

BORIS ASAFIEV AS A STRAVINSKY SCHOLAR

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БОРИС АСАФЈЕВ КАО ПРОУЧАВАЛАЦ ОПУСА ИГОРА СТРАВИНСКОГ

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ABSTRACT

Boris Asafiev, pen name Igor Glebov, was a Russian musicologist, composer, music critic, pedagogue, public figure, publicist; author of works devoted to the music of Igor Stravinsky. The article examines *A Book about Stravinsky* (1929), one of the earliest monographs on the composer in any language and the first one in Russian. It is characterized as an outstanding musicological study of Stravinsky's works that had appeared by that time, that is, from the early period to the works completed in 1927 (*Oedipus rex*, *Apollon musagète* and *The Fairy's Kiss*).

KEYWORDS: Boris Asafiev / Igor Glebov, Igor Stravinsky's oeuvre, Russian style, composer's evaluation.

АПСТРАКТ

Борис Асафјев, псеудоним Игор Глебов, био је руски музиколог, композитор, музички критичар, педагог, јавна личност, публициста, аутор дела посвећених

музици Игора Стравинског. У чланку је реч о *Књизи о Сјравинском* (1929), једној од најранијих монографија о том композитору на било ком језику и првој на руском. Књигу одликује изврсно музиколошко проучавање дела Стравинског која су до тада била компонована, дакле од раног стваралаштва до композиција завршених 1927. године (*Цар Егип, Айолон и Вилин ђољубац*). Кључне речи: Борис Асафјев / Игор Глебов, опус Игора Стравинског, руски стил, вредновање композитора.

According to Asafiev's² later memoirs (*My Life*, 1941–1942), it was he who, as a twenty-five-year-old Conservatoire student, as early as 1909 advised Sergey Diaghilev to propose to Stravinsky a commission for the so-called 'Russian Fairy-Tale Ballet for Paris' – that is, the future *L'Oiseau de feu* (Asaf'ev 1974: 242).

Asafiev's attitude towards Stravinsky's work developed gradually and underwent a noticeable evolution. In May 1914, Asafiev went to Paris to attend the premiere of Stravinsky's opera *The Nightingale* and other performances of the "Ballets Russes". By that time, he had been working at the Imperial Mariinsky Theatre for about four years as a ballet accompanist, occasionally composing music for small choreographic performances. He managed to see the opera and get acquainted with the score. He liked *The Nightingale*, although the music seemed not entirely clear. However, Asafiev was obviously unable to penetrate into Diaghilev's circle, although he had many contacts among the members of his ballet company. He reacted very sharply to Diaghilev's enterprise. "It is a sink of iniquity. I see no higher purpose in it", he wrote to Vladimir Derzhanovsky, the editor of the Moscow periodical *Muzyka*.³ Asafiev did not write a review of *The Nightingale* at that time. Nevertheless, twelve articles about the music of Stravinsky were published over the next two years under his pen name "Igor Glebov". The first of them – a review of the concert at which *Three Japanese Lyrics* were performed – was published in 1914 in *Muzyka* (No. 203, December 27 [O.S.]). In 1917, his first major article on the composer appeared in the collection *Melos*, Petrograd.

As a champion of new art, Asafiev contributed to the renewal of the musical life in Petrograd/Leningrad. He worked in the Music Department of *Narkompros* (Peo-

2 Asafiev, Boris Vladimirovich, pen name Igor Glebov (born St. Petersburg, July 17 (29), 1884 – died Moscow, January 27, 1949). Composer, musicologist, music critic, pedagogue, public figure, publicist. Between 1904 and 1910 he studied at the St. Petersburg Conservatoire in the composition classes of Nikolay Rimsky-Korsakov and Anatoliy Lyadov: his fellow students included Sergey Prokofiev and Nikolay Myaskovsky. He also studied at the Department of History and Philology of St. Petersburg University, from where he graduated in 1908.

Asafiev was a prolific composer, above all in the field of ballet. He energetically participated in the formation of the musical culture of Russia, and founded the school of Soviet musicology. His literary heritage included over 900 published works.

3 May 11 (24), 1914 (Stravinskii 2000: 256).

ple's Commissariat of Education, since 1918), collaborated with the musical theatres of Petrograd / Leningrad (Mariinsky and Mikhailovsky) as a repertoire adviser (from 1919); he was the artistic director of the Petrograd/Leningrad Philharmonia (1921–1930). In 1926, he became one of the founders of the Leningrad branch of the Association of Contemporary Music. Almost all of Stravinsky's works were performed at his homeland in the 1920s, they were regularly played in concerts. Asafiev wrote detailed annotations and reviews on them.⁴ In parallel with writing for common readers, he was busy with a theoretical research of Stravinsky's music, which developed as a part of his academic activities at the Zubovsky Institute for Art History.⁵ He himself refers to this work in one of his articles, concisely setting out theoretical observations on the music of Stravinsky.⁶

On the basis of these activities, Asafiev wrote a large essay "Igor Stravinsky and his ballets" which he included in his book *Symphonic Etudes* published by the Petrograd State Philharmonia in 1922. In this academic research (written in a style that is far from being really academic), the study of Russian musical theatre begins with a chapter on Glinka's *Ruslan and Lyudmila* and ends with the aforementioned essay: Stravinsky's work appears as a legitimate part of Russian classical heritage.

During his foreign duty tour from July 20 to November 30, 1928, Asafiev had the opportunity to listen to Stravinsky's new works; however, he could not meet their author, and their personal acquaintance never materialized.

His impressions were mixed. "Stravinsky is not here. He's in Nice. I'm afraid for his creative activity: he is at the peak of fame, and he began to write a very dry music. [...] Yet, Stravinsky's last ballet on themes by Tchaikovsky is interesting. I will probably bring the sheet music, that is, the full score of this ballet."⁷ "I heard *Apollo* (after that my opinion got even worse), *Oedipus*, *Soldat* (that's great). In my opinion, Ansermet performs Stravinsky better than Klemperer."⁸

Upon his return to Leningrad, Asafiev made a report to the Committee of Contemporary Music of the Institute for Art History, published by his postgraduate student A.E. Budyakovsky under the title "Musical Composition in the West (according to the reports of B.V. Asafiev)", in the newspaper *Zhizn' iskusstva*. Stravinsky was given a significant place in it:

"The name of the Russian composer I. Stravinsky, who has mastered the French culture, is usually associated with Paris; his mission is similar to that of Lully and Gluck. Stravinsky is 'recognized' by the most diverse social strata in France. His influence is noticeable everywhere, although in recent years it has become not so boundless as it was in the past. The novelty of Stravinsky's earlier works, emphasized by his

4 For the most part they were later collected and reprinted. See their list (Stravinskii 2003: Appendix II).

5 Now Russian Institute of Art History, St. Petersburg.

6 The article was published in an abbreviated German translation: *Der Auftakt: Moderne Musikblätter*, Jg.IX (1929), №4, 101–103.

7 Letter to his wife Irina Asafieva; Paris, October 28, 1928 (Stravinskii 2003: 314).

8 Letter to Sergey Prokofiev; Berlin, November 10, 1928 (Stravinskii 2003: 319).

specifically “Russian” musical language, was incomparably more astounding for the West than the novelty of his latest works, written in a “cosmopolitan” idiom. The cosmopolitan language and the austere simplicity of his latest works run up against an indifferent attitude on the part of the French, as well as against some bewilderment on the part of the Germans. However, Stravinsky, as a master of ballet (the last works of Stravinsky are ballets), is of much greater value for the French.”⁹

Performances of Stravinsky’s music continued in Leningrad at that time. The premiere of *Oedipus rex* took place on April 8, 1928 under the direction of Mikhail Klimov. In the spring of 1929, Ernest Ansermet came on tour to Leningrad for the second time, with a new Russian premiere of Stravinsky’s work. “I heard yesterday [May 8] Stravinsky’s Piano Concerto. An amazing thing. The sonority is as if steely-grey. The rhythms are devilishly elastic, especially in the last movement. Even the second movement is more solid than I supposed. [...] Stravinsky rides here from Vivaldi, Handel, etc. right into the twentieth century. There are more Paris and modern urban Europe in this thing than in all the writings of the French themselves.”¹⁰ By that time, Asafiev had already written the section on the *Concerto for Piano, Winds, Double Basses and Timpani* in his forthcoming monograph, and he was checking his interpretation of the work.

Hence, *A Book about Stravinsky* (1929) arose in the atmosphere of keen interest in the composer’s work, which Asafiev shared with the Russian audience and to which he contributed through his professional activities. Moreover, *A Book about Stravinsky* was not only the first Russian monograph on the composer, but one of the first full-length studies of Stravinsky’s music in any language. Compared to other contemporary studies – including books by Alfredo Casella, Boris de Schloezer and André Schaeffner – it is distinguished by its analytical depth and the range of covered issues. No doubt, it was the first comprehensive musicological study of Stravinsky’s works that had appeared up to that time, from early compositions through *Oedipus rex*, *Apollon musagète* and *The Fairy’s Kiss*.

The *Book about Stravinsky* is structured as a series of analytical sketches (thirteen “études-variations”, as defined by the author) devoted to major works presented in chronological order. Some chapters are of a summarizing nature: these are “Early Stravinsky” which ends with *Petrushka*; “On the Edge” (pieces surrounding *The Rite of Spring*); “The Importance of Stravinsky’s Oeuvre” and “New Instrumental Style”. The most recent works are described in the book’s last chapter, “Instead of an Afterword. *Oedipus rex* and New Ballets” (1925). The *New Instrumental Style* is of particular interest since it deals with the pieces of the 1920s, later characterized as neoclassical.

The monograph’s first striking feature is the precise and expressive description of Stravinsky’s music, of its sound, intonation, rhythm, and timbre. The ear of an enthusiastic musician meets here Asafiev’s extraordinary literary gift, honed in his previ-

9 Zhizn’ iskusstva 1929, No. 5, January 27: 17.

10 Letter to Nikolay Myaskovsky: May 9, 1929 (Asaf’ev, Miaskovski 2020: 418).

ous writings on Stravinsky. A good example is his description of the “techniques of accentuation by means of ‘percussive’ intonations that cause a sensation of ‘tinkling’, ‘hammering’, ‘clanging’, ‘thud’, ‘clicking’ etc. From the dry ‘non-resonating’ pizzicato of a separate tone to the sonorous ringing of a bell, all this makes a vast scale of percussive intonations abounding in subtle gradations...” (Glebov 1929: 131–132). It is noteworthy that this is not about a percussion ensemble, but about the accompaniment in the cycle *Four Russian Songs* for voice and piano.

No less fascinating are the author’s comments concerning the musical language, the style of Stravinsky’s oeuvre and its roots. There are real artistic aphorisms here, for example, “slanting rain of strong beats”, or “The form of Introduction to *The Rite of Spring* is the process of growth of musical material.” On the other hand, the book contains a very detailed musicological analysis of Stravinsky’s works, supported by musical examples, scale diagrams and rhythmic tables. The author tried to elaborate the most complete and concrete idea of Stravinsky’s innovative style, the professional description of which still presented considerable difficulties.

Asafiev’s research and theoretical ideas were confirmed by later works and became generally accepted. He formulated key features of Stravinsky’s style, such as the irregularity of metric accents and the principle of structural asymmetry; the predominance of concise motifs (*popevki* and *naigryshi*) and heterophonic texture; the peculiarities of pitch organization and timbral innovations; and, last but not least, the penchant for montage-like structures (in Asafiev’s terms, “mosaic” – *ibid.*: 239). Asafiev, indeed, created the research tradition which was followed by the authors of later works on Stravinsky.

Over time, the merit of Asafiev’s historical and stylistic conclusions was also confirmed. Especially valuable are his observations concerning new chamber-instrumental writing (a topic that was relevant in those years). Asafiev discusses it in the most detail in connection with the *Three Pieces for String Quartet*, but he also touches on this topic in other places in the book. “The very concept of chamber music has changed” (*ibid.*: 136). Hence follows a new type of writing, new “tasks” which “naturally lead to an extraordinary complication of the linear technique of composition and to a peculiar kind of polyphony and polyrhythm with a tendency towards polytonality” (*ibid.*: 139). Asafiev not only presents an innovative phenomenon as such, but also determines the significance of the Russian master in its formation: “Stravinsky stood in the front line of this movement and preserves his position, and his experiments in the new chamber style have served as a model for almost all the best French, Italian and even German composers” (*ibid.*). This is Asafiev’s conscious position, which runs like a red thread throughout the monograph. Stravinsky’s oeuvre appears in the book as the most important innovative phenomenon of musical modernity, which has an objective character. “The revolution was carried out not by personal creativity, but by the common experience of the epoch, which manifested itself most vividly and first of all in Stravinsky’s music” (*ibid.*: 219). This is what Asafiev writes in the chapter with the characteristic title *The Importance of Stravinsky’s Oeuvre*.

In general, Asafiev highly appreciated the music of Stravinsky as a whole and was convinced that some of his compositions were real masterpieces. The context in

which Stravinsky's music is considered in the book is also very significant. Such moments are infrequent, but every time great names emerge herewith: Glinka, Bach, Mozart. Asafiev also refers to the name Bach in another context, which by the end of the 1920s still remained highly relevant: "Stravinsky is now sarcastically called a modern 'Bachian', and if he really gravitates towards Bach, not as a particular composer, but as the greatest phenomenon in which the musical thinking of the Enlightenment has shown itself with colossal energy, then he is deeply right." (Ibid.: 223) He says the similar thing in the penultimate chapter *New Instrumental Style*, which deals with the works of the 1920s, later labeled "neoclassicistic".

Nevertheless, the book's main advantages are related to Stravinsky's works of his Russian period. Asafiev identified the Russian genesis of Stravinsky's music, specifically its roots in archaic folklore, peasant polyphony and Orthodox liturgy. Stravinsky's music appears in the book as a Russian sound universe in all its inexhaustible diversity. Brilliant analytical descriptions are devoted to *Renard (Baika)*, *Les noces*, *The Soldier's Tale* and *Mavra*: in all of them we can feel a genuine delight in musicological research. Perhaps no one could surpass Asafiev in the "Russian" part of Stravinsky studies, and his observations became the basis for subsequent writings, including the fundamental *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions* by Richard Taruskin.

However, the book as a whole turned out to be uneven in quality. This is partly due to Asafiev's literary manner, his spontaneous creative process. In his own words, he wrote all at once, immediately clean copy, without drafts and sketches, keeping all the working material in his head. In addition, *A Book about Stravinsky* is largely composed of material from earlier works; the temporal distance between different essays reached seven years (1922–1929). During that period, not only the subject of study, Stravinsky's music, had changed; Asafiev's view of it was also transformed.

Asafiev directly states this in the short text "From the Author", which opens the book: "Now, three years later, having been abroad and having familiarized myself with the way of life in which Stravinsky's work evolves, I could write another book about him" (ibid.: 1). Then he develops his idea: "Musical hegemony is in his [Stravinsky's] hands. But the crisis, I'm afraid, is close. [...] Surprise passes. Stravinsky may find himself 'without an audience' [...] The latest ballets by Stravinsky, despite their high intellectual value, are already frightening with the lack of firm ground behind them" (ibid.: 1–2). Asafiev considers Stravinsky's neoclassical turn to "visible universal humanity" to be inorganic. All this, in both tone and meaning, is in contradiction with the interpretation of not mentioned here overtly, but implied works (opera-oratorio *Oedipus rex*, ballets *Apollon musagète* and *The Fairy's Kiss*), presented in the last chapter of the monograph "Instead of an Afterword. 'Oedipus rex' and the New Ballets". The opera-oratorio is described there with Asafiev's inherent skill and insight into the essence of Stravinsky's new style: "I don't believe in Stravinsky's imitative Bachianism or Handelianism (which is now so commonly spoken about), that is, I don't believe in *deliberate* stylization" (ibid.: 369). As for the "audience", that is, the degree of relevance of *Oedipus rex*, the afterword says about it in a way that is directly opposite to the initial section: "The music of *Oedipus* sounds timely, as a strong word in defense of humanity and the ideas of humanism trampled by modern European civilization." (ibid.: 367–368). Though Asafiev is not so fond of *Apollo*,

he brilliantly portrays the ballet's material (Lully, of course, but also Tchaikovsky's *String Serenade* and the St. Petersburg ballet repertoire, up to *Le Roi Candaule* by Cesare Pugni), as well as the methods of working with it, without concealing his admiration for Stravinsky's skill.

If we also remember that throughout the entire book Asafiev now and then takes up arms against retrogrades unable to appreciate Stravinsky's innovative achievements, then the sharp change of tone in the initial text *From the Author* can be perceived as a forced move in response to a pressure from outside. This was additionally stimulated by Asafiev's ability to change his opinions to diametrically opposite and reflected the new attitude towards Stravinsky's music in Soviet Russia. Therefore, it is not surprising that from time to time passages of a straightforward materialistic and sociological nature appear in Asafiev's text. They look like alien inclusions. For example, "invention changes with the age of a person and with the success of science" (ibid.: 97); or "... Stravinsky can find a way to the great festive symphony of our time" (ibid.: 108); or "Our proud time knows that everything is simple and clear: the laws of nature and the world energy govern substance, being themselves a product of it..." (ibid.: 226). Stravinsky marked such passages in the margin with the words "this is for communists" (though he suspected irony in the last phrase).

By the time the monograph was published, Stravinsky already knew the writings of Igor Glebov.¹¹ He subsequently acquired and studied in detail *A Book about Stravinsky*, as evidenced by numerous marginalia in the surviving copy. His notes were investigated by Robert Craft, Viktor Varunts and, more fundamentally, by Tatiana Baranova, whose article "Stravinsky as a Reader and a Bibliophile" contains all forty-nine remarks by Stravinsky versus the text of the book (Baranova 2013). In the same publication, the author proposed a classification of the composer's marginalia, from which it follows that most of them are related to the correction of inaccuracies, including in music examples; there are also direct disagreement with the details of the analysis. Six remarks are of approving nature and, finally, eleven contain strong objections.

The composer's protest was caused mostly by Asafiev's sociological and straightforward materialistic interpretations of his music, which primarily concerned *Les noces* (*The Wedding*), where Asafiev emphasizes the physiological implications in the spirit of Freudianism: "a person in the face of the reproductive instinct"; "like it or not, obey the instinct" (Glebov 1929: 182). They served as an incentive for the formulation of Stravinsky's own definition of the opus, also fixed on the margins of the book: "*Les noces* is nothing but a symphony of Russian song and Russian language."¹² (Ibid.: 213–214; Baranova 2013: 23).

However, a few years later, in response to an enquiry from Prokofiev, Stravinsky described Asafiev's book as the best of those written about him.¹³ Asafiev's work was highly appreciated by Stravinsky's closest circle. The review of Asafiev's former col-

11 In his library there were two of his earlier books (Baranova 2013: 27).

12 "‘Svadebka’ eto nictto inoe kak simfoniya russkoy pesennosti i russkogo sloga."

13 Prokofiev's letter to Asafiev; September 6, 1934 (Stravinskii 2003: 542).

laborator and associate Pierre Souvtchinsky, published in *Musique* (Paris), opened with the words: “This is a book by a great critic about the great musician; it is one of the most remarkable and competent studies that have been devoted to the Stravinsky problem, and it will serve, without any doubt, as the basis for further works on Stravinsky and his time” (quoted in Baranova 2013: 28). Nicolas Nabokov’s opinion was similar: “I am reading Glebov’s book about Stravinsky. It’s an absolutely wonderful book. Not because of what is written in it about Stravinsky (we all know everything), but because of those amazing, purely musical positions and views that are expressed in it” (Stravinskii 2003: 382). These responses reached Asafiev (with some unsurprising exaggerations): “Did I write to you that Stravinsky really liked my book about him and that he was surprised how without knowing him personally, without any correspondence and ‘interviews,’ I figured out his method of creativity (or rather, his creative process). It recompensed me ethically for all the barking here.”¹⁴

We can even assume that some aspects of Asafiev’s book could indirectly influence the later statements of Stravinsky himself. An example we can find in the summary of the chapter *The Importance of Stravinsky’s Oeuvre*: “If you like, Stravinsky’s thought is ‘soulless’ and impersonal, just as his music is non-sensual (but not insensible and not lifeless) ...” (Glebov 1929: 222). These words anticipate the composer’s future reasoning about the inability of music to express anything (in *Chronicle of My Life*).

Stravinsky’s evaluation of Asafiev’s monograph fluctuated throughout his life. Many years later, Pierre Souvtchinsky mentioned a rather less flattering opinion about the work: “Asafiev’s book [...] contains many true thoughts, but, unfortunately, B.V.A. began later to write extraordinary nonsense. [...] (I.F.S. himself hates this book by I. Glebov).”¹⁵ It is known that Stravinsky objected to the translation of Asafiev’s book into English (Craft 1982: VII).

A Book about Stravinsky was Asafiev’s last major work on the composer, and one of the last ones published under the name of Igor Glebov. By the time the book was published, he had stopped writing reviews of performances of Stravinsky’s works.¹⁶ The activities of the Association of Contemporary Music ceased in 1931. On November 7, 1932, on the day of the 15th anniversary of the October Revolution, the premiere of the ballet *The Flames of Paris* (or *The Triumph of the Republic*) took place, which marked the beginning of Asafiev’s successful career as a Soviet ballet composer. As we know, the ballet’s music was based on quotations from Jean Baptiste Lully, Christophe Willibald Gluck, André Grétry, Luigi Cherubini, François Gossec, Étienne-Nicolas Méhul, etc. The study of Stravinsky’s ballets, *The Fairy’s Kiss* (based on Tchaikovsky’s music) and especially *Pulcinella*, recently staged in Leningrad, turned out to be very useful for Asafiev.¹⁷

14 Letter to Myaskovsky, October 26, 1931 (Asaf’ev – Miaskovski 2020: 465).

15 Letter to Maria Yudina. April 26, 1960 (Iudina 2009: 288).

16 The last review was written about *Oedipus Rex*: *Krasnaya Gazeta*, October 12, 1927.

17 Prokofiev noticed in his Diary “unexpected signs of megalomania: he [Asafiev] finds *The Flames*

Stravinsky's music was seldom performed in the USSR in the 1930s, until it almost completely disappeared in the 1940s. In 1948, the composer's music was officially condemned in the Soviet Union as "bourgeois and formalistic". Sadly, as a member of the establishment, Academician Asafiev also fell in line with the official view.

The fate of the *Book about Stravinsky* was dramatic, just as dramatic was the fate of Stravinsky's music in his homeland. This is undoubtedly one of Asafiev's best books, if not the best. Of course, he was aware of its value, but had to do everything to forget about it. And he succeeded: Asafiev's musicological insights for many decades disappeared from scholarly usage, and new Stravinsky scholars followed in his footsteps without suspecting this.¹⁸ The *Book about Stravinsky* was not allowed to appear in the posthumous five-volume edition of Asafiev's works (1952–1957). A reprint of the 1929 edition appeared half a century later, in 1977.

Be that as it may, in the memoirs *My Life*, written in 1941–1942 in besieged Leningrad, Asafiev recalled both Diaghilev's Ballets Russes and his own advice to commission a new work from young Igor Fedorovich Stravinsky. Whether it was really so, probably did not matter anymore.

to be more significant than *Pulcinella*. So, even good musicians have some bad luck as soon as it comes to their own compositions!" (Prokof'ev 2002: 836).

18 As far as we know, the first mention of Asafiev's book outside Russia was in the monograph of Roman Vlad *Stravinsky* (Oxford University Press: London– N.Y. – Toronto, 1967) where it was characterized as "the only book of any importance on Stravinsky published in USSR" (p. 258). However, in the main text of Vlad's book the name Asafiev is missing.

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СВЕТЛАНА САВЕНКО

БОРИС АСАФЈЕВ КАО ПРОУЧАВАЛАЦ ОПУСА ИГОРА СТРАВИНСКОГ

(РЕЗИМЕ)

Предмет овог чланка је једна од првих – и најбољих – монографија посвећених стваралаштву Стравинског. *Књига о Стравинском* (1929) истиче се по дубини аналитичког захвата и опсегу разматраних тема, у односу на друге значајне публикације о том композитору настале у сличном временском раздобљу. Асафјевљеве истраживачке идеје касније су развијали други аутори и постале су општеприхваћене. Он је формулисао кључне одлике стила Стравинског, попут неправилности метричких акцената и начела структуралне асиметрије; преовладавање концизних мотива (*йойевки*) и хетерофоне фактуре; специфичности организације тонских висина и софистицираност тембра. Главна вредност ове књиге односи се на остварења Стравинског из његовог руског периода. Асафјев је идентификовао руску генеалогију музике Стравинског, посебно њене корене у архаичном фолклору, сеоској полифонији и православној литургији. Музика Стравинског представљена је у овој књизи као руски звучни универзум неисцрпне разноликости. Уопште узевши, Асафјев је високо вредновао опус Стравинског у целини и веровао је да су неке његове композиције једноставно сјајне.

Књига о Стравинском настала је у атмосфери наглашеног интересовања за музику Игора Стравинског – интересовања које је Асафјев делио са руским слушаоцима и којем је допринео својим професионалним активностима. Вредност Асафјевљевих историјских и закључака о стилу временом је потврђена.

У чланку је такође описана реакција Стравинског на Асафјевљеву монографију, коју ишчитавамо из композиторских бележака и преписке. Мишљење Стравинског о овој књизи константно је варијало током његовог живота.

Судбина *Књиге о Стравинском* била је драматична, баш као и судбина музике Игора Стравинског у његовој домовини.

Кључне речи: Борис Асафјев / Игор Глебов, опус Игора Стравинског, руски стил, вредновање композитора.