*, *sf*, *p*, and *sfz*, along with performance instructions like "I con sord." and "sul pont. solo".

Figure 5. Entrance of solo violin at n.9, similar to n.1 (theme has been reduced by two notes).

Figure 5 shows the musical score for the entrance of the solo violin at measure 9. The score is for a full orchestra and includes parts for Bassoon (Fag.), Cor Anglais (Cor.), Violin solo (V-no solo), and Violoncello (V-no solo). The tempo is marked "Poco più mosso" with a metronome marking of quarter note = 76. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The score features various dynamics such as *p*, *f*, and *sf*, along with performance instructions like "espr." and "3".



Figure 6. Third appearance of Royal Theme, in string section at n.17.

Archi

17

ritenuto

a tempo

unis.

mf

f

ff

div.

tutti ord.

tutti

Figure 7. Theme played in augmentation by piccolo and flute (n.43 and 44).

Picc.

Fl.

Batt. II

V-no solo

C-b. div. in 4

Cor.

Batt. II

V-no solo

43

44

mf

f

ff

**Figure 8.** Theme reduced to two middle notes, played by Trumpet in B (3 measure before n. 56).

The musical score consists of six staves, each with a different instrument label on the left:

- Tr-be:** Trumpet in B. The staff shows two measures of music. The first measure has a dynamic marking of *ff* and a hairpin crescendo leading to a dynamic marking of *f*. The second measure has a dynamic marking of *f* and a hairpin decrescendo. Above the first measure, there is a marking "a3" and "frull." with a fermata over the notes.
- V-no solo:** Violin solo. The staff shows a dynamic marking of *ff* at the beginning.
- V-ni I:** Violin I. The staff shows a dynamic marking of *ff* and a series of notes with slurs and a dynamic marking of *s* (piano).
- V-ni II:** Violin II. The staff shows a dynamic marking of *ff* and a series of notes with slurs and a dynamic marking of *s*.
- V-le:** Viola. The staff shows a dynamic marking of *ff*.
- V-c.:** Violoncello. The staff shows a dynamic marking of *ff* and a dynamic marking of *s*. At the end of the staff, there is a marking "I solo" and a fermata.

Figure 9. Clusters at n.57. Theme has been completely reduced.

57  $\text{♩} = \text{♩} \cdot (60)$   $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

Fl.

Ob.

Cl. a2

Fag.

Cor.

Tr-be

V-no solo

57  $\text{♩} = \text{♩} \cdot (60)$   $\text{♩} = \text{♩}$

V-niI div. in 3

V-niII div. in 3

Vle div. in 3

Vc. div. in 3  *tutti*

Detailed description of the musical score: The score is for measures 57-60. The tempo is  $\text{♩} = \text{♩} \cdot (60)$ . The music is in 3/4 time. The top system includes Flute (Fl.), Oboe (Ob.), Clarinet (Cl.), Bassoon (Fag.), Horn (Cor.), and Trumpet (Tr-be). The bottom system includes Violin Solo (V-no solo), Violin I (V-niI div. in 3), Violin II (V-niII div. in 3), Viola (Vle div. in 3), and Cello (Vc. div. in 3). The score is characterized by complex rhythmic patterns, including triplets and sixteenth notes, and dynamic markings such as *ff* and *tutti*. The key signature has one flat (B-flat).

**Figure 10.** Crescendo and diminuendo technique to symbolize a cross.



**Figure 11.** Sliding notes as a sound symbol for the cross (crucifixion of the sound).

The image displays five staves of musical notation. Each staff features a series of notes that are connected by a long, upward-sloping hairpin, indicating a continuous increase in volume or intensity. The notes are primarily quarter notes and half notes. The dynamic marking *ff* (fortissimo) is placed at the end of each staff. The notation includes various accidentals (sharps and flats) and a fermata over the final note of each staff.

**Figure 12.** Crucified sound technique. One note abruptly cut off by another.

Partie A / var4 / dev / sect.2 / mes.258-259





**Figure 15.** Theme being rebuilt – harp and piano enter on a D, which adds one note.

Musical score for Figure 15. The top staff is labeled '2 Arpe' and the bottom staff is labeled 'P-no'. Both staves show a sequence of notes starting with a rest, followed by a series of notes including a triplet. The '2 Arpe' staff has dynamics *f* and *f*. The 'P-no' staff has dynamics *mf* and *mf*, and includes a double bar line with an asterisk (\*) before the first note of the sequence.

**Figure 16.** Beginning of ascending line in solo violin, at n.115. (played below retrograded theme in piano, harp and glockenspiel).

Musical score for Figure 16. The staff is labeled 'V-no solo'. It shows an ascending line of notes starting with a *p* dynamic. Above the staff, there are markings 'λα.' and a comma ','.

**Figure 17.** Rhythmic figure in solo violin ascending line, accompanied by « Church bells motif » at n.116.

Musical score for Figure 17. The score includes several staves: 'Batt. III' (C-ne), 'Batt. V' (T-tam), '2 Arpe', 'P-no', 'V-no solo', 'Vle' (div.), 'V.c.', and 'Cb.' (unis.). The 'Batt. III' and 'Batt. V' staves have a box containing the number '116' and 'C-ne' or 'T-tam' markings. The 'Vle' staff has a 'div.' marking. The 'Cb.' staff has a 'unis.' marking. The '2 Arpe' and 'P-no' staves show a sequence of notes with dynamics *f* and *mf*. The 'V-no solo' staff shows an ascending line of notes. The 'Vle' and 'V.c.' staves show a rhythmic figure. The 'Cb.' staff shows a rhythmic figure.

**Figure 18.** Distinct presence of major chords at n.118, indicating a change in the sound scape.

118

Cl.(B) I solo *p*

Batt. III C-ne *p*

Batt. V T-tam *p*

2 Arpe a.2 *f*

P-no *mf*

V-no solo

V-le

V-c.

Cb.

**Figure 19.** Ascending line has led solo violin up to its highest register at n.133. Orchestra plays a chromatic scale cluster. We are reaching the epitome of the concerto.

The image displays a page of a musical score, specifically measures 133 through 148. The score is arranged in a standard orchestral format with multiple staves for each instrument family.

- Violin Solo (V.no solo):** The top staff shows a solo violin line. It begins with a measure of rest, followed by an ascending melodic line that reaches its highest register at measure 133. The notation includes various ornaments and dynamic markings such as *pp* and *sf*.
- Orchestra:** The remaining staves represent the orchestra, divided into sections:
  - Vn I & II (Violins):** Divided into groups of 16 and 14.
  - Vla (Violas):** Divided into groups of 12.
  - Vc (Violoncello):** Divided into groups of 10.
  - Cb (Contrabasso) and Altri (Altri):** Represented by a few staves at the bottom.

The orchestral part consists of a dense, chromatic scale cluster that spans across all sections. The notation is highly detailed, with many notes beamed together and various articulation marks. Dynamic markings like *pp* and *sf* are used throughout. Performance instructions such as "ord. vibr." (orchestral vibrato) and "s. p." (solo part) are also present. A box labeled "133" is placed above the first measure of the solo violin part. A tempo marking "♩ = 20" is visible at the top right of the page.



**Figure 20.** Solo cadenza at n.134. It is in fact the entire main theme completely retrograded.

Figure 20 shows a musical score for two staves of V-nno solo in 8/4 time. The top staff is marked "espr." and "non espr. s. t." with various dynamics like *p*, *sf*, and *f*. The bottom staff is marked *p* and *sf*. The score includes various musical notations such as slurs, accents, and dynamic markings.

**Figure 21.** First two measures of the cadenza, where soloist reiterates F-E trill from his original entrance at beginning of the concerto.

Figure 21 shows the first two measures of the cadenza for V-nno solo in 8/4 time. The staff is marked "espr." and "p". The score includes musical notations such as slurs and dynamic markings.

Figure 22. Soloist's final note, its highest D.

135 Più mosso  $\text{♩} = 108$   
solo

Picc.  
FL  
Batt. II  
Batt. III  
Batt. IV  
Cel.  
V-no solo  
1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
V-ni I  
div. in 14  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14

The musical score is for a symphony orchestra and soloist. It features 14 staves for the strings (V-ni I, V-ni II, V-ni III, V-ni IV, V-ni V, V-ni VI, V-ni VII, V-ni VIII, V-ni IX, V-ni X, V-ni XI, V-ni XII, V-ni XIII, V-ni XIV) and staves for Piccolo, Flute, Bassoons II, III, and IV, Cello, and Violoncello solo. The tempo is marked 'Più mosso' with a metronome marking of 108. The score includes various musical notations such as dynamics (pp, s.s.), articulation (s), and phrasing slurs. The soloist's part is indicated by 'solo' and 'I solo' markings. The final note of the soloist is a high D, which is the focus of the figure.

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