

Ivana Medić

FROM POLYSTYLISM TO META-PLURALISM

ESSAYS ON LATE SOVIET SYMPHONIC MUSIC



Institute of
Musicology SASA

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Essays on Late Soviet Symphonic Music



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Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia

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Institute of Musicology
Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts

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Essays on Late Soviet Music

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Svetlana Bakushina's poster for the 2003 Russian premiere of Alfred Schnittke's opera *Life with an Idiot* at the Novosibirsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre. Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner.

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Note on Transliteration

Russian text is transliterated using a simplified version of the Library of Congress romanisation system, as presented below. Russian names have also been rendered according to this system, although exceptions have been made for names that are well known in the West and have taken on conventional spellings. As for Alfred Schnittke, his name is presented in its ‘German’ form except when directly referencing a Russian publication, in which case it is transliterated as Al’fred Shnitke. Exceptions have also been made for quotations, which have been left in their original form.

А а	A a	П п	P p
Б б	B b	Р р	R r
В в	V v	С с	S s
Г г	G g	Т т	T t
Д д	D d	У у	U u
Е е	E e	Ф ф	F f
Ё ё	Io io	Х х	Kh kh
Ж ж	Zh zh	Ц ц	Ts ts
З з	Z z	Ч ч	Ch ch
И и	I i	Ш ш	Sh sh
Й й	I i	Щ щ	Shch shch
К к	K k	Ъ ъ	''
Л л	L l	Ы ы	Y y
М м	M m	Ь ь	''
Н н	N n	Э э	E e
О о	O o	Ю ю	Iu iu

Preface

Seven years have passed since I defended my PhD dissertation on Alfred Schnittke's symphonies in the context of late Soviet music.¹ During this period, I disseminated my findings in a number of journal articles, book chapters and conference papers, where I mostly focused on various facets of Alfred Schnittke's oeuvre.² In this monograph I wish to offer a broader context and to discuss Schnittke's achievements alongside those of his Soviet contemporaries.

Although the largest portion of the material in this book is published for the first time,³ the text has benefited immensely from the many collegial exchanges during the past seven years, which have helped me to rethink and revise my conclusions.

¹ Ivana Medić, *Alfred Schnittke's Symphonies 1-3 in the Context of Late Soviet Music*. PhD dissertation supervised by Prof. David Fanning. University of Manchester, United Kingdom, 2010. Funded by the Overseas Research Award (ORS), Graduate Teaching Assistantship and School of Arts, Histories and Cultures Award.

² These include: Ivana Medić, 'Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: Representation of the Cross in Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*,' in: Gavin Dixon (ed.), *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 3–29; 'Revised Catalogue of Alfred Schnittke's Sketches in the Juilliard Manuscript Collection' in: *ibid.*, 209–257; 'Opera i kraj komunizma: Život s idiotom Alfreda Šnitkea' [Opera and the End of Communism: Alfred Schnittke's *Life with an Idiot*], *The Annual of the Institute of Theatre, Film, Radio and Television* 28, Belgrade, Faculty of Dramatic Arts, 2015, 59–74; 'Irony, Satire, Parody and Grotesque in Alfred Schnittke's Opera *Historia von D. Johann Fausten*,' paper read at the *Symposium zum 80. Geburtstag von Alfred Schnittke: Emigration, Integration und künstlerische Produktivität – Alfred Schnittke in Hamburg, 1990–1998*, Alfred Schnittke Akademie International Hamburg, 27–29 November 2014 (publication forthcoming); 'The Sketches for Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 and What They (Don't) Tell Us', *Muzikologija/Musicology* 15, 2013, 169–213; "'I Believe... In What?'" Arvo Pärt's and Alfred Schnittke's Polystylistic *Credos*, *Slavonica* 16/2, November 2010, 96–111.

³ Portions of three chapters previously appeared as articles; these are marked in the text.

I am greatly indebted to a number of my teachers, coworkers and friends who have assisted me during the various stages of preparation of this book. Some of them have influenced and inspired my thinking on late Soviet music, while others have assisted me in obtaining musical scores, as well as a range of primary and secondary sources, or been there to offer friendly and professional support. My heartfelt thanks go to: Tamsin Alexander, Philip Ross Bullock, Barry Cooper, Gavin Dixon, Pauline Fairclough, David Fallows, David Fanning, Amrei Flechsig, Marina Frolova-Walker, James Garratt, Jane Gottlieb, Srđan Hofman, Katerina Levidou, Sonja Marinković, Melita Milin, Ivan Moody, Danica Petrović, Leslie Ruthven, Peter J. Schmelz, Dimitrije Stefanović, Christian Storch, Danijela Špirić-Beard, Miodrag Šuvaković, Richard Taruskin, Katarina Tomašević, Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, Arnold Whittall, Stephen Wilford and Patrick Zuk. Two of my guiding lights, Alexander Ivashkin and Noëlle Mann are no longer among us, but memories will live forever.

My twin sister and fellow musicologist Jelena Janković-Beguš has read my text at various stages of gestation, and the book has benefited greatly from her sharp eye and critical acumen.

I would like to thank the extraordinary artist, photographer, film producer and musician Svetlana Bakushina, who has kindly allowed me to use her artwork – the poster for the 2003 Russian premiere of Schnittke's opera *Zbižen s idiotom* [Life with an Idiot] directed by Henryk Baranowski at the Novosibirsk State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre – for the cover of this book.

Finally, I am deeply grateful to my husband Dejan and son Bojan for their endless patience and warm encouragement.

INTRODUCTION

In this book I identify and discuss the main trends of late Soviet music – the period roughly encompassing a quarter-century (from the late 1960s to the dissolution of the Soviet Union). These trends – *polystylism*, *spiritualism* and *meta-pluralism* – overlapped, yet exhibited specific distinguishable traits. They permanently changed the profile of Soviet music, while they also revived several older musical traditions that had fallen out of focus in the decades predating this period. In order to illustrate these trends, I analyse symphonic – and a few vocal-instrumental – works by (then) Soviet composers. Aside from Alfred Schnittke (1934–1998), whom I regard as the central figure of the late Soviet period, I discuss the works by his great predecessor Dmitrii Shostakovich (1907–1975), as well as his contemporaries Galina Ustvol'skaia (1919–2006), Boris Chaikovskii (1925–1996), Sofia Gubaidulina (b. 1931), Arvo Pärt (b. 1935), Valentin Sil'vestrov (b. 1937) and Boris Tishchenko (1939–2010).

While the terms *polystylism* and *spiritualism* (or *religious revival*, the label that I used in my doctoral dissertation for the latter phenomenon)¹ have been common in discussions of late Soviet music, *meta-pluralism* is my own label – coined in the absence of an established umbrella term in the literature – for a tendency that is commonly (but wrongly) equated with Western postmodernism. Instead, meta-pluralism should be equated with *postism* – the half-serious term coined by Richard Taruskin in his seminal book *Defining Russia Musically*.² Taruskin is doubtful about the appropriateness of use of the term *postmodernism* in the late Soviet context. Namely, the emergence of Soviet polystylism coincided with

¹ Medić, *Alfred Schnittke's Symphonies 1–3...*, op. cit.

² Richard Taruskin, 'After Everything,' in: *Defining Russia Musically. Historical and Hermeneutical Essays*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1997, 100.

the dawn of postmodernism in the West. At that point, it became increasingly difficult to distinguish composers who began as traditionalists or moderated modernists and went on to embrace some avant-garde techniques, from those who started off as avant-gardists, but grew dissatisfied with using novel devices alone and started introducing elements of older styles. The fact that tendencies overlapped played in the Soviet composers' favour; their polystylistic works, which sounded similar to some of the early examples of Western musical postmodernism, brought them recognition abroad and made them internationally relevant. However, Taruskin asserts that the career trajectories of Schnittke and his Soviet peers were entirely different from those of the first postmodernists, and thus describes their style as 'postism, after-everythingism, it's-all-overism.'³

* * * * *

Among Anglo-American authors of general histories of music, Taruskin is the only one who pays due attention to Soviet music.⁴ On the other hand, several German and Russian music historians have recognised the three main tendencies that are in the focus of this book; however, they interpret them in different ways. Dorothea Redepenning identifies 'pluralism' as the crucial feature of the late Soviet music, and delineates two major trends within it: *polystylism* and *religious music*. Redepenning adopts Tamara Levaia's⁵ label *late thinking* [spätes Denken]⁶ for what Taruskin has dubbed *postism*; she discusses the *late thinking* with respect to polystylism and correctly observes that it does not simply amount to postmodernism, but rather to a revisionist approach to various styles from the past, from diverse artistic positions.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Volume IV: *The Early Twentieth Century*; Volume V: *The Late Twentieth Century*; New York/Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005.

⁵ Tamara Levaia, 'Sovetskaia muzyka: dialog desiatiletii,' in: *Sovetskaia muzyka 70-80-tykh godov: Stil' i stilnye dialogi* [Soviet Music: the dialogue of the decades; Soviet music from the 1970s and the 1980s: Styles and stylistic dialogues], Moscow, Gnessim Institute, 1985, 9–29.

⁶ Dorothea Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Band 2 'Das 20. Jahrhundert,' Laaber, Laaber-Verlag, 2008, 683–684.

Levon Hakobian divides the entire post-war period in Soviet music (he calls it ‘the Bronze Age’) into four periods, the first ending in the early 1960s, while the demarcation points for the remaining three periods are 1974–1975 (the premiere of Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 and Shostakovich’s death) and ca. 1982 (the acceptance of the ‘avant-garde,’ as marked by the Denisov-Schnittke-Gubaidulina concert at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory).⁷ Hakobian does not think in terms of stylistic divisions, and although he does acknowledge the existence of relatively independent stylistic streams, he argues that the culture created by the joint efforts of ‘leftists,’ ‘moderates,’ ‘conservatives,’ ‘outsiders’ and ‘provincials’ was ‘an integral phenomenon whose foundations lay deeper than any individual idiosyncrasies, any consciously elaborated ideological or aesthetical platform;’⁸ moreover, he believes that these foundations lay in the Soviet ‘gnosticism’ and its philosophical and moral subtext.

While Francis Maes does not even examine works by Schnittke and his peer group and finishes his history of Soviet music with a chapter on Shostakovich,⁹ Peter Schmelz’s 2009 history of ‘unofficial’ Soviet music focuses precisely on the artists of Schnittke’s generation and provides very valuable observations. He analyses the social, political and aesthetic contexts within which the young composers attempted to learn avant-garde techniques. Similarly to Redepenning, Schmelz recognises two main trends: ‘the shift from abstraction to mimesis’ – closely related to the emergence of polystylism – and ‘a related set of conversions [...] of an explicitly religious nature.’¹⁰ However, he discusses issues related to postmodernism in the Soviet context very briefly, because he ends his

⁷ I have used the old Swedish edition of Hakobian’s seminal book: Levon Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age: 1917–1987*, Stockholm, Melos Music Literature, 1998, 219–223. (The second, revised edition has recently been published by Routledge: Levon Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Era: 1917–1991*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2017.)

⁸ *Ibid.*, 219.

⁹ Francis Maes, *A History of Russian Music (From Kamarinskaya to Babi Yar)*, (trans. Arnold J. Pomerans and Erica Pomerans), Berkeley/Los Angeles/London, University of California Press, 2002.

¹⁰ Peter J. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical: Unofficial Soviet Music During the Thaw*, Oxford/New York, Oxford University Press, 2009, 220–221.

study with Schnittke's Symphony No. 1, which he regards as the work that marked the end of the 'musical Thaw.'¹¹

My decision to focus on symphonic music was primarily motivated by the overall importance of the symphonic genre in Soviet cultural life. A seminal 1979 book by Mark Aranovskii,¹² in which he analysed a vast body of Soviet symphonies written between 1960 and 1975, provides valuable clues on the ways in which music was written, analysed and understood at that time. As many passages of this book indicate, symphony was considered a supreme genre, the crown of composers' achievements; moreover, the most important feature of a symphony for theorists and practitioners of the time was the semantic/symbolic meaning both of its separate movements and of the cycle as a whole: "The symphony becomes a complex construction of signs, a statement, consisting of "words" with certain meanings."¹³ It was such statements that inspired Eric Roseberry's remark that Soviet theorists measured symphonies according to Beethovenian standards, since the entire ideology of 'historicism' in Marxist-Leninist musical aesthetics was essentially Beethoven-oriented. Roseberry aptly cited Shostakovich's friend Ivan Sollertinski's words: "The very terms "Beethovenian" and "symphonist" are not really separable."¹⁴

Aranovskii understood Symphony as a 'substitute' for the Mass in the atheist contemporary world and, accordingly, constructed an 'ideal' model of a symphonic work, with each movement assigned a special role in the overall dramaturgy. According to Aranovskii, the four movements of the symphony, by means of the relations between their semantics and structure, describe the four different aspects of Man: Homo agens (action), Homo sapiens (contemplation), Homo ludens

¹¹ Ibid., 322.

¹² Mark Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia – Problema zhanra simfonii v sovetskoii muzyke 1960-1975 godov* [Symphonic Quests – Problems of the Symphonic Genre in the Soviet Music 1960–1975], Leningrad, Sovetskii kompozitor, 1979, 14–17.

¹³ Ibid., 160.

¹⁴ Eric Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process in the Symphonies, Cello Concertos, and String Quartets of Shostakovich*, PhD diss., New York/London, Garland Publishing Inc., 1989, viii.

(play) and Homo communis (man as a member of a larger collective).¹⁵ He admitted that this ideal model was rarely embodied in the actual works; however, Aranovskii considered it an ‘invariant’ and claimed that any given work employed a different variant of the ideal model, the essence of which was nevertheless preserved.¹⁶ Aranovskii also outlined four main symphonic tendencies in the period between 1950 and 1975: 1) ‘renaissance’ of the (traditional) symphonic canon; 2) an alternative canon (this mostly applies to the music of the ‘unofficial’ generation); 3) chamber symphonies; and 4) vocal symphonies. Aranovskii discussed Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 (at that time still only named ‘Symphony’) as a pinnacle of the ‘alternative canon,’ whilst Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 15 and, to a lesser extent, Boris Chaikovskii’s Symphony No. 2 (both of which will be analysed below) were singled out as examples of the ‘renaissance of the symphonic canon.’

¹⁵ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 27.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 25–35.

POLYSTYLISM

The term *polystylism* (or *polystylistics*, in original *полюстилистика* [*polistilistika*]) was made (in)famous by Alfred Schnittke, who first used it in his 1971 paper 'Polystylistic Tendencies in Contemporary Music.'¹ His aim was to define, classify and analyse the major new tendency of the time, namely the shift towards eclecticism and an aspiration to overcome the idea of stylistic purity. The term polystylism is nowadays usually employed to refer to the works by Schnittke and his 'non-conformist' peers, whose styles evolved from the fascination with the West-European avant-garde techniques, in the direction of re-assessing the entire traditions of European artistic, popular and folk music(s), mixing and merging their avant-garde experience with elements of other styles. However, Schnittke neither invented the term polystylism, nor had his own oeuvre exclusively in mind when introducing this catchword into his theoretical discourse. Instead, he used it as a broad and flexible umbrella term for various manifestations of the tendency to employ, within a single piece, creative tools drawn from diverse styles and traditions. Moreover, he applied it to a vast number of works written around that time by composers both old and young, Soviet and 'Western,' 'moderate' and 'avant-garde.'

Hakobian coined the term 'Second avant-garde' in analogy with Russian 'first' avant-garde from the beginning of the twentieth century.² The emergence of the 'Second avant-garde,' whose exponents were composers born around 1930 and educated after the Thaw, was facilitated by a 'defrosting' of ideological pressures since the mid-1950s. However, while the first avant-garde spread well beyond the borders of

¹ Alfred Schnittke, 'Polystylistic Tendencies in Contemporary Music,' in: Alexander Ivashkin (ed.), *A Schnittke Reader* (trans. John Goodliffe), Bloomington/Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2002, 87–90.

² Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 30.

Russia and became internationally relevant, the second wave was borne out of isolation and restriction. This generation felt the urge to discover ‘new’ sound worlds, whether those of pre-war modernism, post-war Western avant-garde or their country’s own modernist past – in short, all kinds of music that had been dubbed formalist and banned for decades.

During the 1950s and early 1960s the young Soviets slowly gained access to previously forbidden scores by avant-garde composers from the Second Viennese School to Stockhausen and Boulez, and also rediscovered Russia’s own suppressed avant-garde past.³ In their urge to taste the forbidden fruit, they began trying out and adopting the entire avant-gardist spectrum of expressive means, starting off with dodecaphony, and quickly moving towards pointillism, aleatory and sonoristics. Therefore the seeds of future eclecticism were sown at their first encounter with avant-garde music. The reason why they initially turned to the twelve-note technique was because they had two role-models – Andrei Volkonskii (1933–2008) and Philip Gershkovich (1906–1989). Both of them were ‘domestic foreigners’ – Gershkovich an immigrant from Austria, and Volkonskii born in exile, in Geneva, and repatriated in 1949. Unlike their Soviet-born contemporaries, they owned the forbidden scores, and Volkonskii even remained in touch with the world ‘outside the Iron Curtain’ via his Swiss friends.⁴ Volkonskii was the first young Soviet composer to write a twelve-note piece and was quickly recognised as the most influential figure and the leader of the generation.

Notable is the speed with which the young Soviets assimilated ‘new’ techniques, but also the fact that they used them quite idiosyncratically.

³ On the young Soviets’ early dodecaphonic works see Peter J. Schmelz, ‘Shostakovich’s “Twelve-Tone” Compositions and the Politics and Practice of Soviet Serialism,’ in: Laurel E. Fay (ed.), *Shostakovich and His World*, Princeton/Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2004, 308–353.

⁴ On their importance for the generation of Soviet avant-gardists, see Yuri Kholopov, ‘Andrei Volkonsky – the initiator: a profile of his life and work,’ in: Valeria Tsenova (ed.), *Underground Music from the Former USSR*, Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997, 1–20; Yuri Kholopov, ‘Philip Gershkovich’s search for the lost essence of music,’ in: *ibid.*, 21–35; Peter J. Schmelz, ‘Andrey Volkonsky and the Beginnings of Unofficial Music in the Soviet Union,’ *Journal of the American Musicological Society* 58.1 (Spring 2005), 139–208.

What made this group of composers look avant-garde in the eyes of their Soviet contemporaries were not only the (relatively) new techniques that they introduced, but even more so, their anti-conformist attitude, rebellion against establishment, and the courage to learn banned techniques. Their music also sounded ‘new’ because, at least in the beginning, they departed from realist gestures and turned to abstract, ‘formalist’ compositional methods. The fact that these composers were soon pushed into an ‘unofficial’ status only contributed to their separation from the establishment and strengthened their avant-gardist aura.

The breakthrough of the ‘Second avant-garde’ in the 1960s was a major shock not only for the representatives of the official socialist realist line, but also for prominent moderated modernists of the older generation because, just fresh from being castigated for ‘formalism,’ they found themselves old-fashioned and irrelevant to the youngest generation of composers and their partisan audiences. A key example here is Dmitrii Shostakovich himself, and his very personal late adoption of note rows might have been an attempt to re-bond with the youth and become relevant again.⁵ Hakobian even includes Shostakovich in the ‘Second avant-garde’ as a ‘senior colleague of Gubaidulina, Schnittke, Sil’vestroy, and Pärt;’ however, Shostakovich never gave up his official status and never employed the avant-garde techniques to the extent that his younger colleagues did.⁶

Although stylistic eclecticism and the use of various types of musical references had been a feature of Russian (and later, Soviet) music throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, it was Schnittke and his peers who turned mimetic polystylism into a fully-fledged idiom. Their fascination with serialism and other contemporary techniques did not last long; already by the mid-1960s they had lost the appeal of a forbidden fruit, and the young composers grew dissatisfied with using avant-garde devices alone. They were torn between the official condemnation of ‘formalist’ music and the realisation that their works would

⁵ On the possible influence of the young avant-gardists on Shostakovich’s music see Schmelz, ‘Shostakovich’s “Twelve-Tone” Compositions,’ 303–330.

⁶ See Levon Hakobian, ‘The Nose and the Fourteenth Symphony: An Affinity of Opposites,’ in: Laurel E. Fay, ed., *Shostakovich and His World*, Princeton/Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2004, 179.

always sound dated and epigonic compared to those by their Western contemporaries. Hence they began to explore the expressive and associative possibilities of the most diverse compositional devices and their potential to convey meaning and transmit political, philosophical and ethical messages. Schmelz makes a distinction between two phases of 'unofficial' music. In the first, 'abstract' phase, composers employed serial techniques to withdraw from the social demands of socialist realism. In the second, 'mimetic' phase, from 1965 onwards, as noted by Schmelz, they moved 'from serial techniques to aleatory devices and a range of familiar tonal gestures and harmonies, including direct quotations of familiar compositions from the past.'⁷

Just as Shostakovich's adoption of 12-note rows was probably inspired by the works of the 'unofficial' generation, one could also assert that the young composers' eventual return to the concept of dramatic music was a return to an essentially Shostakovichian idiom, embroidered with allusions, quotations, and hidden messages craving for hermeneutical interpretation. The main difference was that the young composers used a wider variety of contemporary compositional techniques and often juxtaposed them in a deliberately crude manner.

The young composers' turn to polystylism was undoubtedly conditioned by their attempts to navigate between the contradictory requirements of Soviet cultural life. On the one hand, they were expected by the officialdom to write accessible music, which they associated with academicism and conformism. On the other hand, a majority of them were earning a living by composing music for film and theatre, which often required an eclectic employment of various styles and genres. Their attempts at pursuing their own, self-taught and inevitably idiosyncratic brands of avant-gardism were systematically frustrated by the officialdom. Besides, it was not just avant-garde music that was officially condemned in the USSR, but also religious music,⁸ early music,⁹

⁷ Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 12.

⁸ On the intensified campaign against religion by the Soviet government from 1957 onwards, see Robert Conquest, 'Religion Since Stalin's Death,' in: idem. (ed.), *Religion in the USSR*, London, The Bodley Head Ltd, 1968, 45–66.

⁹ On the reception of early music in the Soviet Union see Paul Hillier, *Arvo Pärt*, Oxford/New York, Oxford University Press, 1997, 66.

improvised music,¹⁰ as well as Western rock, pop and jazz.¹¹ Although none of these were strictly banned (at least not after 1953),¹² the official attitude towards them vacillated between relative tolerance and increased vilification. Navigating between these Scyllas and Charybdes was anything but easy, and Alfred Schnittke confessed that he often felt like a split personality,¹³ forced, like many of his contemporaries, to write one type of music to make a living and another type to satisfy his intellectual and creative urges.

What distinguishes the first polystylistic works by Soviet composers from earlier historical examples (as in for instance, Mahler, Berg or Stravinsky) is that the stylistic interaction itself provides the basis and the main constructive tool for a new work. Furthermore, the compositional techniques of various provenances are assigned different programmatic roles. In other words, samples or simulations of various styles are selected according to their mimetic and dramatic potential. At their best, polystylistic works are multidimensional, dynamic and engaging; furthermore, as Gordon E. Marsh has recently shown, the multiplicity of styles can itself be an effective structuring tool.¹⁴

¹⁰ As noted by Michael Kurtz, in the Soviet totalitarian regime in which ‘any individual freedom was seen as a threat to the system,’ performances of improvised music were strictly monitored by the cultural authorities, because this type of music ‘could not be controlled.’ See Michael Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina – A Biography* (trans. Christoph K. Lohmann), Bloomington/Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, 2007, 146; 122.

¹¹ On the ups and downs of the official reception of rock and other popular music genres in the Soviet Union, see Timothy W. Ryback, *Rock Around The Bloc: A History of Rock Music in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union*, Oxford/New York, Oxford University Press, 1990, especially chapters 7, 10 and 14.

¹² However, in some areas of Soviet cultural life, the bans persisted; for example, the works of Russian religious philosopher Nikolai Berdiaev (1874–1948) were forbidden in the USSR up to the post-Soviet time. Vera Lukomsky, “‘Hearing the Subconscious’”: Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina, *Tempo* 209, 1999, 30.

¹³ See Kholopova, Valentina and Chigariova, Evgenia, *Alfred Schnittke – Ocherk zhizni i tvorchestva* [Alfred Schnittke – A study of his life and work], Moscow, Sovetskii kompozitor, 1990, 93–94.

¹⁴ Gordon E. Marsh, ‘Schnittke’s Polystylistic Schema: Textural Progression in the Concerti Grossi,’ in: Gavin Dixon (ed.), *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 103–136.

The Godfather of Polystylism

Alfred Schnittke occupied a special place within his peer group because, although he did not singlehandedly invent any ‘new’ creative strategies, his first three symphonies reflected the main tendencies of that time and played crucial roles in establishing and popularising them; in particular his Symphony No. 1 became a milestone and a model for numerous works by other Soviet composers.¹⁵ As noted by Redepenning:

Schnittke had formulated the question of a [composer’s] place in history so emphatically in his Symphony No. 1 that reflection about types and styles and playing with formal conventions became the general characteristic of Soviet music since the 1970s.¹⁶

Although Schnittke’s output does not reflect *all* trends of late Soviet music (e.g. he was almost completely unaffected by the so-called ‘neo-folkloristic wave,’ or ‘neo-primitivism’,¹⁷ and his increasingly hostile attitude towards popular music was probably a reaction to the success of the ‘Third Direction’ [*tretye napravlenie*] with Soviet audiences),¹⁸ by the early 1970s Schnittke had assumed the role of the most prominent ‘avant-garde’ or ‘unofficial’ Soviet composer of his generation. This title had previously ‘belonged’ to Volkonskii until the mid-1960s, and to Edison Denisov (1929–1996) from the mid-1960s to the early 1970s. However, unlike Volkonskii and Denisov, Schnittke had the same ability as Shostakovich to absorb various tendencies of the time, filter them through his own artistic prism and make them his own, which contributed to his promotion into the central figure of his generation and

¹⁵ Medić, *Alfred Schnittke’s Symphonies 1–3...*, 13–14.

¹⁶ Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Band 2, 701–702.

¹⁷ On these overlapping tendencies, see Redepenning, 712–713; Svetlana Savenko, *Istoriia russkoi muzyki XX stoletiiia ot Skriabina do Shnitke* [A History of Russian 20th-Century Music from Scriabin to Schnittke], Moscow, Muzyka, 2008, 207; Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 247–255.

¹⁸ This style was distinguished by the merger of serious and rock music; see Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Bd. 2, 699–700.

enabled his advocates to regard him as Shostakovich's successor.¹⁹ Apart from the influence he exerted over his peers, Schnittke was one of the first Soviet composers of this generation to gain prominence in the West, thanks to famous performers such as Gidon Kremer, Tatiana Grindenko, Mstislav Rostropovich et al. who championed his works.

Schnittke's own infatuation with serialism only lasted about five years (1963–1968), which can be regarded as his period of apprenticeship. As the 1960s neared the end, Schnittke increasingly felt the urge to communicate his messages more directly and expressively. He realised 'the necessity to desist from any kind of "technological enthusiasm" (including that for the twelve-tone technique)²⁰ and later assessed his serial scores from the early 1960s (such as *Music for Chamber orchestra*, *Music for Piano and Chamber Orchestra*, *Improvisation* for piano, *Fugue and Variations on a Chord* for piano) as 'dead music.'²¹

Dmitrii Smirnov observes that Schnittke was not the first Soviet composer to combine diverse styles into a single work:

The idea of 'polystylism' had already been represented by Rodion Shchedrin (Second Piano Concerto, 1966), Boris Chaikovskii (Second Symphony, 1967), by Sofia Gubaidulina (Piano Sonata, 1965), by Edison Denisov (*Silhouettes*, 1969) and especially by Arvo Pärt (*Collage on the theme B-A-C-H*, 1964; *Pro et contra*, 1966; Second Symphony, 1966; and *Credo*, 1968).²²

Nevertheless, it was Schnittke who provided a theoretical foundation for the new 'style' and he soon emerged as its most outspoken and prolific

¹⁹ See Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniia*, 161; Alexander Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke – A Biography*, London, Phaidon Press, 1995, 123; Taruskin, 'After Everything,' 100–101; Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 282; Ivan Moody, 'Schnittke [Shnitke], Alfred (Garrievich),' *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/51128>; Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 319.

²⁰ See Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 273.

²¹ Interview with Hannelore Gerlach, quoted in: Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 241.

²² Dmitrii Smirnov and Guy Stockton, 'Marginalia quasi una Fantasia: On the Second Violin Sonata by Alfred Schnittke,' *Tempo*, New Series, 220 (April 2002), 2.

representative. In other words, it was Schnittke who turned polystylism into a brand. He wrote: ‘By the polystylistic method I mean not merely the “collage wave” in contemporary music but also more subtle ways of using elements of another’s style.’²³ He confessed to not knowing ‘where the boundary lies between an eclectic and a polystylistic method, or between the polystylistic method and direct plagiarism.’²⁴

Schnittke attempted to define two different principles: the principle of quotation and the principle of allusion.²⁵ However, his grouping is rather inconsistent. He argued that ‘*The principle of quotation* manifests itself in a whole series of devices, ranging from the quoting of stereotypical micro-elements of an alien style, belonging to another age or another national tradition (characteristic melodic intonations, harmonic sequences, cadential formulae), to exact or reworked quotations or pseudo-quotations.’²⁶ His examples range from samples of national anthems in Stockhausen’s *Hymnen*, to a piece like Shostakovich’s Piano Trio, where there are no samples at all, but some mannerism of the eighteenth century music is merely simulated. Hence the last example would better fit into Schnittke’s category of *allusion*, which he defined as ‘the use of subtle hints and unfulfilled promises that hover on the brink of quotation but do not actually cross it’ – which is precisely what Shostakovich does in his Trio.

Schnittke’s next category is that of ‘*adaptation* – the retelling of an alien musical text in one’s own musical language,’ or ‘a free development of alien material in one’s own style.’ His understanding of the adaptation

²³ Schnittke, ‘Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,’ 87.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 90.

²⁵ Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman defines four types of ‘musical paradigms’: *sample* [exact quotation], *pattern* [sample which has been modified, worked on/with; paraphrase], *faux sample* [forgery, ersatz quotation] and *model* [simulation, imitation, without an obvious reference]. See Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, *Fragmente zur musikalischen Postmoderne* (trans. Vlastimir Peričić), Frankfurt am Main, Peter Lang, 2003. Her understanding of ‘modelling’ is different from J. Peter Burkholder’s, whose detailed classification of methods of borrowing has separate categories for *modelling* a work or section on an existing piece, and *stylistic allusion*, alluding ‘not to a specific work but to a general style or type of music.’ Compare: J. Peter Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes – Charles Ives and the Uses of Musical Borrowing*, New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 1995, 3–4.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

generally equates to paraphrase,²⁷ and this technique is present in several of the works that Schnittke singles out – Stravinsky’s *Pulcinella*, Webern’s *Fuga Ricercata*, and Pärt’s *Credo*. Of course, the extent to which a composer may alter someone else’s music is impossible to predefine, and Schnittke does not even try.

Schnittke’s description of a ‘quotation not of musical fragments but of the technique of an alien style’ is again dubious, as this is really no different from his *technique of allusion*. Schnittke’s examples here include ‘the reproduction of the form, rhythm, and texture of music of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and earlier periods, by the neo-classicists (Stravinsky, Shostakovich, Orff, Penderecki) or devices taken from choral polyphony of the fourteenth through sixteenth centuries (isorhythm, hocket, antiphony) in serial and postserial music.’²⁸ It is difficult to regard any of these examples as quotations, as they contain neither verbatim quotations, nor paraphrases, but only simulations.

Schnittke also introduces the term *polystylistic hybrids* to refer to works that contain elements of three, four, or more styles. However, the very term *poly*-stylistic suggests that there are always several styles at stake, so *polystylistic hybrids* is a pleonasm.

As a whole, Schnittke’s attempt at systematising quotational procedures in polystylistic works is quite unsatisfactory. He makes the mistake pointed to by Burkholder, who has warned that many writers use the term ‘quotation’ arbitrarily to refer to a variety of ways of basing a new piece on a pre-existing musical work.²⁹ What is valuable, however, is Schnittke’s observation that polystylistic elements have long existed in European music – not just overtly in parodies, fantasies, and variations

²⁷ Richard Sherr defines paraphrase as a compositional technique whereby a pre-existing melody is subjected to rhythmic and melodic ornamentation but not obscured. See: idem., ‘Paraphrase,’ *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/20882?q=paraphrase>

This description matches Veselinović-Hofman’s definition of *pattern* cited above; while Burkholder’s understanding of *paraphrase* implies that an existing tune is used to form a new melody, theme or motive. J. Peter Burkholder, ‘Borrowing,’ *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/52918>.

²⁸ Schnittke, ‘Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,’ 88.

²⁹ Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 2–3.

but also at the heart of ‘monostylistic’ genres. Schnittke argued that only in recent times has the polystylistic method become a conscious device; thus he opted to give examples of musical borrowing as seen in the works of his exact contemporaries, e.g. Stockhausen, Berio, Ligeti, et al. rather than to refer to composers from the past.³⁰ In hindsight, what Schnittke actually noticed was the shift towards what would be defined as *postmodernism* in the West; however, at the time when he wrote his essay, this term was virtually unknown in the USSR.

Origins of Schnittke’s Polystylism

Schnittke’s biographical circumstances offer some clues as to why he embraced the polystylistic method. The first important impulse was provided by his music for film and theatre. He explained his refusal to conform to any kind of single style by his unwillingness to estrange his ‘serious’ oeuvre from his activities as a composer of incidental music:

From the musical point of view I found myself with a split personality. I had my own interests – an interest in modern musical techniques, in new compositions [...] But life saw to it that for about seventeen years I worked in the cinema much more and more often than I ought to have done [...] Eventually I began to feel uncomfortable, as though I were divided in half. At first the situation was that what I was doing in the cinema had no connection with what I was doing in my own compositions. Then I realized that this would not do: I was responsible for everything I wrote. This kind of split was inadmissible, and somehow I had to revise my views of both kinds of music. [...] I realized that there was something radically abnormal in the split that exists in modern musical language, in the vast gap between the laboratory ‘top’ and the commercial ‘bottom.’³¹

Schnittke admitted that sometimes he ‘was compelled to write absolute rubbish,’ but also realised that he ‘gained a great deal from cinema.’³²

³⁰ See Schnittke, ‘Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,’ 90.

³¹ Alfred Schnittke, ‘On Film and Film Music,’ in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 50.

³² *Ibid.*

the actual treatment of the inferior material inevitably dictated by the cinema may prove useful for a composer [...] I can transfer one or another of the themes into another compositions, and by contrast with the other material in that composition, it acquires a new role.³³

Thus Schnittke began to look for a ‘universal’ musical language aiming to reconcile the highbrow and middlebrow, advanced and moderate, profound and entertaining:

I have this dream of a unified style where fragments of serious music and fragments of music for entertainment would not just be scattered about in a frivolous way, but would be the elements of a diverse musical reality: elements that are real in the way they are expressed, but that can be used to manipulate – be they jazz, pop, rock, or serial music (since even avant-garde music has become a commodity). An artist has only one possible way of avoiding manipulation – he must use his own individual efforts to rise above materials that are taboo, materials used for external manipulation. In this way he will gain the right to give an individual reflection of the musical situation that is free of sectarian prejudice, as, for example, in the case of Mahler and Charles Ives.³⁴

Ivashkin draws parallels between Schnittke’s ‘serious’ and film music and points to the fact that Schnittke’s film music was his artistic laboratory, where he could explore various compositional techniques:

Schnittke used random, serial and sonoristic elements in his very first [film] scores of the early 1960-s, written for thrillers. At this time he was unable to introduce such elements into his serious music [...]

The combination of different styles and genres [...] is very clear in many of Schnittke’s works of the 1970s. Expressive stereotypes first used in his film music become the idioms of the language he uses in his symphonies and concerti grossi.³⁵

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Alfred Schnittke, ‘On Concerto Grosso No. 1,’ in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 45.

³⁵ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 114–115.

Ivashkin notes that a new period for Schnittke started in 1968 with his work for the director Andrei Khrzhanovskii and argues that Schnittke's 'music for [Khrzhanovskii's cartoon] *Glass Accordion* is probably the first consistently polystylistic score in post-war European music.³⁶ Indeed, Schnittke not only road-tested the novel idioms in his incidental scores, but he also freely transferred many pages of his incidental music to his 'serious' works and vice versa.

Gavin Dixon interprets Schnittke's polystylism drawing on the writings of the literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895–1975) and argues that 'Dostoevsky's dialogue and Schnittke's polystylism both imbue the concept of style with semantic potential. The primary mechanism in both cases is the multiplicity of styles within a single work, which for Bakhtin guarantees the presence of dialogue.'³⁷

Schnittke's own analysis of Igor Stravinsky's oeuvre proves that he found Stravinsky's oeuvre significant and influential. Speaking of the absence of stylistic consistency in Stravinsky's music and 'the paradoxical character of his musical ideas, the way he turns the unexpected into normal,' Schnittke argued that Stravinsky's creative method was 'the quickest and the most logical way to encompass the musical space of past and present from various directions'³⁸ and admired him for "admitting" anyone at all into himself, while retaining his own identity.³⁹ Schnittke's observation that in Stravinsky's *Orpheus* 'an organic synthesis of opposing stylistic resources is achieved'⁴⁰ could apply to Schnittke's own works from the mid-1970s onwards; he aptly described the most significant feature of Stravinsky's oeuvre as 'a tragic quality stemming from the impossibility in principle of repeating the classical

³⁶ Ibid., 110–111. He adds: 'The logic of development in his music is very similar to the principles of film structure: juxtapositions of contrasts instead of smooth and tidy development, lack of proportion, harsh and expressive contrasts which resolve into new unity. All these were definitely derived from the cinema.' Ibid., 115.

³⁷ Gavin Dixon: 'Polystylism as Dialogue. Interpreting Schnittke through Bakhtin,' in: idem. (ed.), *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 75.

³⁸ Alfred Schnittke, 'Paradox as a Feature of Stravinsky's Musical Logic,' in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 151.

³⁹ Ibid., 180.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 153.

models today without falling into absurdity [...] The only possible solution is to parody these grand forms or to seek new ones.⁴¹ Schnittke admired the works such as *Apollon musagète*, Symphony in C and Concerto for Piano and Wind Instruments in which ‘a complex and indivisible synthesis of characteristics from various “times” and “styles” is achieved, because of the almost surrealistic mixture of times incidentally remembered from music history or more precisely the simultaneity of these times: on the “Mount Olympus of Music,” Haydn can meet Tchaikovsky, Vivaldi can meet Weber, and Handel can meet Rimsky-Korsakov.’⁴² When describing Stravinsky’s early serial works, Schnittke explicitly called him a ‘polystylistic’ composer, and even put an equals sign between neoclassicism and polystylism: ‘The transitional works – *Agon*, *Canticum Sacrum*, Three Songs from William Shakespeare – are dualistic; in these works the familiar neoclassical polystylistic method of the mature Stravinsky coexists with separate serial and dodecaphonic episodes.’⁴³ One may add that Stravinsky’s idiosyncratic approach to serial method anticipated (although it did not directly influence) the Second avant-garde’s own idiosyncratic adoption of serialism.

The second important influence on Schnittke’s polystylism is that of Leningrad modernists from the 1920s. David Haas has done important research on the origins of the term polystylism and what it meant in the 1920s and 1930s, when it first became a part of the curriculum. Haas’ study of the interrelationships of contemporary musical thought and music in the creative work of Leningrad’s four renowned modernists from the first half of the twentieth century (Boris Asaf’ev, Vladimir Shcherbachiov, Dmitrii Shostakovich and Gavriil Popov) shows that stylistic eclecticism had a long tradition in Russian music, and was theoretically established as an artistic methodology in the 1920s.⁴⁴

Haas singles out Shcherbachiov’s compositional school and Asaf’ev’s influential theoretical views as the overpowering influences on the young

⁴¹ Ibid., 168.

⁴² Ibid., 170.

⁴³ Ibid., 181.

⁴⁴ David Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists: Studies in Composition and Musical Thought, 1917–1932*, New York, Peter Lang Publishing Inc., 1998.

Leningrad composers of the time, including Shostakovich.⁴⁵ Shcherbachiov was the one who coined the term *polistilistika* to signify the kind of stylistic diversity that he considered essential to a mature compositional technique:

A hybridization of elements drawn from widely divergent styles can produce the most unexpected results, provided it is prompted by a sharp intellect and a sharp ear and provided it emerges from a deep comprehension of the logic of musical thought.⁴⁶

Haas thus observes: ‘Here then was an aesthetic for a consciously heterogeneous style, which could only arise from a methodical comparative study of styles,’⁴⁷ and after examining the syllabi of Shcherbachiov and his colleagues, he concludes that the goal was not eclecticism but ‘a highly individualized and flexible “metastyle” in which stylistically marked passages could be juxtaposed, contrasted, and like any simpler or stylistically ambiguous material, be submitted to a developmental process.’⁴⁸ This is quite similar to the qualities Schnittke admired in Stravinsky’s oeuvre; and although Stravinsky left St Petersburg⁴⁹ and Russia before Shcherbachiov’s school was established, there are numerous common traits shared by these composers.

Many works analysed by Haas (especially Gavriil Popov’s Septet op. 2, 1926–1927) demonstrate a similarity with Schnittke’s later polystylistic works: be it in the employment of West-European avant-garde techniques mixed with elements of jazz and popular urban music, or the use of verbatim or ersatz quotations and ‘naturalistic’ sound effects, or the

⁴⁵ Ibid., 50. Haas also discusses G. Orlov’s influential monograph *Russian Soviet Symphonism*, in which Orlov demonstrated how various modernist influences, intermixed with the continuation of traditions, could coexist within symphonic music. Ibid., 49.

⁴⁶ Quoted in: *ibid.*, 90.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 90-91.

⁴⁸ Shcherbachiov insisted that two rigorous conditions be met: first, that the composer’s own signature be discernible in any and all borrowed material; second, that the borrowed material be integrated into the work’s developmental process. Ibid., 102.

⁴⁹ The city’s original name St Petersburg was changed to Petrograd in 1914, and then to Leningrad in 1924.

'linearist' layering of mutually independent musical streams. Although this line of Soviet modernism was gradually suppressed by exponents of the official ideology from the 1930s onwards, this creative methodology survived, thanks to the fortunate fact that one of the young composers to fall under the influence of Asaf'ev's and Shcherbachiov's ideas back in the 1920s was Dmitrii Shostakovich.

Despite the fact that Shostakovich seemingly 'abandoned' modernism after the denunciation of his opera *Lady Macbeth of Mtsensk District* in 1936, many elements of Shcherbachiov's method survived even in his later works. These include: the diversity of musical themes derived from various 'stylistic' sources and their 'dialogical' development and interactions; linear chromaticism; the employment of recurring themes/motifs, which are subjected to constant development and transformation; the avoidance of verbatim repetitions and symmetry; an understanding of symphony as a musical drama, complemented by a careful construction of conflicts and tensions to depict this drama; finally, the employment of various (more or less obvious) musical references, symbols, signals, leitmotifs – all of them impregnated with semantic meanings and utilised to support and affirm the main dramatic idea(s). Hence I propose a clumsy, yet fitting oxymoron *organic eclecticism* to describe Shcherbachiov's (and consequently Shostakovich's) concept of *polistilistika*, wherein everything 'must flow from a concept of the whole' and yet can contain 'the broadest and sometimes the most unexpected associations and parallels.'⁵⁰ This is a feature of all Shostakovich's symphonies, from the early modernist/experimental ones, to the deeply synthetic and auto-reflexive Symphony No. 15, which will be analysed later.

Shostakovich's taste for eclecticism, just like Schnittke's, was fuelled by his work as a cinema composer.⁵¹ Since his teenage days Shostakovich worked in the cinema as a pianist and tested a variety of compositional devices in his film scores. Furthermore, his work for the films helped him devise musical symbols suitable for conveying various moods and depicting external phenomena, and he applied these

⁵⁰ Shcherbachiov, quoted in Haas, *Leningrad's Modernists*, 102.

⁵¹ On the parallels between Shostakovich and Schnittke see Alexander Ivashkin, 'Shostakovich and Schnittke: The Erosion of Symphonic Syntax,' in: David Fanning (ed.), *Shostakovich Studies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994, 256.

signifying ‘codes’ extensively in his ‘serious’ scores. Schnittke himself acknowledged Shostakovich as one of the main influences on generations of Soviet composers and praised Shostakovich (and Stravinsky) for their ability to absorb various styles and make them their own:

Different composers – completely individual, with quite distinct features, at almost opposite poles, like Sviridov and Peiko, Weinberg and Levitin, Ustvolskaya and Boris Chaikovsky, Galynin and Meerovich, Denisov and Nikolaev, Tishchenko and Banchchikov, and many more besides, branched out in their own musical ways from the trunk of Shostakovich’s music, while the trunk itself kept growing and putting out new branches.⁵²

Another important influence on Schnittke’s polystylism was Gustav Mahler.⁵³ Just like Mahler, Schnittke spent a good part of his creative life in search for his ethnic and religious identity; thus, Gavin Dixon argues that, just like Mahler’s, Schnittke’s own engagement with a wide range of cultural and spiritual issues is motivated by a need to address his distance from his cultural and spiritual roots.⁵⁴ As observed by Maria Kostakeva:

In Russia he was called a Jew and a German; in Germany he was also a foreigner, born in Russia and well known as a Russian composer; he was a Jew who could not speak his own language; and he was a German who had lived in the Soviet Zone [...] Schnittke searches for answers to the fundamental question of identity at all levels – national, religious, socio-political, cultural and existential – with his polystylistic method.⁵⁵

⁵² Alfred Schnittke, ‘On Shostakovich: Circles of Influence,’ in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 59.

⁵³ On Schnittke’s admiration for Mahler and the similarities between them see Georg Borchardt, ‘Alfred Schnittke and Gustav Mahler,’ in: George Odam (ed.), *Seeking the Soul – The Music of Alfred Schnittke*, London, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 2002, 31.

⁵⁴ See Gavin Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue: A Bakhtinian Interpretation of Schnittke’s Symphonies 3, 4, and his Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5*, PhD diss., Goldsmiths College, University of London, 2007, 23–24.

⁵⁵ Maria Kostakeva, ‘Artistic individuality in Schnittke’s oeuvre,’ in: George Odam, ed., *Seeking the Soul – The Music of Alfred Schnittke*, London, Guildhall School of Music and Drama, 2002, 21–22.

One may thus conclude that Schnittke developed his all-encompassing, cross-breeding polystylistic intertextuality for the purpose of depicting his various and often conflicting ethnic, spiritual, religious, social, political, cultural and existential identities, and as a means of coping with his inner experiences of rootlessness and homelessness.

Aside from these circumstantial similarities, Schnittke also revered and absorbed Mahler's musical textures – both directly, as analysed by several authors,⁵⁶ and tangentially – as mediated by Dmitrii Shostakovich.⁵⁷ Shostakovich's Symphony No. 10 (1953), the first (and the only) considerable musical work written in the early years of the Thaw, was an embodiment of the Mahlerian model.⁵⁸ Although the eclectic musical language of this symphony is by no means daring, the complexity of symphonic process, the web of allusions and references, and the avoidance of straightforward affirmation, made the work sound modern(ist) enough to challenge the cultural criteria in the early 1950s. The work's reception was highly significant for the moment,⁵⁹ and it remained a model for Soviet composers aiming to be accessible yet credible – until the emergence of Schnittke's generation which changed the paradigms of 'moderate(d)' and 'modern.'

Schnittke's affinity for another Viennese composer, Alban Berg, is easily discernible. Aside from directly paraphrasing Berg in several of his works, Schnittke was also inspired by various elements of Berg's style, among them: a free, undogmatic treatment of 12-note technique, often verging on tonality; the dialectic of precise constructivism and sponta-

⁵⁶ See Chapter 5 of Dixon's doctoral dissertation, 'Concerto Grosso No. 4/Symphony No. 5: Epic and Novel,' esp. 213–230; and Lisa Brooks Robinson's discussion of the second movement of the same work and its relation to Mahlerian models: idem., *Mahler and Postmodern Intertextuality*, PhD diss., Yale University, 1994, 178–220.

⁵⁷ On the importance of Mahler's work for Shostakovich see Pauline Fairclough, *A Soviet Credo: Shostakovich's Fourth Symphony*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2006, 54–63.

⁵⁸ Already in the mid-1930s, i.e. as the dogma of socialist realism was spreading all over the Soviet music community, Shostakovich – aided by his friend, musicologist Ivan Sollertinskii, who published an influential monograph on Mahler [Ivan Sollertinskii, *Gustav Mahler*, Leningrad, Triton, 1932] – discovered in his oeuvre a prototype for a new symphonic model, which allowed him to maintain his creative credibility and dignity.

⁵⁹ See Hakobian, 216; for a detailed discussion of this work see David Fanning, *The Breath of the Symphonist – Shostakovich's Tenth*, London, Royal Music Association, 1989.

neous expression, with strong dramatic overtones; an affinity for numerical symbolism; the frequent employment of monograms and other leit-themes to represent certain people and events within instrumental dramas; finally, a penchant – inherited from Mahler and shared with Shostakovich – for employment of popular music and dance and other ‘low’ genres for the purpose of depicting certain social strata.⁶⁰

While in the cases of Mahler, Berg, Stravinsky, Shostakovich and Leningrad modernists one may speak of a direct influence on Schnittke, in the case of Charles Ives the similarities between his proto-polystylistic works and Schnittke’s earliest attempts at polystylism are almost certainly accidental, although no less striking. Given Ives’s relative obscurity at the time, especially in the Soviet Union, it is unsurprising that Schnittke insisted that he was unfamiliar with Ives’s oeuvre when he was writing his early polystylistic works, including the Symphony No. 1.⁶¹ However, by the time he embarked on writing his Concerto Grosso No. 1 (1977) Schnittke was already well familiar with Ives and he praised him and Mahler as the composers who were ‘free of sectarian prejudice’ and who used fragments of entertainment music as elements of ‘a diverse musical reality.’⁶²

Authors of recent studies of Ives’s output, such as Philip Lambert,⁶³ Larry Starr⁶⁴ and especially J. Peter Burkholder have proved that Ives was more attached to tradition than previously believed, and that even the most extraordinary of his compositional techniques, such as *collage* and *cumulative setting*, are simply extensions of traditional procedures. Burkholder’s classification of Ives’s use of music by other composers will serve as a model for my own classification of the various techniques

⁶⁰ See Aranovskii, 75.

⁶¹ See Dmitrii Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Schnittke (Besedy s kompozitorom)* [Alfred Schnittke’s obscure years (Conversations with the composer)], 2nd edition, Moscow, Kompozitor, 2004, 66.

⁶² See footnote 76.

⁶³ Philip Lambert, *The Music of Charles Ives*, New Haven/London, Yale University Press, 1997.

⁶⁴ Larry Starr, *A Union of Diversities – Style in the Music of Charles Ives*, New York, Schirmer Books, 1992.

of borrowing that Schnittke employed in his symphonies.⁶⁵ More importantly, Burkholder has demonstrated that Ives was a much more skilled and versatile craftsman than he is usually given credit for; that his seemingly random, redundant and chaotic scores often unfolded according to elaborate designs, and that every musical borrowing in his works had a precise symbolic meaning.

The analyses that follow will hopefully demonstrate that the same could also be said of Schnittke and that, far from being crude and unsophisticated patchworks of mutually unrelated episodes, his symphonies are carefully structured and musical events are selected and placed according to their dramatic potential and codified symbolical meanings. Even after Schnittke dissociated himself from serialism, a certain degree of constructivism, often based on non-dodecaphonic numerical symbolism, is preserved in his works. Unlike the exponents of experimental aesthetics, Schnittke did not rely on chance operations, and the dramaturgy of his most disturbingly polystylistic works is never arbitrary, but usually based on minute plans and precise calculations, which are complemented with his fine sense of dramatic timing and a broad symphonic rhetoric ‘inherited’ from Shostakovich.

Table 1 below contains Burkholder’s classification, with some minor adjustments, and supplemented with my comments intended to point to the instances where Burkholder’s categories overlap, or where his explanations differ from those offered by other authors (e.g. Richard Sherr and Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman, cited above). Burkholder himself acknowledges that some of his categories are *methods of adaptation* (variation, paraphrase, cantus firmus and transcription); others are *roles the existing music may play* (as a model, as a theme, as part of a humorous quodlibet, or as a programmatic element); still others are *musical forms* as well as ways of using material (variation, setting, medley, cumulative setting, extended paraphrase).⁶⁶

⁶⁵ See Burkholder, *All Made of Tunes*, 3–4.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 4–5.

Table 1. J. Peter Burkholder's classification of methods of borrowing

PROCEDURE	J. PETER BURKHOLDER'S EXPLANATION	I. MEDIC'S COMMENT
Modelling	Modelling a work or section on an existing piece, assuming its structure, incorporating part of its melodic material, imitating its form or procedures, or using it as a model in some other way. Modelling is the seminal technique, underlying many of the later procedures. Some pieces use a single model, others several.	Burkholder's explanation that some pieces allude directly to the musical material of the model, while in others Ives avoids quotation and emulates non-melodic aspects of his source is rather confusing, because any modelling is akin to paraphrasing various aspects of an entire piece, not just its melodic content. Thus, paraphrase and modelling are closely related.
Variations	A set of variations on a given tune.	A traditional procedure.
Paraphrase	Paraphrasing an existing tune to form a new melody, theme, or motive; i.e., a borrowed melody or passage is reshaped to create a new one.	Burkholder's definition is somewhat different from R. Sherr's understanding of paraphrase as quotation that has been altered, but left recognisable. Burkholder admits that if little is changed, the result may strike someone who knows the source as a direct 'quotation,' yet if the transformation is more complete, the new tune or passage may sound only vaguely familiar.
Setting	Setting an existing tune with a new accompaniment.	A traditional procedure; a quotation has been worked on/altered.
Cantus firmus	A given tune is presented in long notes against a more quickly moving texture.	A traditional procedure; a quotation has been worked on/altered.

Medley	Stating two or more existing tunes, relatively complete, one after another in a single movement.	A traditional procedure; it can involve both the literal and modified quotations, i.e. both 'samples' and 'patterns.'
Quodlibet	Combining two or more existing tunes or fragments in counterpoint or in quick succession, most often as a joke or technical tour de force.	A traditional procedure; it can involve both the literal and modified quotations, i.e. both samples and patterns. A precursor for collage.
Stylistic allusion	Stylistic allusion, alluding not to a specific work but to a general style or type of music.	This is something akin to modelling, but without an obvious model. It equates to emulation or simulation, or to what M.Veselinovic-Hofman understands as modelling.
Transcription /arrangement	Transcribing a work for a new medium	A traditional procedure; a quotation has been worked on/altered.
Programmatic quotation	Quotation fulfils an extramusical program or illustrates part of a text	Burkholder does not specify whether he refers only to literal quotations, or to modified quotations as well. Furthermore, he fails to add that any other type of musical reference from his classification can also fulfil an extramusical role, depending on the context.
Cumulative setting	A complex form in which the theme, either a borrowed tune or a melody paraphrased from one or more existing tunes, is presented complete only near the end of a movement, preceded by development of motifs from the theme, fragmentary or altered presentation of theme, and exposition of important counter melodies.	Burkholder suggests that this procedure was invented by Ives himself, and later explains that cumulative setting combines paraphrase, variation, and setting with sonata-style development.

Collage	<p>Quoted and paraphrased tunes are added to a musical structure based on modelling, paraphrase, cumulative setting, or a narrative program.</p> <p>The ideas of quodlibet and programmatic quotation blend with modelling, paraphrase and cumulative setting.</p> <p>What distinguishes collages from other procedures is that tune fragments are overlaid atop a musical structure that is already coherent without them.</p>	<p>Burkholder suggests that this procedure was invented by Ives himself.</p> <p>He elaborates that in a collage only some of the borrowings are themes, leading melodies, or principal countermelodies, and others add further layers to the music. The omission of these added tune fragments might simplify the texture and weaken the effect, but it would not harm the basic musical structure.</p>
Patchwork	<p>Fragments of two or more tunes are stitched together, either elided through paraphrase or linked by interpolations.</p>	<p>This is essentially a somewhat more complex version of medley, often combined with paraphrase.</p>
Extended paraphrase	<p>The melody for an entire work or section is paraphrased from an existing tune.</p>	<p>This is a more complex type of paraphrase (as understood by Burkholder).</p>
SUPPLEMENT	EXPLANATION	COMMENT
Quotation	<p>A sample copied verbatim and transferred from a pre-existing work into a new one.</p>	<p>Burkholder only mentions exact quotations when they are assigned programmatic function.</p>
Ersatz (false) quotation	<p>A forgery; something that simulates a style of a pre-existing work so closely that it tricks us into believing that it is a quotation, although it is not.</p>	<p>The false quotation behaves like an actual quotation, in that its borders are clearly visible, and it is interpolated into an alien musical context.</p>

Luciano Berio: 'Sinfonia'

Although Luciano Berio's *Sinfonia* (1968) is regarded by many as a model for Schnittke's Symphony No. 1, Schnittke himself asserted that the idea of the Symphony No. 1 had come to his mind several years before he got acquainted with Berio's work.⁶⁷ However, already by 1970 Schnittke was familiar with Berio's *Sinfonia* sufficiently to be able to analyse its third movement for a collection of essays on the subject of the techniques of modern composition.⁶⁸ While Schnittke agreed with Ivashkin that his Symphony No. 3 actually resembled Berio's *Sinfonia* more closely than the First,⁶⁹ the comparison to the latter is still more compelling.

The third movement of Berio's *Sinfonia* is a fascinating *collage*, which uses the Scherzo from Mahler's Symphony No. 2, quoted in its entirety, as its underlying texture. On top of this, Berio piled and interweaved dense layers of quotations and paraphrases; he selected music written by other virtuoso orchestrators (Berlioz, Debussy, Ravel, Strauss, Stravinsky), by the 'Three Great Bs' (Bach, Beethoven, Brahms), the Second Viennese School (Schoenberg, Berg, Webern), as well as Berio's own Darmstadt cohorts.⁷⁰ In his analysis of this work, Schnittke consistently refers to Berio as a 'polystylistic' composer and believes that the most interesting feature of *Sinfonia* is that 'each quotation serves a thematic function [...] the semantic unit is not confined to an intonation as such, with its conventional expressive responsibility, but rather to an entire intonational bloc (the quotation), an intonational coalition with an enormous range of emotional, stylistic, and historical associations.'⁷¹ He analyses the factors that ensure the overall unity of this movement (various 'affinities'), and concludes that 'the most subtle unifying factor,

⁶⁷ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 275–276.

⁶⁸ Alfred Schnittke, 'The Third Movement of Berio's *Sinfonia* – Stylistic Counterpoint, Thematic and Formal Unity in Context of Polystylistics, Broadening the Concept of Thematicism,' in Ivashkin, ed., *A Schnittke Reader*, 216–224.

⁶⁹ 'From Schnittke's Conversations with Alexander Ivashkin (1985–1994),' in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 17.

⁷⁰ Berio's *Sinfonia* has been analysed in great detail in: David Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words – A Guide to Luciano Berio's Sinfonia*, London, Royal Music Association, 1985.

⁷¹ Schnittke, 'The Third Movement of Berio's *Sinfonia*,' 216.

which imbues the work with a tragic quality, is the precise correspondence between the ephemerality of Mahler's scherzo, as it flows rapidly through the work, and the deliberately imperfect form of the whole.⁷² While writing on Berio, Schnittke reaffirms his own method:

A nostalgic sense of the impossibility of achieving conceptual and formal perfection, which had distinguished West European music of the nineteenth century, permeates Berio's *Sinfonia*. As though identifying himself with the dying individualistic humanism of the art of the past, the composer revives in a 'death-bed review' images of nineteenth- and twentieth-century music from Beethoven to Stockhausen, and even himself (thereby relegating himself to the past as well) [...] And he proves his point with an experiment designed to generate and bring about the premature destruction of the new polystylistic form.⁷³

In another text, Schnittke discussed the possible 'programme' of this movement: 'we hear an ominous apocalyptic remainder of our generation's responsibility for the fate of the world, expressed by means of a collage of quotations, of musical "documents" from various ages, reminding one of cinema advertising in the 1970s.⁷⁴ But he also notices that 'Berio's super-collage symphony is an adequate demonstration of both the individual and national identity of the composer (the richness of the collage polyphony in this work is similar to the mixing of street sounds we hear on the soundtracks of Italian neorealistic films).⁷⁵

In yet another article, Schnittke discussed the procedures applied in Berio's 'super-collage' third movement:

Berio follows a scale of increasing deconstruction of collage: (a) literal quotation of a Mahler scherzo; (b) quotation, but with added, stylistically unrelated, counterpoints; (c) 'punctuated' [i.e. segmented] quotation that preserves the thread of the cantus firmus in a hidden

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ Schnittke, 'Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,' 90.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 89.

‘counting out’ of its temporal relationships; (d) fragmentary quotation, but without preserving the thread; and, finally, (e) prolonged absence of quotation. [...] As we listen to Berio’s Symphony, it is not so much that we distinguish his own music in the third movement from the music he quotes from other composers, but that we draw a distinction between the music of the atonal school and tonal music. We hear principally the contrast between the music of Berio, Schoenberg, Berg, Webern, Stockhausen and Globokar, and the music of Mahler, Ravel, Strauss and Beethoven.⁷⁶

These articles testify that Schnittke considered Berio’s work extremely important. However, a comparison of the scores of Berio’s *Sinfonia* and Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1, which will be analysed later, does not prove that Schnittke was directly influenced by his Italian contemporary. First of all, Berio’s *Sinfonia* was written after a commission issued by the New York Philharmonic in connection with its 125th anniversary in 1967,⁷⁷ while Schnittke’s work originated from his association with Mosfilm. Schnittke conceived his work as a ‘proper’ Symphony and modelled it after a traditional four movement cycle, with all movements loosely following traditional models. On the other hand, Berio’s symphonic cycle emerged gradually – the composer actually incorporated his earlier work ‘O King’ (1967) as the symphony’s second movement,⁷⁸ and only added the fifth movement much later; of all Berio’s five movements, only the third is in a traditional form (Scherzo). *Sinfonia* employs notably smaller orchestral forces and does not contain the theatrical element: it is a vocal-instrumental piece, containing both sung and spoken text, while Schnittke’s First is a piece of ‘instrumental theatre,’ without text.

While Schnittke found inspiration in theatre, film and various public spectacles, as well as the everyday life in the Soviet Union, Berio relied on models from literature and philosophy (structuralism, existentialism,

⁷⁶ Alfred Schnittke, ‘A New Approach to Composition – The Statistical Method,’ in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 128.

⁷⁷ Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. 5, 346.

⁷⁸ Richard Taruskin notes that ‘Berio had written *O King* in 1967 as a tribute, and decided, after [Martin Luther] King’s martyrdom, to adapt the piece (originally scored for a single singer and a chamber ensemble) for the large forces of *Sinfonia* to serve as a commemoration.’ *Ibid.*, 348.

anthropology, the concepts of ‘open work’ and ‘work in progress,’ etc.). The list of authors whose texts Berio used in *Sinfonia* includes Claude Lévi-Strauss, Samuel Beckett, Paul Valéry – luminaries of the Western modernist, elitist culture. Ivashkin claims that Berio was assisted by Umberto Eco while working on this symphony;⁷⁹ David Osmond-Smith emphasises the influence of James Joyce.⁸⁰ As we shall see, in the collage of the second movement of his own Symphony No. 1 (which, at first glance, resembles Berio’s ‘Scherzo’), Schnittke’s ‘stitching’ method is akin to cinematic montage, rather than a Joycean ‘stream of consciousness.’

Soviet/Russian authors who compared Berio and Schnittke claimed that Berio’s approach was more abstract, intellectual, detached, while Schnittke was the ‘ethically concerned’ one.⁸¹ What led them into such a conclusion is a very obvious lack of realist musical gestures in Berio’s work. Hence, despite containing important philosophical and literary texts and explicitly dealing with myths ancient and modern, Berio’s work actually seemed to them less ‘topical’ and they heard it as a purely formalist show-off. However, Taruskin argues that ‘Berio intended a new commentary on the eternal question of the relation between the present and the past’ and adds that ‘Berio’s collage was a panorama of the moment of historical disruption and unrest that was “the sixties.”’⁸²

Berio only borrows pre-existing music in the third movement (while in Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 the only movement sans quotations is the third). The rest of *Sinfonia* revolves around post-serial, post-avant-garde procedures (even the collage in the ‘Scherzo’ actually sounds [post-]avant-garde), as opposed to Schnittke’s work where one finds a much greater variety of stylistic allusions. Both composers look up to Mahler, but for different reasons: while Schnittke only echoes Mahler’s blunt, banal and embarrassing musical narratives, Berio builds the entire edifice on the basis of ‘Scherzo’ from Mahler’s Symphony No. 2.

⁷⁹ ‘From Schnittke’s Conversations with Alexander Ivashkin,’ 17.

⁸⁰ Osmond-Smith, *Playing on Words*, 4.

⁸¹ E.g. Hakobian says: ‘It is important to underline that the element of ethically relevant collision constituting the core of the Symphony No. 1 by Schnittke is absent in the “mythologizing” Fourth Symphony by Ives, let alone in *the more superficially illustrative collage symphony* by Berio.’ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 277. [emphasis mine]

⁸² Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. 5, 347–348.

Unlike Schnittke, who aims towards a mix of high-brow, middle-brow and low-brow musical materials in his Symphony No. 1, Berio only quotes landmark works of classical canon: his collage reflects his elitist taste and training, untainted by popular kitsch – because he did not grow up surrounded by ‘music for the masses.’ Furthermore, the way Berio introduces quotations and paraphrases is much more sophisticated, with complex links established between Mahler and the superposed or interpolated fragments – and between the fragments themselves. By means of his skilful, sophisticated, intellectual and elitist collage, Berio speaks with a voice of a smart-aleck member of a ‘superior’ Western culture; while Schnittke’s blunt, banal, cheeky or overtly sarcastic utterances reveal an irritated, deprived, riotous and repressed artist from a ‘stagnant’ country whose political system favoured uniform thinking.

Although Berio’s ‘re-engagement’ with triads and ‘return to classics’ are often seen as symptoms of simplification of his avant-gardism, in *Sinfonia* he actually works at the limits of comprehensibility. Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 is, on the surface, more accessible; but in reality the piece was intended to produce an ‘avant-garde’ impact in the Soviet cultural life, and it succeeded.

Berio’s work is postmodern in that it reflects on the most radical phase of Western musical modernism, which has come to a (dead)end. An artist such as Berio, whilst facing the information overload at the dawn of the computer era, the political disillusionment following the 1968 events, the end of history (in fact the end of historicism), and the (temporary?) impossibility of further artistic progress, nostalgically reflect upon the avant-garde glory days, of which he was an active protagonist. Schnittke’s motivation for employing quotations is much different, as he is unable to reflect nostalgically on that heady period. Having grown up in a society where avant-garde had been suppressed by the proponents of official utopia, all he is capable of is either resigned irony or bitter polemic with the officially approved kitsch; instead of pursuing a utopian dream, he feels obliged to tell-it-like-it-is, and in order to do so he employs the full range of realist gestures available.

Alfred Schnittke: Symphony No. 1

Schnittke's seminal Symphony No. 1⁸³ (1968–1972) makes it possible to dissect his 'brand' of polystylism and numerous related phenomena, including the interpenetration of his 'serious' output and incidental music scores, as well as the semiotic/signalling aspect of the composer's methodology and merits of the hermeneutical interpretative method.

Even when reacting to socialist realism, Soviet composers of Schnittke's generation often employed similar narrative strategies and musical symbols, thus inspiring Taruskin to correctly label their 'style' as 'socialist realism minus socialism.'⁸⁴ Ivashkin stated that this artistic position was a result of a deeply-rooted belief that 'a work of art never exists as a fact of pure art,'⁸⁵ since in the Soviet Union of the time 'music (like the other arts) was obliged to replace the spiritual values of real life.'⁸⁶ Similarly, Hakobian uses the term 'gnosticism'⁸⁷ to describe this artistic tendency according to which the works of art always refer to something outside themselves and contain a philosophical and moral subtext. Hakobian describes this as the artists' concern 'with the transforming power of artistic creation, with the mission of the artist as ruler of thoughts, and with the artist as a bearer of some higher knowledge, working as a mediator between our empirical world, and the world of transcendental values.'⁸⁸

The controversial Symphony No. 1, completed in 1972 and premiered in 1974, marked a turning point in Schnittke's career, not only in terms of promoting his polystylistic compositional method, but also in terms of securing his status of a leading avant-garde composer in the

⁸³ Schnittke's first attempt at writing a symphony was actually a student piece, written ca. 1955–1956 and nowadays commonly known as his 'Zero' Symphony. Just like Schnittke's 'proper' First, this symphony has remained unpublished to this day, but a recording was commercially released on CD BIS 1647.

⁸⁴ Taruskin, 'After Everything,' 99.

⁸⁵ Ivashkin, 'Shostakovich and Schnittke: The Erosion of Symphonic Syntax,' 256.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 267.

⁸⁷ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 219.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 333.

USSR. Although the symphony was a manifesto of Schnittke's polystylism in the realm of symphonic music, the compositional method applied in this large-scale orchestral work was developed in some of Schnittke's chamber, concert and film music scores that preceded it, such as *Three Poems by Marina Tsvetaeva* for female voice and piano (1965), *Dialogue* for cello and ensemble (1965), Concerto No. 2 for violin and chamber orchestra (1966), Sonata No. 2 for violin and piano *Quasi una sonata* (1968) and *Serenade* for five instrumentalists (1968).⁸⁹

Schnittke considered (but eventually abandoned) several (sub)titles, e.g. 'K[eine] Sinfonie' or 'Symphony-Antisymphony/Antisymphony-Symphony';⁹⁰ these titles testify that Schnittke was aware that his work was deeply rooted in the symphonic tradition but, at the same time, constituted a radical break from this tradition. Although it is possible to analyse the Symphony No. 1 as an autonomous work of art, it was not produced within a cultural context where the autonomy of artistic artefacts was the dominant ideology. Quite the opposite, Schnittke's artistic decisions are manifestations of a deliberately anti-autonomous aesthetics. As explained by Ivan Moody:

If the criticism might be made that Schnittke's expressionistic all-inclusiveness could lead to the near-suppression of purely musical argument, this was perhaps inevitable in a composer who was concerned in his music to depict the moral and spiritual struggles of contemporary man in such depth and detail.⁹¹

In the very first publication dedicated to this symphony, Iuri Korev explicitly called it a 'programmatic symphony'⁹² and insisted that Schnittke's way of developing his motifs did not adhere to musical laws, but rather to the principle of cinematic montage.⁹³ Indeed, the genesis

⁸⁹ On these works see Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Shnitke*, 41–55; Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 250–259; Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 21–25.

⁹⁰ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Al'fred Shnitke*, 73–74.

⁹¹ Moody, 'Alfred Schnittke,' op. cit.

⁹² Korev's contribution in: V. Blinova, S. Savenko et al., 'Obsuzhdaem Simfoniu A. Shnitke' [Discussing a Symphony by A. Schnittke], *Sovetskaiia muzyka* 10, 1974, 24.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, 25.

of Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 coincided with his work on the score for Mikhail Romm's film *I vsyo-taki ya veruy...* [And Yet I Believe],⁹⁴ which was conceived as a panoramic overview of the twentieth century and aimed to reflect the diverse problems of the world as perceived in the late 1960s, such as students' demonstrations, Maoism and China's 'cultural revolution,' the Vietnam War, famines in Africa, widespread drug abuse, environmental problems etc. Schnittke claimed: 'If I had not seen all these shots in the film, I would never have written this symphony.'⁹⁵ In this light, his Symphony No. 1 can be seen as a kaleidoscopic (and apocalyptic) panorama of the twentieth century, painted by musical means.⁹⁶ Hence, there is no point in treating this symphony as an abstract work of absolute music; the very context in which it was written, as well as its musical structure and dramaturgy, encourage us to indulge in attempts to decode its 'meaning(s).'

The Symphony No. 1 was a riotous work of an author forced into an underground status domestically, whose attempts at pursuing an international career were constantly undermined by the officials. This work, which effectively negated all premises of the 'official symphony' – its compulsory optimism, futuristic utopianism, bombastic triumphalism and propagandist inspirationalism – was intended to cause a major stir in the Soviet Union, and it succeeded. After its 1974 premiere,⁹⁷ the symphony was immediately blacklisted and only performed once more in the Soviet Union until *perestroika* (in Tallinn, the capital of Estonia, in 1975). Despite this, the work did not end up in obscurity; in fact, the

⁹⁴ Mikhail Romm's original title for this film was *Mir segodiia* [World Today]. Romm died in 1971, and the film was finished by his students Elem Klimov, Marlen Khutsiev and German Lavrov.

⁹⁵ Schnittke's Preface for the score of Symphony No. 1; reprinted in V. Blinova, S. Savenko et al., 'Obsuzhdaem Simfoniu A. Shnitke,' 13.

⁹⁶ Although very little of Schnittke's original score for *World Today* actually ended up in the Symphony No. 1, there are references to his other incidental scores, which will be discussed later. Another Schnittke's work, *Voices of Nature* for ten female voices and vibraphone originated from Schnittke's music for this film: see Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Shnitke*, 65.

⁹⁷ The symphony was premiered in Gorki [Nizhni Novgorod], the city closed to foreigners, on 9 February 1974; the dedicatee of the symphony Gennadi Rozhdestvenskii conducted the Gorki Philharmonic and Melodia jazz ensemble.

ban only contributed to its cult status.⁹⁸ One could even say that, with this symphony, Schnittke singlehandedly changed the course of late Soviet music. As explained by Ivashkin: ‘For many musicians and music lovers it was a stimulating shock. They had never heard anything like it before. [...] Most of the critics had little doubt that the work marked the beginning of a new era in Russian music and that it suggested completely new ideas for the genre.’⁹⁹

As noted by Schmelz, the work was warranted ‘two open discussions at the Union of Composers in late February 1974 (with Schnittke present) in addition to an extended treatment in *Sovetskaia muzyka* in the October 1974 issue based on another discussion that Schnittke did not attend.’¹⁰⁰ Schnittke himself acknowledged the importance of this work and confessed that everything he did after the Symphony No. 1 was ‘an offshoot from it, a continuation of its ideas and tendencies.’¹⁰¹ Schmelz sums up the elements of the symphony that all critics – whether favourably disposed towards this work or not – fixated on: ‘its theatricality, the moments of improvisation, the use of collage and quotation, and the relationship of the symphony to “tradition,” both Soviet and Western.’¹⁰²

The Western reception was less favourable: as reported by Ivashkin, at the symphony’s London premiere in 1985 it was dubbed ‘Russian vaudeville,’ ‘deadpan comedy,’ ‘symphonic anarchy’ and ‘crazy, chaotic,

⁹⁸ According to Soviet witnesses, the recording of the symphony was bootlegged and distributed in a manner akin to *samizdat* literature. Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 318.

⁹⁹ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 120–121. Hakobian also asserts that the premiere of this Symphony was nothing short of ‘sensational’ and a ‘symbolic date’ in the history of Soviet music; Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 221. Michael Kurtz calls this premiere ‘one of the key events of Soviet musical history in the 1970s;’ Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 109. Peter Schmelz argues that the premiere of this piece marked the end of the musical Thaw in the Soviet Union; Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 297; 304.

¹⁰⁰ See Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 311–319, where the author presents an overview of these discussions, as well as the overall critical reception of the Symphony in the Soviet press at the time.

¹⁰¹ Quoted in: *ibid.*, 306.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 317.

exuberant construction;¹⁰³ and on occasion of its 1988 Boston performance, the audience booed and walked out.¹⁰⁴ In essence, the criticism directed towards this piece was based on the premises that the symphony was an unsophisticated and blunt collage, that the composer employed familiar music in an attempt to mask his inability to develop a coherent musical language, that the complex avant-garde machinery was used unskilfully; etc.¹⁰⁵ Due to these objections, the symphony has not become a part of the canon – the way some other works by Schnittke have – and nowadays it is performed only sporadically.¹⁰⁶

Whatever its future in the concert hall, the Symphony No. 1 is defensible from such objections, when seen in the context of Schnittke's output and Soviet music at the time. First of all, one must recall that the Soviet composers of Schnittke's generation struggled to learn the latest Western compositional techniques, being prevented from travelling abroad and denied access to scores and recordings of 'formalist' music. Schnittke's creative laboratory was *Mosfilm*, and he 'tested' various techniques in his film scores first: consequently, the sound effects produced by them and the various moods conveyable and illustratable by them became a matter of importance to Schnittke, and not the technical, formal(ist) perfectionism. Furthermore, Symphony No. 1 was a product of Russian 'realist' aesthetics, in which music was not understood as an abstract and self-sufficient intellectual activity, but as a vehicle for transmitting philosophical, moral and political messages. Related to this was the fact that in the Soviet anti-elitist context new music was written for a broad audience and not just for sophisticated experts in the latest compositional trends; hence musical symbols and intonational codes were employed to facilitate communicativeness and accessibility of new

¹⁰³ See Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 123.

¹⁰⁴ See Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 199.

¹⁰⁵ Schmelz provides a detailed account on the Western reception of the Symphony No. 1: see Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 320–322. See also Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 123–124, where the author discusses the issues of the (mis)understanding of Schnittke's work in the West.

¹⁰⁶ However, the symphony reached wider audience as the music for the second act of John Neumeier's successful ballet *A Streetcar Named Desire* (after T. Williams). See Jürgen Köchel, liner notes to CD *Alfred Schnittke: Symphony No. 1*, BIS CD 577, 8–9.

works. Considering all these, a pure technical *tour de force* in avant-garde writing was hardly to be expected from Schnittke – and it was not his intention either.

When deciding to apply the polystylistic method consistently throughout this symphony, Schnittke knew that he could be accused of plagiarism and lack of invention on the one hand, and a mere striving for superficial effects without any deeper substance on the other.¹⁰⁷ He was also aware that listeners' ears would be drawn more to the stylistic references than to the structure, and that the work could sound incoherent.¹⁰⁸ However, Schnittke argued that the merits of his polystylistic method were obvious:

It widens the range of expressive possibilities, it allows for the integration of 'low' and 'high' styles [...] In it we find the documentary objectivity of musical reality, presented not just as something reflected individually but as an actual quotation [...] And finally it creates new possibilities for the musical dramatization of 'eternal' questions – of war and peace, life and death.¹⁰⁹

Schnittke also asserted that he was looking for universalism, a 'link between the ages,' and the variety of employed styles enabled him to erase temporal and spatial boundaries, but also to merge his 'serious' output with his work for cinema. By incorporating the entire musical soundscape of the Soviet Union into his kaleidoscopic First, Schnittke invited the audience to listen to all the various musics around them actively, thus turning this work into something akin to a 'maximalist' version of John Cage's *4'33"*. However, Schnittke's general attitude to music making also reflected typical neo-Platonistic ideas: he believed that in the twentieth century it was impossible to 'create' music – a composer could only pick up what lies around him and become a medium for spiritual communication.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Schnittke, 'Polystylistic Tendencies in Modern Music,' 89–90.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, 90.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

¹¹⁰ See Alfred Schnittke, 'The Problem of Giving Outward Expression to a New Idea,' in: *A Schnittke Reader*, 94–96.

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Since Schnittke's ambitious symphony readily offers itself to various interpretations, I shall briefly overview some of them. Among authors who have analysed it, Victoria Adamenko is the most convinced of a religious inspiration behind this seemingly secular piece. Adamenko's answer to the question 'What might save the symphony?' is – the (re)engagement with religious/mystical/theurgic aspects of music making, i.e. 'resacralization.' She finds clues for a religious (and more specifically, Christian) interpretation throughout the symphony, ranging from the opening bell chime (which, according to her, evokes Wagner's *Parsifal*), the analogies with the biblical Creation story, Schnittke's application of numerology, as well as his employment of 14 Sanctus melodies and the sequence 'Dies irae.'¹¹¹ Also, in his description of the form of the third movement as a 'dynamic triangle' Adamenko finds analogies with Golgotha and the crucifix.¹¹² However, according to Ivashkin, at the time of writing this symphony Schnittke was not interested in Christianity, but in various alternative philosophical and mystical systems and doctrines: anthroposophy, cabbala, I-Ching, etc.¹¹³

Of course, prior to *perestroika*, it was not possible (or, at least, not desirable) for Soviet scholars to investigate Schnittke's suspected religious motivation. A fairly typical Soviet interpretation is offered by Mark Aranovskii, who argued that the main conflict unfolds between the different levels of culture, different 'musics' which carry different 'ethical indices;' in his view, Schnittke relegates the role of the bearer of highest moral values to art music, as opposed to various other musics which embody the moral and spiritual decadence of contemporary

¹¹¹ Victoria Adamenko, *Neo-Mythologism in Music – From Scriabin and Schoenberg to Schnittke and Crumb*, Hillsdale, Pendragon Press, 2007, 163; 158; 192–194; "Faith Through Skepticism:" Desacralization and Resacralization in Schnittke's First Symphony,' in: Gavin Dixon, ed., *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 161–176.

¹¹² Adamenko, *Neo-Mythologism in Music*, 259. However, it is equally plausible to relate this form to Kandinsky's theory of dynamic triangle, related to theosophical teachings. See Wassily Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art* (trans. M.T.H. Sadler), New York, Dover Publications, 1977.

¹¹³ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 156–160.

world.¹¹⁴ The ‘tragic hero of this symphony’ i.e. music, ceases to be art and becomes immersed into the noise of the raucous real life, thus turning into noise itself.¹¹⁵

Similarly to Aranovskii, Kholopova and Chigariova believe that the main ‘plot’ of the symphony deals with an artist’s role in the contemporary world; an artist adherent to the humanist tradition originating from Beethoven asks himself what is the role of art and whether there is a point in composing music in a dangerous and disordered world.¹¹⁶ They argue that the ‘Symphony No. 1 actively protests against the devaluation of art to the level of furniture and ornament.’¹¹⁷ Ivashkin also believes that the Symphony No. 1 ‘represents the search for a key to the unlikely interweaving of opposites which the twentieth century has brought to the human race.’¹¹⁸

Richard Taruskin argues that the main impulse for creating this symphony was the composer’s feeling of ‘cultural alienation in which nothing can claim allegiance.’¹¹⁹ Taruskin also emphasises the ‘semiotic’ or ‘signalling’ aspects of Schnittke’s musical handwriting and adds:

With a bluntness and an immodesty practically unseen since the days of Mahler, Schnittke tackles life-against-death, love-against-hate, good-against-evil, freedom-against-tyranny, and (especially in the concertos) I-against-the world.¹²⁰

In Peter Schmelz’s view, Symphony No. 1 was ‘a musical documentary of the 1960s and 1970s, a compendium of the many tendencies, both foreign and domestic, that confronted the ‘young composers’ as they

¹¹⁴ Aranovskii claims that the main ‘hero’ of this work is art music: ‘the stratum of “acculturated,” “learned” sound, which does not embody the physical but the spiritual side of contemporary civilisation.’ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 161.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 163–4.

¹¹⁶ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 87.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 86–87.

¹¹⁸ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 120–121.

¹¹⁹ Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically*, 100.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

had tried to catch up with Western modernism while still fighting to discover their own compositional voices.¹²¹ Thus Schmelz asserts that ‘Schnittke’s First Symphony dealt directly with the stylistic mess of late 1960s and early 1970s Soviet culture.’¹²²

I will now focus on the various methods of borrowing the pre-existing music employed in this symphony, but also offer some explanations for Schnittke’s creative decisions and highlight their significance in the Soviet context. In doing so, I will rely on a classification of methods of borrowing devised by J. Peter Burkholder in his book dedicated to Charles Ives’s music, with certain modifications – mostly where Burkholder’s categories overlap, or where his explanations differ from those offered by other authors. Burkholder acknowledges that some of his categories are *methods of adaptation* (variation, paraphrase, cantus firmus and transcription); others are *roles the existing music may play* (as a model, as a theme, as part of a humorous quodlibet, or as a programmatic element); still others are *musical forms* as well as ways of using material (variation, setting, medley, cumulative setting and extended paraphrase).¹²³

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Surprisingly for a piece conceived as an ‘anti-symphony,’ and accused of being a ‘crazy, chaotic, exuberant construction’ by the critics quoted above, Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 actually unfolds in a logical manner, with a clear disposition of all movements. It follows the traditional four movement symphonic frame, and the thematic unity of the entire cycle is achieved by means of transferring material from one movement to another, by employing the same thematic core in all movements (except the second), and by using identical cadential gestures in the outer movements. If we confront Burkholder’s definition of ‘model’ with Schnittke’s intention to write an ‘anti-symphony,’ we might conclude that Schnittke *modelled* his First after classical symphonies; however, although all main features of the traditional form are preserved, everything is turned upside down and/or ridiculed.

¹²¹ Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 309.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 322.

¹²³ Burkholder, *All Made Of Tunes*, 4–5.

The first movement, *Senza tempo–Moderato–Allegro–Andante*, unfolds in a sonata form (figures in square brackets refer to rehearsal numbers in the autograph score):

Introduction	[1] The Musicians' Entry [30] The Conductor's Entry
Exposition	[33] First theme – C minor [43] Transition [48] Second theme – G minor [81] Conclusion – Cadenza for Trombone solo
Development	[82-102]
Recapitulation	(condensed, no Second theme) [103] Quotation of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 [104] First theme [two bars after 105] Transition
Coda	[107] based on the second theme and the Introduction

The symphony begins with a theatricalised entry of the musicians. The scenic action is an important feature of this score, and reveals Schnittke as an experienced composer of music for film and theatre. The work could be compared to a slideshow, or a documentary: different 'frames' are conveyed by fragments of different sound sceneries. The very first instrument to be heard, the bells, instantly alert the listeners that something non-standard is about to happen, because of their association with the long-taboo church music. This 'tintinnabulation' is counteracted by trumpet, an instrument connoting military music, which might indicate that religion (symbolised by the bells) is suppressed by the state (symbolised by the 'military' trumpet). The remaining musicians arrive, each playing their own music; the composer sketches out their entries, but then lets them improvise. Schnittke notes that entire section up to rehearsal 33 can be completely improvised. This arbitrary mass of sound/noise was seen by Soviet authors as a symbol of chaos – as if the composer says: we live in a crazy, chaotic world and it is impossible –

and pointless – to try to write ordered, beautiful music.¹²⁴ The element of scenic realism also serves as a reminder that a performance does not start with its first notes, but earlier; Schnittke deconstructs and demystifies the institution of concert performance, thus crossing the barrier between art and reality and getting listeners involved with the drama unfolding before them.

When the chaos reaches its climax, the conductor – the authority – appears and tries to establish order; the musicians begin to tune up.¹²⁵ But the momentum of the preceding chaos is so strong that it starts all over again, and the conductor only succeeds at the third attempt. Apart from signifying chaos, the aleatoric mass of sound can now be read as a sign of rebellion against uniform thinking, and the musicians' refusal to conform to the conductor's instructions may be interpreted as advocating resistance towards authority. The subversion continues: Schnittke now deconstructs and demystifies the compositional process, because the thematic materials of the exposition are formed right in front of the listener. The first recognisable tonal centre is C minor at rehearsal 33, the key of Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 – the work that Schnittke will indeed quote by the end of this movement, probably as a signifier of fate and heroism. Another reason for channelling Beethoven might be his reputation of an independent individual, a free spirit, someone who also rebelled against the authorities.

Yet another subversive feature is that orchestral musicians 'sabotage' any attempt at establishing 'normal' symphonic thematism. At rehearsal 34 twelve layers of trivial tunes are played simultaneously, creating the first Ivesian *collage* in this symphony (among them one finds a ragtime in piano, several marches in brass, etc.). Since the drafts for the Symphony No. 1 were not available to me (I am not aware if they exist), I could not

¹²⁴ For example, Aranovskii claims: 'The formation of music as an ordered sequence of sounds is translated to the realm of realistic scenic action. [...] Music [...] emerges from chaos and then gets shaped into organised forms.' Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 159. Kholopova and Chigariova assert that 'The group of the themes of "harmony" is represented by particles of the sound world of classical symphonism. The group of the themes of "disharmony" is represented by the "zone of chaos" and the collage of quasi-quotations.' Kholopova and Chigariova, *Al'fred Shnitke*, 77.

¹²⁵ This 'trick' was first used by Rodion Shchedrin in his Symphony No. 2: Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 158, footnote 2.

determine which of these tunes are quotations, self-quotations, and/or paraphrases. In any case, Schnittke's intention was not to make these melodies clearly recognisable, but to emphasise their triviality by cramming them all in a collage.

When the first theme is finally formed at rehearsal 36, it is a chromatic 'recitative' that gradually takes the shape of a twelve-note row:

C – E ♭ – D – B – A ♭ – G – F – G ♭ – B ♭ – A – C# – E

Schnittke revealed that this theme (which also appears in the final movement) was taken from his own serial Violin Sonata No. 1 (1963); hence this is the first instance of a *self-quotation* in the symphony.¹²⁶ For a long time, 12-note music was anathemised in the Soviet Union; by quoting from his early serial work, Schnittke again pokes a finger in the 'official' eye. The last three notes of the series form an A major chord – but instead of ending the theme there, Schnittke adds a C minor chord, thus affirming C minor as the main key.¹²⁷ This decision to repeat three notes (C, E flat and G) confirms that, at this stage of his career, Schnittke was not interested in adhering strictly to the rules of dodecaphony, but instead he employed this 'twelve-tonish' theme as a symbol.

The theme is then 'developed' by means of sparse, disjointed, 'anti-phonetic' fragments in different orchestral groups, with constant changes of metre and tempo. Schnittke alternates between four types of textures in this movement: the brief thematic sections are usually followed by longer 'sonoristic' sections, which in turn occasionally morph into improvisational sections and collages. The most common cadential gesture is a crescendo and decrescendo on a single note or a cluster: this type of 'cadence' plays a prominent constructive role not only in this symphony but in Schnittke's Symphony No. 2 as well.

The transition is dominated by the repetitive 'licks' of rock and other trivial music genres, layered in a collage and ending with a massive cluster at rehearsal 47. According to Aranovskii, among the quoted (in fact,

¹²⁶ Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Schnittke*, 68. In the Sonata, the theme appears in the violin, and in the symphony it is also played by violins.

¹²⁷ Adamenko regards these two chords as Schnittke's monogram [AlfrEd eSchnittke]. However this is not very plausible because Schnittke does not employ all possible letters/notes (no D, no B i.e. H, no repeated E).

paraphrased) tunes one finds: a cancan, the song ‘Reve ta stohnye Dnepr shirokiy’ [Roar and Groan, Broad Dnepr], choruses of ‘estrada’ songs etc.; some of these popular songs could have been well known to Schnittke’s original audiences.¹²⁸ Schnittke himself indicated that many themes used in collages of the Symphony were borrowed from his incidental music scores; however, he did not specify which melodies he quoted or paraphrased.¹²⁹ Although many authors equate Schnittke’s employment of popular music with depicting the forces of evil, I would argue that the rock beats here also serve a subversive/rebellious purpose – because rock music was one of the stigmatised genres in the Soviet Union, as it was accused of promoting Western cultural values. Amidst these rock influences, Schnittke preserves links with the first theme, either by repeating melodic fragments (the melody in the oboe at rehearsal 39 is repeated in violins at 46 and two bars after 105, and one of the marches from the first collage, first heard in the trumpet at rehearsal 34, is repeated at 79) or by basing some of the ‘layers’ on the main series (for instance, the series is varied in bells at rehearsal 47).

The second subject is even more hopeless than the first: it consists of one note only, G, which constantly fails to develop into a theme. Schnittke here further undermines the heroism of the symphonic genre, by admitting his own impotence; the irony is strengthened by the fact that the first and second subjects are, nominally, in the traditional tonal disposition – tonic/dominant. It is as if he is saying: ‘I do want to write a proper symphony, but it is impossible!’ After this anti-theme, the second subject morphs into a constantly expanding sonoristic section: the church bells reappear, but here they sound as judgment day music, because they are surrounded by cacophonous chaos. To emphasise this effect, Schnittke *paraphrases* the ‘Dies irae’ sequence, which will play a very prominent role in the final movement. The culmination at rehearsal 77 features another *self-reference*: Schnittke quotes a march from the third movement (Allegretto) of his 1968 *Serenade* for five instruments. In Burkholder’s classification, this self-reference would qualify as a

¹²⁸ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 167.

¹²⁹ Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al’freda Shnitke*, 70. Ivashkin specifies that a ‘polka from the film *How Tsar Peter Got The Black Man Married* starts a chain of chaotic quotations in the first movement.’ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 115.

transcription, because in the Serenade the march appears in the clarinet, while here it is presented in Trumpet 2, but also as a *paraphrase*, because the theme is truncated. Even the employment of bells solo at the beginning of the symphony can be seen as a reference to Serenade, because the bells play a prominent role in the final movement of this crassly polystylistic work.

The exposition ends in an equally disturbed tone: at rehearsal 81 Schnittke prescribes a cadenza for trombone solo; the cadenza is written out in the score, but it can also be completely improvised. Since every attempt at establishing 'proper' symphonic thematicism has failed, the composer finally 'gives up,' allowing the soloist to play whatever s/he likes. This could be a further proof of Schnittke's unwillingness or inability to write a 'proper' symphonic exposition, but it can also be seen as another act of rebellion, because improvised music was also seen as troublesome in the Soviet Union. In a culture where artistic production was closely scrutinised and expected to glorify socialist progress, the incorporation of segments that allowed musicians to play as they pleased represented the composer's act of resistance and an expression of his urge for artistic and personal freedom. Schnittke's Symphony was by no means the first Soviet work to contain improvisational segments, but what strikes us here is their sheer amount and variety: the symphony contains aleatoric sections performed by the entire orchestra, formulaic improvisations for an incorporated jazz ensemble, fuzzy rock licks, as well as improvised cadenzas for individuals and groups of soloists.¹³⁰

To sum up, Schnittke crammed together everything that was undesirable in the Soviet musical culture into this movement's exposition: church bells, a 12-note theme, rock music, improvisation, while at the same time demystifying the process of composing a symphonic exposition and poking fun at the notion of triumphant symphonism.

The development proceeds in a similar manner; fragments of the first theme occasionally break through the sonoristic layers, improvised chaos and collages of banalities; all of these combine into a nightmarish soundscape. Throughout the development the strings play an aleatoric vibrant cluster in the high register: since this instrumental group has been codified in Schnittke's works (especially in concertos and sonatas)

¹³⁰ Medić, 'The Dramaturgical Function of Improvisatory Segments of Form,' op. cit.

as a substitute for human voices, these clusters can be heard as human moans, cries, squeals, aching, surrounded by a menacing chaos. They are again counteracted by the trumpet, the instrument associated with marches and other ‘official’ music. The message here could be that the state/military/police oppress the moaning mass. However random the development may seem, Schnittke claimed that he constructed it on the basis of the Eratosthenes Row, the sequence of prime numbers (1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 13, 17, 19, etc.), which determines the combinations of various motifs and their hybrids. Here we can observe the dialectics of rigid control and apparent chaos, typical of a number of Schnittke’s scores.

At rehearsal 100 the entire orchestra rebels: musicians are allowed to talk, or do whatever else they like, in the ultimate act of independence from symphonic conventions and official prescriptions. At rehearsal 102 Schnittke finally manages to establish the subdominant and dominant of C minor/major, thus preparing the recapitulation and making way for – Beethoven. Namely, Schnittke here quotes the last bars of the transition leading into the finale of Beethoven’s Symphony No. 5, as well as the first four bars of the finale itself. Schnittke possibly brings in Beethoven as an authority who could bring some order into this completely anarchic symphonic movement. Alas, Beethoven’s optimistic ethos, represented by this verbatim *quotation*, cannot save the day: at rehearsal 104 the quotation morphs into Schnittke’s own 12-note first theme, and only a few bars later, the recapitulation is brutally interrupted. This time the theme is played out as a full twelve-note series, ending in the same way as in the exposition – with the last three notes forming an A major chord, to be followed by a C minor chord. The final act of subversion is that the movement ends with the evocation of the unsuccessful second theme in G, presented as a pedal in low trombones¹³¹ – there is no tonal resolution, just leftovers of what could have been a symphonic theme, mixed with the obnoxious trumpet first heard in the Introduction. Gennadi Rozhdestvenskii, the dedicatee of the Symphony, supplied the idea that, after the end of the finale, the improvisatory beginning of the first movement (until the conductor enters) should be repeated;¹³²

¹³¹ Schnittke was inspired by the sound of airplane engines that he heard at the Vnukovskii airport in Peredel’kino. See Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al’freda Shnitke*, 65.

¹³² See Alfred Schnittke, ‘On Gennady Rozhdestvensky,’ in *A Schnittke Reader*, 76–77.

Schnittke confirmed that the idea to combine the Gorky Philharmonic with the Melodia jazz ensemble also came from Rozhdestvenskii.

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The second movement unfolds in a similar vein, but contrasts are even cruder, stylistic clashes even more ridiculous and, in accordance with the dramaturgical role of the scherzo, the entire movement is a grotesque joke. This movement is an excellent example of several complex methods of manipulating pre-existing music material, although it does not reference music by any other composers; instead, Schnittke based the entire movement on his own earlier scores. He described the form of this movement as ‘some kind of a hybrid of rondo and double variations’.¹³³ However, I prefer to define it as a mixture of rondo and ABA:

A (a) [1–7] **Scherzo** – ‘concerto grosso’ (ritornello): Allegretto, D major

Joined by other stylistic allusions:

[4] ‘the skeletons’ dance’

[5] ‘foxtrot’

[6] ‘ragtime’

[1 bar before 7] – ‘military march’ in C minor

b [7] ‘jazz’ & ‘Webern’

The echo of ‘march’ [two bars after 13]

a1 [16–22] ‘concerto grosso’ (ritornello)

Joined by other stylistic allusions

b1 [22] ‘jazz’ & ‘Webern’

Again with an echo of ‘march’ [26]

a2 [31–36] ‘concerto grosso’ (ritornello);

from [33] paired with the march from Serenade (here in E flat major)

b2 [36–42] ‘march’

b3 [42–57]

B [57] **Trio – Cadenza**

Transition [59] ‘sonorika’

A1 (a) [61–67] **Scherzo** – ‘concerto grosso’ (ritornello)

Coda [68] – The Exit of Musicians (the winds)

¹³³ Quoted in Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Schnittke*, 65.

The movement begins with a bright quasi-baroque concerto grosso in D major, scored for strings and harpsichord. In Burkholder's classification, this is a *stylistic allusion*, i.e. pastiche – a faithful simulation of an older style, but without the obvious reference. At the same time, this is a *self-reference*, because Schnittke took this theme from the second movement, 'Ballet,' of his *Suite in the Old Style*, completed just a few months before the symphony; moreover, as Schmelz has pointed out, the theme was previously used in Schnittke's scores for Elem Klimov's films *Adventures of a Dentist* and *Sport, Sport, Sport*.¹³⁴ Schnittke's treatment of the theme amounts to *transcription* (because in 'Ballet' it is scored for violin and piano, while here it is transcribed for the mock-baroque orchestra), but it also provides a basic structure, a background onto which Schnittke piles layers of a massive *collage*, in a manner akin to Ives's 'The Fourth Of July' from *Holidays Symphony* or the third movement of Berio's *Sinfonia*.

The carefree beauty of the concerto grosso is unsustainable, and it is soon suffocated by a mash of *stylistic allusions* (most of them actually self-quotations and paraphrases, taken from Schnittke's incidental music scores), resembling the noise heard while turning a radio knob:¹³⁵ one hears a waltz, a 'skeletons' dance,' foxtrot, ragtime, and the most intimidating one – a crass military march in C minor, sounding as if extracted from a socialist realist parade, and most likely employed here for the purpose of representing the oppressive, aggressive, militant state. The march asserts itself several times, and eventually manages to overwhelm all other materials. Thus, the Scherzo resembles Burkholder's description of *cumulative setting*, because the march is initially only hinted at, but it gradually expands, and it is only stated in its entirety at the end of the first Scherzo section, at rehearsals 41–42. Aside from this one, another march plays a prominent role from rehearsal 33: it is the same march that was borrowed from Schnittke's *Serenade* and featured at rehearsal 77

¹³⁴ Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 306–308. In the 1965 film *Adventures of a Dentist* [Pokhozhdeniia zubnogo vracha], this theme appears approximately 15 minutes into the film, when the young dentist who can perform dental procedures painlessly, becomes a local celebrity.

¹³⁵ Paul Griffiths stresses 'the importance of radio as a metaphor for composers as they moved away from the search for a new language to the discovery of the many languages already existing.' Idem., *Modern Music and After: Directions Since 1945*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, 167.

of the first movement; hence this is the first instance of Schnittke transferring material from one movement to another.

The complex of the second theme/episode consists of cool jazzy rhythms and chords intertwined with atonal utterances *a la* Webern. These are sharply opposed both to one another and to the merry concerto grosso. The banal waltz rhythm undermines any attempt at establishing a link (via Webern) to serious modernist music. This coexistence of incompatible elements is further parodied with interpolations of the intimidating C minor march.

The satirical and parodist character of this movement is further emphasised by the fact that the conventional Trio section (or episode C in a rondo) is substituted by a cadenza *ad libitum*. The cadenza can be performed either by a solo instrument, or a group of instruments, or the entire orchestra; it can be based on the themes provided by the composer or completely improvised. According to Schnittke, at the Gorky premiere this was a completely free improvisation by the jazz ensemble, while at the 1975 Tallinn performance conducted by Eri Klass it was an improvisation of the strings and the organist.¹³⁶ One might say that here Schnittke again ‘gives up’ composing – either as an act of subversive anarchy, or for the purpose of conveying his loss of faith in the possibility of creating art in the cacophonous and oppressive world.

In the recapitulation (A1), all the various materials from the Scherzo section are recalled at small distances, forming an increasingly dense texture; the merry concerto grosso is suffocated by the conglomerate of banalities. Schnittke quotes another march from his incidental music portfolio: the A major march that dominates the end of the movement (rehearsals 64–67) was originally a part of his 1965 music for the spectacle *Gvozdi* [Nails].¹³⁷

In the ensuing Coda Schnittke’s way of ‘getting rid’ of the wind instruments and their raucous march is by literally removing them from the stage. The flautist leads the entire wind ensemble and, as they leave

¹³⁶ Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Schnittke*, 68. The acclaimed 1988 live recording with Rozhdestvenskii conducting the Russian State Symphonic Orchestra, released by Chandos on CD CHAN 9417, features the duo of violinist Tatiana Grindenko and pianist Alexei Liubimov playing a hilarious collage-ish cadenza.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 69.

the stage, they improvise on the basis of the melody played by the flute. Although the ‘departing’ improvisation is designed with the entire wind ensemble in mind, Schnittke allowed the possibility that, if the stage is small, only the flute and brass may participate in the improvisation.

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Since Schnittke removed wind instruments from the orchestra at the end of the second movement, the third movement is principally scored for the strings. It unfolds in an arch form:

- Part 1 ‘Ascent’** [1-12]
- Culmination (axis)** [1 bar before 12]
at [12], the winds join in from behind the stage
- Part 2 ‘Descent’** [two bars after 12 until the end]

The initial motif of the first movement’s main theme – the minor third, C–E flat – is the basic constructive element here. The entire movement unfolds as a continuous stretch of strings *divisi*, which form a slow vibrant cluster. The lengthy first part, ‘ascent’ (120 bars out of 180), presents several stages of constantly growing textural waves. If we recall that in Schnittke’s expressive vocabulary the strings usually stand for human voices, then we might say that in the beginning of the movement people gradually awake and begin to ‘sing’ in a high register, louder and louder. This ever-rising sonic wave is occasionally challenged by other instrumental groups, but never interrupted – or at least not until a bright, celestial A major chord is reached.

This moment of bliss is crudely interrupted by an ominous C minor chord performed by the winds from behind the scene.¹³⁸ Since the C minor has already been codified as representing ‘fate’ or ‘doom’, the symbolism here is obvious – if there was ever hope of free speech, it is now extinguished. Thus a massive slump in the strings begins, giving the entire movement a dramatic shape of a rise-and-fall. This interpretation

¹³⁸ Obviously here Schnittke replicates the ending of the main theme from the first movement i.e. the chords of A major and C minor in succession.

is supported by Schnittke's own explanation that this movement represents 'lyrical sufferings';¹³⁹ thus Schmelz correctly observes that the third movement is not far removed from the symbolic structuring of Schnittke's earlier orchestral work *Pianissimo*, in which serialism was equated with brutal punishment.¹⁴⁰ In the symphony, the entire third movement (just like the 'serialised' portions of the first movement) is based on the Eratosthenes Row. As observed by Schmelz, 'Schnittke's reliance in this movement on the Eratosthenes Row is significant because the greatest impression of the First Symphony is one of a barely contained chaos, the freely cacophonous episodes standing out as emblematic of the whole.'¹⁴¹ Obviously, this impression is false, and in this movement Schnittke calculated 'everything that was possible to calculate.'¹⁴² Schmelz provides a detailed analysis of the serial method based on the Eratosthenes Row as employed by Schnittke in this movement.¹⁴³

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As if to emphasise the 'defeat' of the strings, the winds (which represent the oppressive forces) return to the stage in a slow procession at the beginning of the fourth movement, thus continuing the theatrical line of the symphony. They play a *collage*: a conglomerate of funeral marches, grotesquely piled atop of one another. Among them one finds several different sections from Chopin's 'Funeral March' – the third movement of his Piano Sonata in B flat minor; Grieg's 'The Death of Asa' from his *Peer Gynt* suite; a popular Soviet march 'Behind the corner'¹⁴⁴ etc. The composer claimed that he was inspired by his experience at the funeral of Mark Lubotskii's father, where he had heard several funeral marches simultaneously played at different parts of the cemetery. Although such a procedure is very similar to Ives's 'stream of consciousness' collages, Schnittke claimed that he was not familiar with Ives's *Holidays Symphony*

¹³⁹ Quoted in Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Shnitke*, 71.

¹⁴⁰ Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 311.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 309.

¹⁴² Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Shnitke*, 69.

¹⁴³ Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 310.

¹⁴⁴ Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Shnitke*, 69.

or any other collage-based symphonic work when he conceived the finale.¹⁴⁵ The funeral marches are coupled with other trademarks of socialist realist kitsch – including classical ‘hits’ (Johann Strauss’s waltz ‘Tales from the Viennese Forest’ and the beginning of Tchaikovsky’s Piano Concerto no. 1 – both presented in their original instrumentation, i.e. as outright *quotations*), folk dances etc. All unresolved tensions of the previous movements explode in this raucous finale, which is structured as follows:

Introduction	The first collage: [1–4] funeral marches [2] round dance [5] ‘Tales from the Viennese Forest’ [5 + 1] Tchaikovsky’s First Piano Concerto [7] jazz [8] round dance [9] cluster, leading into a ‘sonoristic’ section
Exposition	[14] First theme as a 12-note series [22] ‘Dies irae’ [26] Transition [34] Second theme – 14 different ‘Sanctus’ melodies [38] Conclusion
Development	[40] ‘Dies irae’ [53 + 2] First theme
Recapitulation	[80] First theme [83] Second theme of the first movement [89] Transition [90] Second theme – a new one
Coda	[96]

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 65–66.

The first sonata theme begins as a twelve-note series, with its pitches copied from the first movement's main theme:

C – E \flat – D – B – A \flat – G – F – G \flat – B \flat – A – C# – E

However, in the final movement the row occurs fully formed and it is presented as a canon on the background of bells. As if to emphasise the feeling of doom, created by the 12-note series and the ominous bells, gradually the theme morphs into the 'Dies irae' sequence. The employment of 'Dies irae' here amounts to *paraphrase*, because the original sequence is written for male voices and contains lyrics.

To counteract this gloomy predicament, Schnittke employs an unusual and, in this context, completely unexpected second theme, carrying the highest 'ethical index'¹⁴⁶ – fourteen 'Sanctus' melodies played simultaneously and supported by a C major chord.¹⁴⁷ The depiction of the 'forces of good' by religious music would become a staple of Schnittke's later works; however, this is the first time ever that he created a *quodlibet*.

Just like other good and beautiful themes in this symphony, this oasis of serenity is quickly destroyed. What follows is a development mostly based on 'Dies Irae,' alternatively presented in grotesque, gloomy and spooky outfits. The pathos of this sequence collides with all sorts of 'alien' materials, ranging from echoes of the classics to 'estrada' songs, rock solos, a cheesy tango (the majority of these stylistic allusions paraphrased from Schnittke's music for theatre) and, most remarkably, a lengthy, partially improvised jazz episode (from rehearsal 59 to 68).¹⁴⁸ In terms of quotational procedures, this episode also belongs to *stylistic allusions*. Although a majority of authors who have analysed this

¹⁴⁶ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 167. The term 'ethical indices' was later appropriated by Levon Hakobian in his analyses of Tishchenko's and Schnittke's works: see Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 246; 277.

¹⁴⁷ Schnittke took these 'Sanctus' melodies from Masses gathered in the volume *Graduale de Tempore et de Sanctis* (Ratisbonae, 1877, 8–54); see Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 84, note 14.

¹⁴⁸ Schnittke has remarked that the 'Dies irae' theme shares two pitches with a melody of a popular 'Schlager' which he used in the development; thus, in his own words, "'Dies irae" and the diabolic banality [teufliche Banalität] interlock here.' Cited in: Adamenko, *Neo-Mythologisation in Music*, 258.

Symphony believe this episode to be an epitome of commercial banality which destroys the contemporary artistic music, I have already quoted Schnittke's high opinion on jazz; hence it is possible to interpret this episode as another act of subversion/rebellion, since jazz was also one of the genres officially condemned in the USSR because of its American roots and because it was entertainment music unusable for propaganda purposes. Besides, jazz was based on 'uncontrollable' improvisation. Still, in the context of the funeral marches from the beginning of the movement and the doomsday announced by the 'Dies irae,' these jazzy grooves do sound banal and tasteless, like dancing at a funeral. From rehearsal 68 the march rhythms return, followed by ominous drumming and organ chords and ending at rehearsal 80 with the main theme of the symphony transformed so as to resemble 'Dies irae' – thus firmly establishing the gloomy predicament of the symphony.

After a brief but loud transition, resembling various 'themes of doom' from Romantic symphonies, Schnittke does not repeat any of the fourteen *Sanctus* melodies, but provides another *Sanctus* melody in a similar idiom,¹⁴⁹ again in C major, in a multi-voiced canon, beginning in the strings and spreading across the entire orchestra. This 'apotheosis,' beginning at rehearsal 91, is the final attempt at establishing positive thematicism and concluding the movement in a triumphant manner; or maybe here Schnittke mocks the notion of triumphant, bombastically optimistic apotheoses in major keys expected from Soviet symphonic composers. Either way, at rehearsal 96 the apotheosis crumbles: Schnittke's documentary (or rather, mockumentary) symphony is not likely to end happily. Schnittke recalls several themes from the previous movements, and then quotes the last 14 bars of Joseph Haydn's 'Farewell' Symphony No. 45 in F# minor. This is such an outright *quotation* that Schnittke does not even bother to write out Haydn's music, but only provides a written instruction that the last 14 bars of the 'Farewell' Symphony should be performed!

The orchestral musicians exit the stage and two violins are left alone to sing a sad farewell. But then the beginning of Schnittke's symphony is repeated verbatim, up to the moment when the authority (i.e. the

¹⁴⁹ Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Shnitke*, 69–70.

conductor) re-establishes control and silences the crowd. The symbolism here should be pretty obvious: there is no escape from oppression and dictatorship. The entire symphonic course is utterly pessimistic – there is no room for enthusiastic progress, no getaway; everything beautiful shall crumble and dissolve; every riot is silenced.

This may be the moment to quote Benjamin Boretz's definition of 'masterpiece culture':

In masterpiece culture, musical behaviour is strictly the symbolic behaviour of abstract ideas, idealized Figures, and schematized structures of quantified sonic particles [...] It is only when music is seen as something that is done by and among people, as a form of people's behaviour among other forms of behaviour, that real-time, people-size circumstances of history, culture, and experience become indispensably relevant, both as input to and as output from, our conceptions and practices of music.¹⁵⁰

It is possible to say that, with his Symphony No. 1, Schnittke created an 'anti-masterpiece': a blunt work firmly rooted in real life experiences and circumstances and intended to challenge every member of his audience. Schnittke's Symphony puts forth a strong argument that it is not only pointless, but also morally and spiritually harmful, to try to write beautiful and ordered music in the ugly and chaotic world. And the words that Boris Groys used to describe Ilya Kabakov's paintings could serve as a summary of Schnittke's aspirations imprinted on this symphony:

He views everyday life not as a set of stable forms, but as interwoven images, discourses, ideological attitudes, styles, traditions, and revolutions against traditions, all of which eternally comment upon each other.¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Quoted in Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 251.

¹⁵¹ Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*, 86.

Boris Chaikovskii: Symphony No. 2

Born in 1925, Boris Alexandrovich Chaikovskii (or Tchaikovsky) was a Soviet/Russian composer, pianist, teacher and professor. Although he was awarded the title of People's Artist of the USSR in 1985, he still awaits a Western (re)discovery such as the one that has recently befallen his friend and contemporary Mieczyslaw Weinberg. Chaikovskii studied at the Moscow Conservatory with Shostakovich, Nikolai Miaskovskii, Visarion Shebalin and Lev Oborin. One of Shostakovich's favourite students, he was held in high regard as a symphonist; however, his oeuvre mostly belongs to the 'lyrical,' moderately modernist branch of Soviet symphonism, making him an 'heir' of Miaskovskii and the likes. A prolific composer of symphonic, concertant and chamber music, Chaikovskii taught composition at the Gnessin Russian Academy of Music. He died in 1996. A comprehensive internet source dedicated to his life and work is maintained by *Obschestvo Borisa Chaikovskogo* [The Boris Chaikovskii Society].¹⁵²

I chose to discuss Chaikovskii's Symphony No. 2 (1967) here because a number of Soviet writers (including Schnittke himself) considered it one of the earliest examples of Soviet polystylism, as well as Chaikovskii's standout piece.¹⁵³ The symphony was premiered on 17 October 1967 at the Great Hall of Moscow Conservatory Great Hall, with Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Kirill Kondrashin. In 1969 Chaikovskii was awarded the State USSR Award for this work, and the orchestral score was published by the Moscow branch of the state publishing house *Sovetskaia muzyka* in 1970.

Symphony No. 2 is the only one in which Chaikovskii employed *paraphrases* – and only in its first movement, Molto allegro; thus, it will be the only movement analysed here. The second movement of this symphony is a Mahlerian Largo, but its melodic content is enriched with typically Russian inflections; and the third movement is unmistakably Shostakovichian. Despite only having three movements, in performance the symphony typically lasts about an hour.

¹⁵² <http://www.boris-tchaikovsky.com>

¹⁵³ Aranovskii described Chaikovskii's Symphony No. 2 as 'one of the best and most colourful Soviet symphonies of the late 1960s.' Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 63.

Exposition (in strings, harp and vibraphone)

- [1] First theme in D – Molto allegro, 4/4
- [10] Transition – very similar material, but varied
- [23] Second theme in F#, 3/2 – similar material
- [36] Conclusion

Exposition – repeated (in winds and percussion)

- [39] First theme
- [48] Transition
- [54] Second theme
- [65] Conclusion

Development – in several stages

- [68] First stage
- [82] Second stage – new theme in celesta
- [106] Third stage – preparation for the paraphrases
- [113] Paraphrase 1 –
W. A. Mozart, Clarinet Quintet K. 581
- [115] Paraphrase 2 –
L. van Beethoven, String Quartet in C minor Op. 18 No. 4
- [117] Paraphrase 3 –
J. S. Bach, 'Erbarne dich' from 'St Matthew Passion'
- [118] Paraphrase 4 –
R. Schumann, 'Des Abends' (from 'Fantasiestücke')

Recapitulation – compressed

- [120] First theme in D
- [123] Transition
- [127] Second theme in G
- [129] Coda in D

The first movement begins with a Prokofievian *brio*. Chaikovskii uses short, laconic motives, in many invariants; the tonal centre is D, but 'major' and 'minor' vacillate all the time, in the tradition of Russian 'peremennyi lad' [shifting mode]. There is hardly any motivic difference between the first theme, transition and the second theme (although the latter does establish a new tonal centre, F#). A peculiar feature of the

exposition is that it is heard twice – the first time in strings, harp and vibraphone only, and then repeated almost verbatim but scored for winds and percussion. Chaikovskii employs a massive orchestra, but not for the sake of sound amplification: what he aims for is a constant interchange of bright, relatively independent, differently coloured episodes. A ‘lyrical’ episode which concludes both expositions (at rehearsals 36 and 65 respectively) will reappear again in the crucial moment of development, at rehearsal 106.

This non-conflicting, vibrant exposition is not contradicted by the ensuing development, which proceeds in a very similar manner, providing another set of episodes, ‘variations’ on the familiar motives, different each time but nevertheless recognisable. A new theme in the celesta is introduced at rehearsal 82; it reappears again at rehearsal 108, after the ‘lyrical’ episode that ended the exposition. Chaikovskii seems to be preparing for a recapitulation; but instead he ‘digresses’ and offers a new episode consisting of a *medley* of *paraphrases*. Chaikovskii paraphrases the following pieces: Mozart’s Clarinet Quintet K. 581 (the second theme of the first movement), Beethoven’s String Quartet in C minor Op. 18 No. 4 (the beginning of the first movement), J.S. Bach’s ‘Erbarme dich’, No. 47 from his *St Matthew Passion* (the instrumental introduction, here assigned to the flute instead of the violin) and Schumann’s piano piece ‘Des Abends’ from *Fantasiestücke* Op. 12 (here performed by the strings).¹⁵⁴

Levon Hakobian notes that, at the epoch preceding Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 15 and Schnittke’s No. 1, this ‘island of nostalgia’ made an impression of ‘something radically new’ in Soviet music; however, he observes that in Chaikovskii’s oeuvre ‘this essay in “polystylistics” *avant la lettre* remained unique.’¹⁵⁵ Aranovskii believes that these themes by great classics ‘embody the principle of wholeness, which contrasts the disjointedness of author’s thematicism,’ and represent ‘signs of the inner peace of the composer, something organically belonging to him,

¹⁵⁴ Hakobian correctly identifies the composers paraphrased by Chaikovskii; however he does not specify which exact portions of the original pieces are recalled, and he erroneously states that Chaikovskii paraphrases ‘Agnus Dei’ from Bach’s Mass in B Minor, instead of ‘Erbarme dich.’ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 244.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 243; 245.

something hidden which infiltrates his artistic life.¹⁵⁶ Pyotr Klimov claims that the ‘feeling of internal emptiness is suddenly resolved by the appearance of small fragments of music by Mozart, Beethoven, Bach, and Schumann. The small excerpts, which are deliberately inexact in their rendition of the great composers, appear to come from the depths of the composer’s subconscious as the image of incorruptible beauty.’¹⁵⁷ Aranovskii also notes that

only after the episode with quotations we discover the unusual idea of the composer: the many-sided intonational elements which inhabit the entire exposition are, surprisingly (in some of their variants), revealed as related to the quoted themes. The form is turned upside down: it begins with what should be reached in the farthest stages of development – with short motifs, with small discretely organised structures, and arrives to what it should have started with – the whole themes.¹⁵⁸

Chaikovskii’s method therefore loosely resembles Burkholder’s *cumulative setting*: on the other hand, the four paraphrased themes form a *medley*. Since this medley ‘usurps’ the place where recapitulation should have been, the actual recapitulation is highly compressed, summarising all main motifs of the movement and ending with a brusque Coda.

When compared directly, the differences between Chaikovskii’s Symphony No. 2 and Schnittke’s No. 1 are striking. In Chaikovskii’s work, only the first movement contains paraphrases, which are (in accordance

¹⁵⁶ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 67. However, he believes that this episode actually belongs to the recapitulation, since he argues that the development ends much earlier: for him, the ‘zone of return to initial materials’ begins approximately at rehearsal 87. However, he admits that the materials are modified and appear in a different order than in exposition, and he even claims that ‘the gradual introduction of the initial thematic components, their intonational proximity, creates the impression that the recapitulation only prolongs the development.’ Hence, I argue that it is impossible to speak of a recapitulation at that point, as it is neither analytically nor aurally perceived as a return to the beginning. Compare: *ibid.*, 66–67.

¹⁵⁷ Pyotr Klimov, ‘The Symphonies of Boris Chaikovsky’ (trans. Tatiana Klimova), CD *Boris Chaikovskiy: Symphony no. 2 – Symphony with Harp*, Relief, 2005, 15.

¹⁵⁸ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 67.

with his overall non-conflicting dramaturgy) gradually prepared and thematically related to his own themes; hence the entire 'intonatsiia' of this movement does not appear schizophrenically disunited. Chaikovskii himself said: 'Overall, I have always been somewhat suspicious of citations and collages, and I still am... Nonetheless, I thought I could go that route this time, although I never used citations since then.'¹⁵⁹

While Schnittke's numerous, often crass and flamboyant quotations, self-quotations and paraphrases corrode the entire form, in Chaikovskii's work the classical medley is visibly isolated from the rest of the musical course – like an oasis, or a sanctuary. Chaikovskii lovingly embraces the classics; Schnittke throws the entire conglomerate of different musics into his 'stew' and lets it 'boil' and 'spill over.' Unlike Chaikovskii, Schnittke is anything but moderate(d); he ridicules the sonata form (preserved, if modified, by Chaikovskii), especially in the first movement, with his futile attempts to construct a 'proper' form. Finally, Chaikovskii's symphony contains no theatrical element, and overall, the themes representing 'positive forces' prevail – while the 'moral' of Schnittke's symphony remains ambivalent, and instead of indulging in nostalgia, he plunges into (self-)doubt, mockery, sarcasm and desperation.

To sum up, it is hardly justifiable to apply the adjective 'polystylistic' to Chaikovskii's Symphony No. 2, at least not in the sense that Schnittke theoretically defined and practically demonstrated it. Namely, although Schnittke's definition is broad enough to embrace such a work, what is decisively lacking in Chaikovskii's symphony is the risqué aspect of polystylism, the deliberate incongruity of the quoted material with the composer's 'original' themes, and an exploration of the narrative potential of this incongruity. Hence Symphony No. 2 remains an oddity (if a successful one) within Chaikovskii's oeuvre, and in the 1970s he decisively distanced himself from Schnittke and his brand of 'avant-gardism.'

¹⁵⁹ Quoted in Klimov, 'The Symphonies of Boris Chaikovsky,' 17.

Dmitrii Shostakovich: Symphony No. 15

Dmitrii Shostakovich's final Symphony No. 15 in A major, Op. 141 (1971) merits comparison to Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 not only because the two symphonies were written around the same time, but also because Shostakovich employed musical 'mementos' in his final venture into the genre – albeit in a manner quite different from Schnittke's own. Hailed by Aranovskii as 'the pinnacle of Soviet symphonism of recent years,'¹⁶⁰ the Fifteenth provides a good reference point as to what was the symphonic mainstream at the time when Schnittke launched his riotously polystylistic Symphony No. 1. Another reason for comparing these two works is that almost all authors whose contributions were published in the 1974 issue of *Sovetskaia muzyka* dedicated to Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 (V. Blinova, S. Savenko, G. Rozhdestvenskii, I. Barsova, B. Getselev, A. Kurchenko, M. Iakubov and Iu. Korev) compared this work to Shostakovich's No. 15, confirming again that it was the standard against which all other symphonic works at that time were measured.¹⁶¹

Symphony No. 15 is remarkably different from Shostakovich's previous two symphonies in that it reestablishes the symphonic canon. While Nos. 13 and 14 are genre-bending works, embracing elements of the genres of cantata and/or song cycle, No. 15 is, on the surface, a 'proper' instrumental symphony, unfolding in four movements, with the main theme of the first movement reappearing in the finale. However, with its emphasis on the scherzo-sphere and the lack of a triumphant conclusion, its symphonic cycle is a rather idiosyncratic one. The three sonata movements (the first, third and fourth) all gravitate towards the model of a 'demonic,' macabre scherzo, characterised by grotesque musical imagery.¹⁶² Shostakovich plays dangerous games in his scherzos, and nowhere is this more obvious than in his Symphony No. 15, a work which is believed to be addressing the issues of mortality and summing up one's lifetime achievements. Hakobian notes that 'with the Eighth

¹⁶⁰ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 68.

¹⁶¹ V. Blinova, S. Savenko et al., 'Obsuzhdaem Simfoniu A. Shnitke,' 12–25.

¹⁶² Soviet authors describe this as a 'typical St Petersburgian trait;' e.g. Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 69.

Quartet, Shostakovich opened the peculiar series of “Requiems” written by him in memory of his own [...] All his large-scale works composed during the last six years of his life contain nostalgically coloured quotations, allusions, other enigmatic “secret signs”.¹⁶³ Symphony No. 15 was a work of an aging and ailing composer; and, being an atheist, Shostakovich did not seek comfort in religion and promise of an eternal life – for him, death was the definitive end.

The symphony unfolds as a unified whole; the second, third and fourth movements are played continuously. The first movement nominally establishes the main key, A major. However the minor mode actually prevails – both in this movement and the rest of the symphony.

The form of the first movement, ‘Allegretto,’ is as follows:

Exposition	beginning – [8] First theme, A major/minor [8] – [9] Transition [9] – [15] Second theme & closing group, E major
Development	[15] – [36]; from [30] Culmination from [33] Transition towards Recapitulation
Recapitulation	[36] – [39] First theme, A major/minor [39] – [4 bars before 41] Transition [41-4] – [47] Second theme, G major [43] First theme reappears
Coda	[47] – end

* **paraphrases of Rossini** appear at [4], [14], [26 - 4], [38] and [51]

Although Shostakovich himself stated in the foreword to the symphony that the first movement described ‘childhood – just a toy shop, with a cloudless sky above,’ there are reasons to doubt his claim. The first

¹⁶³ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 229; 238–239.

theme, the 'leit-theme' of the entire symphony,¹⁶⁴ contains a dance-like rhythm in 2/4, resembling a polka; however, far from being an irreverent dance, in Shostakovich's oeuvre the influx of trivial genres usually has a negative connotation.¹⁶⁵ After being initially performed by a solo flute, from rehearsal 4 onwards the theme appears in bassoon solo. The popular dance is burdened with chromaticism – and indeed, near the end of the movement the theme will morph into a 12-note row.

The second theme, nominally in the dominant key of E major, reaches its full chromatic potential immediately – the theme consists of three consecutive 12-note rows (the first and third rows are the same). However, these rows are not subjected to a full dodecaphonic treatment, instead serving just as chromatic melodies.¹⁶⁶ Besides, the rhythm of the bizarre polka is maintained; thus the second theme brings in limited thematic contrast. Throughout the symphony, twelve-note themes abound; however, Shostakovich completely ignores serial orthodoxy, and the not-quite-12-note themes are treated in the exact same manner as the de-facto-12-note themes.

At rehearsal 12 Shostakovich introduces a *paraphrase* (i.e. a slightly altered quotation) of Rossini's *William Tell* overture, which is to reappear four more times in the course of the movement, always in the dominant key of E major. Although this musical reference is instantly recognisable, it is actually carefully prepared both rhythmically, tonally and texturally by the preceding musical course, thus offering no real contrast either; in Shostakovich's musical universe, polkas, 12-note rows and the heroic *William Tell* sound quite similar. As for the reason for paraphrasing Rossini, one can only speculate that Shostakovich is playing with (and potentially mocking) the notion of heroism – including his

¹⁶⁴ Aranovskii notes that 'the semantics of the leit-theme has two sources: the syntactic function of the cadential formula, and the intonational layer of town music.' Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 76.

¹⁶⁵ Aranovskii states that 'if we listen carefully to the main theme of the first movement [...] and hear the elements of modal deformation (replace E flat with E, A flat with G sharp), we discover under the surface a link to a popular town tune from the 1920s.' Ibid., 73. This tune must have been known to members of Shostakovich's original Soviet audiences, especially to those who were of the same age as the composer.

¹⁶⁶ On Shostakovich's employment of 12-note themes in his works from the 1960s and 1970s see Schmelz, 'Shostakovich's "Twelve Tone" Compositions.'

own.¹⁶⁷ To emphasise this (auto-)irony, Shostakovich employs a variety of self-references, most notably to his long-blacklisted Symphony No. 4, as well as the Symphonies Nos. 5 and 10¹⁶⁸ – the two works that helped him reestablish his reputation after the 1936 and 1948 denunciations respectively. These self-references are not exact, i.e. they are *paraphrases*; Shostakovich employs them as reminiscences.

The development begins with a stylistic allusion to a military fanfare, performed by trumpets and a small drum. However, this short bout of heroism is again subjected to trivialisation, as it is followed by solos for xylophone and piccolo. The interplay of dance and march rhythms, based on the first and second themes, denies both any seriousness, and makes them sound like the ‘popular kitsch’ extracted from the everyday Soviet context. The appearance of the transposed second subject after the third Rossini quote is a quiet anticlimax of the development, followed by a culmination plateau, in which the first theme morphs into 12-note rows. The reappearance of the fanfare first heard at the beginning of the development at rehearsal 32, followed by the second theme, initiates the transition towards the recapitulation, which unfolds in a manner more or less similar to the exposition, except for the fact that the two main themes are brought even closer together: the first subject embraces elements of the second, while the second theme is transposed to G and followed by the augmented first.

The second movement (Adagio – Largo – Adagio) quickly establishes a sharp contrast to the mock-heroic first; it starts with a *funebre* chorale in brass in F minor. The form of the movement can be said to consist of three parts (A B A1), with each one of them featuring various shorter segments in alternation:

¹⁶⁷ Shostakovich said: ‘I don’t myself quite know why the quotations are there, but I could not, could not, not include them.’ *Story of a Friendship: The Letters of Dmitri Shostakovich to Isaak Glikman, 1941–1975* (trans. A. Phillips), Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2001, 315.

¹⁶⁸ The beginning of the development resembles the Coda of the second movement of No. 4. The parallel thirds in the development (3 bars after rehearsal 18) and aggressive chords in brass at rehearsal 43 recall the ‘Scherzo’ from No. 10. Eric Roseberry also discovers a reference to the rhetorical figure that builds up to the recapitulation of the third movement of No. 5 at rehearsal 23. See Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniia*, 77; Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process*, 221.

A – chorale

- a [52] – [53] chorale in brass, F minor
- b [53] – [56] 12-note theme, cello solo
- a1 [56] – [57] chorale
- b2 [57] – [60] 12-note theme (transposed)
- c (transition) [60] – [62] a new 12-note theme in violin+chorale

B – funeral march

- a flutes + low strings, B minor [62] – [64]
- b low brass + Cb. [64] – [65]
- a1 [65] – [66]
- transition [66] – [67]
- b1 [67] – [68]
- a2 [68] – [69]
- c the same 12-note theme as in Ac [69] – [70]
- b2 (culmin.) [70] – [74]
- a2 (transition)[74] – [75]

A1

- a [75] – [76]
- b [76] – [78] 12-note theme from Ab invert.+another row
- transition [78] – [79]
- coda [79] – [80] based on Aa
- transition [81] – [82]

Just as in the first movement, the treatment of 12-note themes does not abide by the rules of Schoenbergian dodecaphony. The expressive 12-note themes introduced by the solo cello and solo violin at rehearsals 53 and 60 respectively are based on ascending broken triads, and bear unmistakable tonal connotations. Throughout the movement the composer applies familiar intonations associated with depictions of tragic, mournful and sorrowful subjects – a high point of the latter being the 12-note cello theme itself. The tendency to employ self-references continues here. Aranovskii observes that this movement ‘fascinates with a wealth of associations to other pages of Shostakovich’s music. Its very first sounds – the tragic thirds – bring to mind some pages from the Fifth and Eleventh Symphonies, and the Twelfth Quartet.’¹⁶⁹ Also, the minor

¹⁶⁹ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 78.

second ‘sighs’ ten bars after rehearsal 52 resemble the beginning of Symphony No. 10,¹⁷⁰ while the funeral march (one bar after rehearsal 62) recalls the first movement of Symphony No. 6.

The third movement, ‘Allegretto,’ predominantly unfolds in G major, the key first introduced in the recapitulation of the first movement. This is another scherzo in the sonata form and an even time signature (2/2):

Exposition	[81] – [89]	First theme, G major
	[89] – [90]	Transition
	[90] – [95]	Second theme, E minor
	[95] – [96]	Transition
Development	[96] – [102]	
Recapitulation	[102] – [106]	First theme, G major
	[106] – [107]	Transition
	[107] – [109]	Second theme, G# minor
	[109] – [110]	Transition

This movement is short and its developmental section rather insignificant, thus giving the entire movement the character of an intermezzo between the grievous Adagio and the hefty finale. The first theme begins with four consecutive 12-note themes played by a clarinet (a b a b1 – b being the inversion of a; b1 its variation). After the transition, the 12-note rows are repeated by the first violins, and followed by a brief thematic development – again, Shostakovich completely disregards the dodecaphony rulebook. The second theme is not based on rows. However it is related to the first theme in terms of rhythm and instrumental colours. The asymmetric melody is first performed by the first violins, and after a brief transition containing the composer’s monogram D-S-C-H (transposed) in brass, the theme is given to the clarinet – thus the same instruments perform both themes, only in reverse order.

The development is based on two short motives, one of which is new, the other based on transitions between the two appearances of the

¹⁷⁰ On Shostakovich’s ‘obsession’ with the minor semitone see Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process*, 331–333.

first subject in the exposition. Apart from the D-S-C-H motto, the movement contains Mahlerian allusions (e.g. four bars after rehearsal 86) and more auto-references, since the beginning of development and the transition towards finale recall the last pages of the second movement of Shostakovich's own Symphony No. 4. Despite this movement's unpretentiousness, the fact that the composer's monogram only appears here makes it important within the symphony's overall fatalistic mood.

However, it is the final movement (Adagio – Allegretto – Adagio – Allegretto) that boasts the greatest wealth of musical references, starting from the very first bar.

- Introduction** [110] – [113] References to Wagner's Ring and Tristan
- Exposition** [113] – [119] First theme, A minor
 from [116] references to Wagner
 [119] – [120] Transition, based on the 'Ring' motif
 [120] – [124] Second theme, E minor with elements of the first
 [124] – [125] Conclusion based on the 'Ring' motif
- Development** [125] – [130] Passacaglia
 a 14-bar theme in G# minor appears 5 times
 [130] – [134] Development proper
 from [133+4] Chorale from the beginning of the second mov.
 [134] – [136] Passacaglia – culmination;
 [136] – [138] Codetta
 [138] – [139] Transition – monogram B-A-C-H in strings
- Recapitulation – themes appear in reverse order**¹⁷¹
 [139] – [142] Second theme, B flat minor
 [142] – [143] Transition based on the 'Ring' motif
 [143] – [146] First theme, A major
 [146] – [147] Transition
- Coda** [147] – end; sums up materials from the entire symphony

¹⁷¹ Aranovskii vaguely defines the form of this movement as 'consisting of four major sections' with a Coda. See: idem., *Simfonicheskie iskaniia*, 79. However, I prefer to interpret this movement as a sonata form with themes in reverse order in the recapitulation.

The introduction is based on Wagner: the ‘motif of fate’ (presented as a chorale in brass, followed by timpani, as in the third act of *Götterdämmerung*) is coupled with Tristan’s motif in strings. Apart from its symbolic meaning and significance, the ‘fate’ motif also performs a purely formal role in this movement, as it functions as a means of punctuation, separating the various segments of form. The motif also shares the first three notes with the (transposed) B-A-C-H monogram, and indeed B-A-C-H will appear in its untransposed form in the further course of the movement. Shostakovich gradually incorporates the two Wagner leitmotifs into his own melodic fabric; hence, just as in the case of the Rossini *paraphrase* in the first movement, he adopts these familiar themes and makes them his own.¹⁷² By self-identifying with these motifs, Shostakovich elevates the final movement of his final symphony into the realm of ontological reflections on the subject matters of death and fate (represented by references to *Tristan* and *The Ring*) and eternal values (represented by J. S. Bach’s monogram).

The first subject is a beautiful, song-like, elegiac melody in A minor (although the key initially appears to be D minor). Aranovskii notices that the melody bears resemblance to Glinka’s elegy ‘Ne iskushay menya bez nuzhdi’ [‘Do not tempt me needlessly’]; therefore Shostakovich here *paraphrases* the ‘father’ of Russian music, possibly with the purpose of reinforcing the lasting artistic achievements.¹⁷³ As the theme develops, the Wagner quotations merge with it (from rehearsal 116 onwards); just like in the previous movements, Shostakovich transforms them into his own music, and even uses the ‘Ring’ motif as a means of punctuation. The second theme does not introduce a great deal of contrast, instead continuing the overall elegiac mood.

The development presents us with a surprise, as its main theme is an obvious *paraphrase* of the ‘invasion’ theme from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 7. The invasion theme is melodically distorted, its rhythm trivialised to resemble a waltz, and it is assigned to murky low strings; obviously not much is left of Shostakovich’s heroic pathos.

¹⁷² Several authors who analysed Symphony No. 15 noticed this: see Ivashkin, ‘Shostakovich and Schnittke: The Erosion of Symphonic Syntax,’ 254; Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process*, 76.

¹⁷³ Aranovskii, *Simfonicheskie iskaniiia*, 71.

The ensuing passacaglia contains five appearances of this theme; from rehearsal 130 it is augmented and presented in its original and inverted forms simultaneously. A chorale in horns (4 bars after rehearsal 133+4), recalling the beginning of the second movement, announces the culmination, which is again based on the passacaglia theme. The transition spells the monogram B-A-C-H in strings, and the recapitulation is reversed: the second theme is repeated before the first. The key of the second theme is B flat – probably utilised to establish symmetry with the G sharp from the development (as compared to the main key of A). The first theme is subjected to a change of mode: instead of A minor, it is in A major: even the ‘Tristan’ motif which precedes it is transformed in this way!

The Coda recalls several motifs from previous movements: the passacaglia, two random 12-note rows, the first theme of the first movement, after which the rows are repeated. The final bars belong to the passacaglia’s rhythmical pattern, which slowly dies away, in a way comparable to Prokofiev’s final Symphony No. 7. Shostakovich’s instruction to the conductor to perform the ending *morendo* suggests that, after revisiting his musical memories, from the ‘toyshop’ remembered from his childhood, to his heroic days, the composer is ready to face death. As observed by Roseberry: ‘This symphony is, perhaps of all [Shostakovich’s] works, a late self-portrait [...] The idées-fixes are symbols of childhood and death; the quotations from his own works a review of past achievements in serious or satirical vein.’¹⁷⁴

There are numerous similarities between Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 15 and Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1, at least on the surface level. Both symphonies are highly referential, impregnated with quotations, self-quotations, paraphrases, stylistic allusions, as well as other means of musical mimesis; nevertheless, the exact ‘meaning’ of all these is elusive and open to interpretation. Both composers use recurring motifs or ‘idées fixes’ for the purpose of achieving sometimes haunting, sometimes downright comic or grotesque effects. Both works display a cinematic quality, with different frames pieced together – which comes as no surprise, given that both Shostakovich and Schnittke spent many years writing music for film and theatre. Both works unfold in the seemingly

¹⁷⁴ Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content, and Thematic Process*, 221–224.

traditional four movement instrumental cycles; but while one can notice Shostakovich's desire to reestablish a symphonic cycle after the programmatic and/or vocal excesses of his previous four symphonies (Nos. 11–14), Schnittke conceives his work as an anti-symphony: the basic outlines of all traditional movements are there, but they are thoroughly shaken from the inside, to the point of completely negating historical models. Schnittke asks himself and the audience whether there is a point in writing symphonies today. Judging by the fact that he went on to write eight more symphonies, his ultimate answer would be a resounding 'Yes!'

The general 'intonatsiia' of both works is largely based on popular tunes, as embodiments of everyday kitsch. Schnittke's approach, however, is by far the more radical one: not only does he use more musical references (and self-references), but the way in which they are stitched together usually results in their heavy distortion. Both composers adhere to the Mahlerian ideology of representing the forces of 'good' with references to the classics; Roseberry argues that in Shostakovich's No. 15 tonality plays a life-affirming role, while atonal sections, especially 12-note rows, symbolise death/evil/destruction.¹⁷⁵ A similar treatment of 12-note themes can also be seen in the finale of Schnittke's symphony. In both symphonies the scherzo elements abound, as well as the elegiac/funebre ones; however, in Shostakovich's work, scherzos stand for the sardonic, black humour of the elderly, atheist composer saying farewell to life and reminiscing, either lovingly or regretfully, events from his life. On the other hand, Schnittke's polystylistic clashes and mashes are crass jokes of a rebellious young composer for whom, at this point of his life, nothing is taboo.

Both composers borrow pre-existing music: Shostakovich only references the 'classics' – Rossini, Wagner, Glinka, Mahler, Bach – and employs numerous self-references which are easily recognisable, because they refer to his hugely popular works. On the other hand, Schnittke quotes and paraphrases many more composers, from Thomas de Celano to Johann Strauss; as for auto-references, they mostly stem from his obscure film and theatre music scores, and thus they serve more as the composer's internal joke than something that would be obvious to an average listener. Both composers paraphrase popular tunes, but while

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 353–355.

Shostakovich transforms them to resemble his own idiom, Schnittke deliberately leaves them to contradict each other and the rest of his symphonic fabric. As observed by Ivashkin: ‘When in Shostakovich the images of his own musical past meet up in collages with images from the history of music an astonishing effect of objectivisation occurs, of introducing the individual to the universal.’¹⁷⁶ Unlike him, Schnittke does not achieve objectification, because he does not even try.

In his final venture into the symphonic genre, by means of the numerous self-references, the elderly and ailing Shostakovich reaffirmed his style and reevaluated his own importance. Having established his authorial voice long ago, Shostakovich was aware of his legacy and felt no need for innovation. Thus, despite the allusions and quotations, the symphony sounds unmistakably Shostakovichian; and its anti-hero – the composer himself – is granted a lyric, elegiac finale.

On the other hand, Schnittke, still only in his thirties at the time of writing his Symphony No. 1, had no intentions of leaving this world anytime soon. He was still searching for his own personal ‘style,’ having just turned his back on serialism, whilst attempting to escape from several overpowering influences: those of Shostakovich himself and the academicism of his epigones; of Denisov and his overt advocacy of serialism; of the officially favoured accessible, educational and spirit-lifting music; and finally, of the flux of popular musics ranging from modernised folk dances to rock and jazz. But instead of isolating himself from these influences, Schnittke brought them all together and confronted them. The anti-hero of his symphony is really *anti-* i.e. against everything, and is accordingly assigned a most raucous and self-deprecating finale. Over the course of years, Schnittke would develop the mixture of styles into his own (poly-)style; the ingredients in his stylistic mashes would continue to change, and yet, their very combination would make them sound unmistakably Schnittkean.

¹⁷⁶ Ivashkin, ‘Shostakovich and Schnittke,’ 254.

Postlude to Polystylism

Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 played a key role in establishing the idiosyncratically Soviet brand of polystylism. However, while his own theoretical foundation of polystylism was broad enough to embrace various works by composers both old and new, maverick and moderated, Russian/Soviet and Western, my analysis of the ways Schnittke actually put his theory into practice, and a comparison of his symphony with other contemporary works have made it possible to revise and narrow down his definition and to determine more precisely the key features of a polystylistic work.

First of all, the very presence of stylistically diverse borrowed material does not automatically mean that a work will be polystylistic. Two of the works analysed above, Chaikovskii's Symphony No. 2 and Berio's *Sinfonia*, each contain only one movement that employs a variety of stylistic references, while the remaining movements unfold in 'uniform' styles typical of their composers. Even the movements that do contain borrowings actually do not stray from the composers' basic styles – moderated modernism¹⁷⁷ in the case of Chaikovskii, and post-avant-garde in the case of Berio. Furthermore, the borrowed material might be treated in such a way that its introduction into the work is carefully prepared and thematically related to the composer's own material, which enables a seamless merger; and, as the example of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 has demonstrated, the borrowed material may in fact reinforce the authorial presence. Therefore, for a work to sound polystylistic, a degree of incongruity must be present; the 'old' and 'new', the 'foreign' and the 'author's own' should not be joined in a loving embrace, but thrown together. Besides, in a 'true' polystylistic work, the collision of styles must constitute the basis of the entire work; thus, despite the presence of the medley of classics in Chaikovskii's symphony, a collage on Mahler in Berio's, and a web of references in Shostakovich's, in all these works their respective composers' personal styles actually prevail.

¹⁷⁷ For a discussion of Russian/Soviet moderated modernism after 1950 see Ivana Medić, 'Moderated Modernism in Russian Music After 1953,' in Dejan Despić and Melita Milin (eds.), *Rethinking Musical Modernism*, Belgrade, Institute of Musicology, Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, 2008, 195–204.

On the other hand, although riotous incongruity is one of the basic ingredients of Schnittke's Symphony No. 1, the work does not come across as a schizophrenically disjointed, Frankenstein-like patchwork, due to the fact that Schnittke achieves a careful balance between order and chaos. The order is maintained by means of employing recurring motifs, transferring thematic material from one movement to another, employing the same cadential gestures in several movements, and by serialising some portions of the symphony.

In a polystylistic work, the tension between musical materials of different origin emphasises their respective qualities and reinforces their narrative potential. The very reason for confronting diverse styles in a polystylistic work is not a mere desire to create an acoustic experiment or a formalist exercise; instead, these 'styles' need to be chosen for their dramatic/mimetic/associative potential, i.e. with respect to their ability to represent certain phenomena and to 'narrate' stories. Often present is a cinematic, documentary quality in the way these musical 'frames' are put together. Schnittke's symphony also contains theatricalised segments; however, these are not 'compulsory' and in a majority of his polystylistic works Schnittke does not indulge in such overt theatricality.

The employment of complex procedures of manipulating borrowed material such as *collage*, again, does not guarantee that a work will be polystylistic. In fact, one may note that the importance of collage in Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 is greatly overstated. Extraordinary as it may be, collage is just one of the many methods employed by Schnittke in this symphony. In fact, in this work he used almost all procedures listed by Burkholder: *quotation* and *paraphrase* (both of his own and of other composers' music), *modelling*, *quodlibet*, *stylistic allusion*, *transcription*, *cumulative setting* and *collage*. More importantly, it is not the sheer quantity of these procedures that makes a polystylistic work, but the fact that they are applied in a way that emphasises their mutual incongruity and increases their semiotic/signalling potential. Thus, in his Symphony No. 1 Schnittke successfully employed the polystylistic idiom to tell the tale of a repressed artist struggling to find his voice in the chaotic world surrounding him and realising the futility of writing 'beautiful' and 'orderly' music.

TOWARDS POSTISM VIA SPIRITUALISM

In recent years I have written a number of articles dedicated to one of the most remarkable tendencies in late Soviet music: a fascination with religious and mystical topoi.¹ This trend, commonly referred to as *spiritualism*, was distinguished by attempts at reconnecting with a supposedly lost religious past and reviving the spiritual side of art. The sheer number of ‘religious’ pieces composed in the Soviet Union in this period – something over 100 – testifies to the impact of this trend (although this number is still fairly small compared to the endless lists of ‘official’ works). The spiritual quest was quite urgent in a society in which atheism rooted in dialectical materialism was the official doctrine and whose citizens had been, more or less, deprived of religious comfort for many decades. Thus, it is not surprising that numerous Soviet ‘unofficial’ composers renounced dialectical materialism, searched

¹ These include: Medić, ‘*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*: Representation of the Cross in Alfred Schnittke’s Symphony No. 2 St Florian,’ *The Challenges of Transition: Arvo Pärt’s ‘Transitional’ Symphony No. 3 between Polystylism and Tintinnabuli*, *Musikgeschichte in Mittel- und Osteuropa*, Heft 16, Institut für Musikwissenschaft der Universität Leipzig, 2015, 140–153; ‘On Stolen Sketches, Missing Pages and Playing a Musical Detective: Catalogue of Alfred Schnittke’s Sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection,’ in: Mirjana Veselinović-Hofman et al. (eds.), *Music Identities on Paper and Screen*, Belgrade, Faculty of Music, 2014, 348–361; ‘Idioti, đavoli i grešnici: opere Alfreda Šnitke’a’ [Idiots, Devils and Sinners: Alfred Schnittke’s Operas], *Muzički talas* 42, 2013, 10–22; ‘Gubaidulina, Misunderstood’, *Muzikologija/Musicology* 13, 2012, 103–123; ‘Skriveni rekvijemi i mise Alfreda Šnitke’a: Klavirski kvintet, Rekvijem iz muzike za Šilerovog *Don Karlosa* i Druga simfonija *Sveti Florijan*’ [Alfred Schnittke’s Hidden Requiems and Masses: Piano Quintet, Requiem from the Stage Music for Schiller’s *Don Carlos*, and Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*], in: Sanja Pajić and Valerija Kanački (eds.), *Jezik muzike – Muzika i religija* [The Language of Music – Music and Religion], Kragujevac, Faculty of Philology and Art, 2012, 25–39; “‘Drugarice’ Ustvol’ska i Gubajdulina: O statusu kompozitorki u Sovjetskom Savezu’ [‘Comrades’ Ustvol’skaia and Gubajdulina: The Status of Female Composers in the USSR], *Genero* 14, 2010, 69–92.

for spiritual values and developed a fascination with the powerful taboo that was religion. Schnittke explained this ‘spiritual awakening’ in these words: ‘Our current fascination with what we were deprived of for decades is the fascination people feel for what they have been starved of.’² This religious revival was part of a broad trend in Soviet society, especially among the intelligentsia, who had lost belief in the viability of the communist system.³ Religion (in the broadest sense of the word) offered an intellectual and moral stimulus, an alternative to official prescriptions and proclamations. George Kline observed in 1968:

The genuinely religious surrogate for traditional religion is limited to a small but apparently growing group of young Soviet intellectuals – mainly poets, writers, and artists – and an increasing number of university students. Their position may be defined, tentatively, as a ‘philosophical’ and non-ecclesiastical theism, in some cases quite close to pantheism.⁴

Kline noted that the young intellectuals found role models in ‘three giants of twentieth-century Russian literature:’ Marina Tsvetaeva, Boris Pasternak and Anna Akhmatova.⁵

Victoria Adamenko discussed prohibitive state politics towards religion during the periods of the Khrushchev Thaw and the Brezhnev Stagnation, which ‘saw new assaults on religion, despite a general opening-up of society during the “Thaw” (1954–1964),’ and asserted that ‘religious persecution continued until Gorbachev’s *Perestroika*.’⁶ She

² ‘From Schnittke’s Conversations with Alexander Ivashkin,’ 7.

³ On the relationship between the church (especially Russian Orthodox Church) and the Soviet state, and the official attitude towards religious music, see Michael John, *Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Geistigkeit? Requiem-Vertonungen in der Sowjetunion (1963–1988)*, Berlin, Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 1996, 10–37.

⁴ George L. Kline, *Religious and Anti-Religious Thought in Russia*, Chicago/London, University of Chicago Press, 1968, 168–171.

⁵ Ibid. See also: Dimitry V. Pospelovsky, ‘(Orthodox) Religious Revival and (Russian) Nationalism’ in *Soviet Studies on the Church and the Believer’s Response to Atheism*, Basingstoke/London, Macmillan Press, 1988, 146–175.

⁶ Adamenko, ‘Faith Through Scepticism,’ 166.

observed that ‘state-imposed atheism clashed with reemerging, spontaneous religiosity in private intellectual and artistic lives.’⁷

It is not surprising that music (and art in general) played a special role in the society that had witnessed the horrors of war, purges and gulags, and in which artists and their audiences jointly suffered, so that the latter turned to the former for guidance and comfort. Among prominent Soviet composers, Shostakovich in particular was regarded as the chronicler of his time. As explained by Gennadi Rozhdstvenskii, ‘he was not just the composer, but the Pimen;’⁸ and young ‘unofficial’ composers, Schnittke in particular, were eager to step into Shostakovich’s shoes.

Throughout the 1970s the composers of the ‘unofficial’ clique gained anti-conformist credibility in the eyes of the ‘generation of the sixties’ by acting as moral and spiritual guiding lights; and several composers embraced the roles of spiritually evolved creators, practising believers, ascetically devoted to their art. Whether these composers did so out of a deep psychological necessity, ‘hungry’ curiosity, or because it was in vogue is hard to determine. In any case, the ‘starved’ Soviet intelligentsia readily bonded with them and concert performances of ‘unofficial’ music became intellectual and spiritual substitutes for religious worship, the sites for pilgrimage or mass exorcism.

Michael Kurtz observed that ‘in Russia, especially Moscow, illustrious artists command admiration and fervor bordering on religious devotion’⁹ and that this reverence extended beyond composers to some performers as well: for example, he notes that the pianist Maria Iudina (who was closely associated with the unofficial composers) ‘usually wore a dark dress resembling a nun’s habit’¹⁰ on stage, and that ‘people came to her performances as to church services.’¹¹

Ivashkin observed that in the 1970s and 1980s Schnittke enjoyed an enormous and unusual popularity:

⁷ Ibid., 167.

⁸ Gerard McBurney, ‘Encountering Gubaydulina’, *The Musical Times*, Vol. 129 No. 1741, 1988, 121.

⁹ Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 44.

¹⁰ Ibid., 24.

¹¹ Ibid.

All performances of Schnittke's music were important events for Russian listeners: in it they found the metaphysical ideas and spiritual values which were lacking in life during the seemingly endless years of revolution, terror, thaw, Cold War, or stagnation.¹²

In his recent book *Modernism and Orthodox Spirituality in Contemporary Music* Ivan Moody provides comprehensive discussion of the Russian/Soviet composers' responses to the challenges posed by the 'change of icons' after the October Revolution. He analyses selected works by Georgii Sviridov, Rodion Shchedrin, Galina Ustvolskaia, Arvo Pärt, Edison Denisov, Alfred Schnittke, Sofia Gubaidulina, Giia Kancheli and other composers who referenced Russian Orthodox tradition (although some of them were not Orthodox Christians).¹³ Dorothea Redepenning offers an extensive, though incomplete list of Soviet 'religious' works from the 1960s onwards. Her list comprises 80 compositions (some of which, such as Kabalevskii's 1962 *Requiem*, have nothing in common with spiritualism except the title); yet it omits numerous important works, including, for example, all of Pärt's *tintinnabuli* works and Alemdar Karamanov's symphonies.¹⁴ Such omissions are unsurprising, given that, as a result of the official intolerance of religious music, many works by Soviet composers had to be 'renamed in Soviet,' as Gubaidulina aptly put it.¹⁵ For example, Gubaidulina's own work *Seven Words* was published in Moscow as 'Partita for cello, accordion and string orchestra,' and the subtitles were removed; Pärt's 1976 works *Sarah Was Ninety Years Old* and *By the Waters of Babylon We Sat Down and Wept* were renamed *Modus* and *In Spe* respectively; and Karamanov had to conceal religious inspiration behind his numerous symphonic works and to declare them to be 'pure' works of absolute music.

¹² Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 215.

¹³ Ivan Moody, Chapter 5 'Icons Inverted: Russia and Beyond,' in: *Modernism and Orthodox Spirituality in Contemporary Music*, Joensuu/Belgrade, International Society of Orthodox Church Music and the Institute of Musicology SASA, 2014, 96–159.

¹⁴ Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Bd. 2, 735–737. On the genre of Requiem in the Soviet Union see John, *Auf dem Wege zu einer neuen Geistigkeit?*, 1996.

¹⁵ McBurney, 'Encountering Gubaidulina,' 120.

From Poly- to Monostylism

Throughout the 1970s, Alfred Schnittke displayed an interest in liturgical genres, such as requiem, mass or hymn. As revealed in his conversations with Shul'gin, Ivashkin and others, his main philosophical concern at that time was the dialectics of life and death and the idea of overcoming death. Schnittke introduced a new, 'meditative' type of dramaturgy,¹⁶ which in many cases replaced the sharp conflicts characteristic of his earlier works. He put an emphasis on the intuitive side of the creative process and stated: 'The change of my relation towards music meant not only that I changed the technique. The main thing was that it stopped being the matter of primary concern to me and became secondary.'¹⁷

When describing the difficulties he ran into while composing the Piano Quintet (1972–1976) Schnittke admitted that he was only able to finish the work after he had given up thinking about the technique(s) and started to write whatever he liked.¹⁸ However, Schnittke's alleged preference for a more intuitive method of composing music does not apply to all his works written in this period; and the detailed sketches for the simultaneously written Symphony No. 2 (1979), *Passacaglia* for orchestra (1980) and Symphony No. 3 (1981) prove that Schnittke by no means abandoned the method of controlling portions of his works (or, in the case of *Passacaglia*, an entire orchestral work) by elaborate (quasi-) serial procedures.¹⁹ The sketches for *Passacaglia* are especially detailed and they prove that even the most randomly sounding portions of this work are strictly calculated; the serialisation does not apply to pitches only, but first and foremost to parameters such as rhythm, durations, instrumental colours and dynamics.

¹⁶ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 93.

¹⁷ Quoted in *ibid.*

¹⁸ Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Alfreda Schnittke*, 74–75.

¹⁹ I have analysed Schnittke's sketches for these three orchestral works and how they relate to finished scores in: Medić, 'Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: Representation of the Cross in Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*?' 'The Sketches for Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 and What They (Don't) Tell Us;' 'The Tide is High: Alfred Schnittke's *Passacaglia* for large orchestra', paper read at the 10th ICMSN Surrey MAC Conference, Guildford, University of Surrey, 11–14 September 2017.

A majority of scholars who analysed Schnittke's post-First-Symphony output claimed that he simplified his musical language; however, this is another generalisation that does not apply to all of his works, and not in an equal measure. Schnittke's aim for a greater accessibility, 'simplification' and 'democratisation' of his musical language was almost certainly inspired by his goal to bridge the gap between his 'serious' music on the one hand and his work for film and theatre on the other. In 1977 he stated: 'Everything we write is our own. What we do for cinema is a musical material, it is a subculture too, but it's still one musical world.'²⁰

Schnittke's 'change of course' was not a wholly personal phenomenon, because it reflected the general tendencies of those years: 'Something changed in the air'²¹ – as the composer stated himself. Svetlana Savenko observed that 'the severe self-restriction in the full freedom to choose the preferred expressive means, lyricism and simplicity – could be noticed not only in Schnittke's output, but also in the work of other composers, both domestic and foreign.'²² Of course – with hindsight – this coincided with the onset of postmodernism in the West.

Among the important works that precede Schnittke's Symphony No. 2, some are obviously polystylistic, such as Concerto Grosso No. 1 (1977), while others, such as the Requiem from the Stage Music for Schiller's *Don Carlos* (1975) or Piano Quintet aim towards a profounder synthesis of contrasting musical layers. Therefore, a majority of authors who have engaged with Schnittke's output after Symphony No. 1 claim that the presence of various stylistic layers no longer constitutes polystylism, i.e. that he more-or-less abandoned it around the mid-1970s and opted for a more synthetic style, often dubbed *monostylism* or *monostylistics*.

²⁰ Quoted in: Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 94.

²¹ Quoted in: *ibid.*, 92.

²² Quoted in: *ibid.* Alexander Ivashkin notes: 'At about the same time one may observe similar changes in the music of other post-avant-garde composers who had started their musical careers in the 1960s with compositions which audiences found shocking. Arvo Pärt and Krzysztof Penderecki are two such examples. Both of them were accused, like Schnittke, of "commercial primitivism" and of copying old idioms. However, neither the *Stabat Mater* by Penderecki nor *Tabula Rasa* by Pärt merely borrows the old ideas of Gregorian chant; they give new meaning to the older forms in a modern context.' Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 131.

It was probably Galina Grigor'eva (Russian musicologist and Edison Denisov's wife) who coined the term *monostylistics* in her 1989 book,²³ and her ideas were developed in a book on Schnittke's symphonies by her student Dziun Tiba. He asserted that 'Schnittke's new style, labeled by Grigor'eva as *monostylistics* actually grew out of the change of the composer's approach to the interrelation between tonality and atonality;' and quoted Schnittke's comment on the Violin Concerto No. 3 (1978):

For a long time I was occupied with the interaction between tonality and atonality. Here I have tried to establish a uniform informational system, which organically unites both sound worlds, i.e. not only through contrasting actions such as day-night, but also through mediatory transitions, such as morning-evening, universal nuances and colour modulations.²⁴

Other Russian scholars also adopted the term *monostylistics*, or coined similar ones; for example, Kholopova and Chigariova argue that in works such as Requiem and Piano Quintet 'one witnesses a peculiar kind of monostylistic organisation that picks contrasting layers and synthesises them.'²⁵ They also state that in some works from the 1970s Schnittke achieved a synthesis of 'incompatible discursive layers – tonal and atonal, polystylistic and monostylistic etc.'²⁶ Obviously, these authors drew on Schnittke's own commentary, quoted above; however, by the late 1970s it had already become pointless to regard tonality and atonality as 'incompatible' sound spheres, not to mention that here they contradict their own claim that 'monostylistics' was a late, more synthetic phase of polystylistics.

²³ Galina Grigor'eva, *Stilnye problemy russkoi sovetskoi muzyki vtoroi poloviny XX veka (50-80-e gody)* [Problems of style in Russian Soviet music of the second half of 20th century (from 1950s to 1980s)], Moscow, Sovetskii kompozitor, 1989, 138. See also Galina Grigor'eva, 'Polystylistik und Monostylistik in der sowjetischen Musik der achtzig Jahre' in Hermann Danuser, Hannelore Gerlach, Jürgen Köchel (eds.), *Sowjetische Musik im Licht der Perestroika*, Laaber, Laaber Verlag, 1990, 91–99.

²⁴ Tiba, *Simfonicheskoe tvorchestvo Al'freda Shnitke*, 67, footnote 25.

²⁵ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Al'fred Shnitke*, 94.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 96.

Svetlana Savenko notes that ‘Schnittke’s new musical language does not disturb with its semantic wealth, as is the case with polystylistics, but streams towards wholeness.’²⁷ Alexander Ivashkin argues that ‘[f]rom the polystylistic surface of his earlier compositions Schnittke goes deeper into the sphere of a new musical language in which all the various stylistic elements are combined into a single homogeneous whole.’²⁸ Later Ivashkin clarifies that over the years Schnittke’s style ‘has become more monolithic. Obvious quotations and allusions have been disappearing as his approach to stylistic colouring has changed.’²⁹ Hakobian states that ‘[t]he writing in the Requiem is emphatically concise and simple, almost exempt of any “polystylistics” (Schnittke himself calls it “naïve”).’³⁰ Redepenning, possibly under the influence of Russian writers, also adopts the term ‘monostylistics’ for this ‘smoothing of stylistic differences.’³¹

While all these authors have correctly noticed Schnittke’s changed attitude towards stylistic interplays, in my opinion it is a gross overstatement to say that he abandoned his previous creative methodology in favour of ‘monostylistics.’ His ‘new’ style from the mid-1970s may be more contained than the overt theatrics of his Symphony No. 1, but it is nevertheless eclectic and all-inclusive. Besides, Schnittke’s own definition of polystylism is flexible enough to include works such as Requiem, Piano Quintet or Symphony No. 2. Although they lack the remarkable collages as seen in Symphony No. 1, they do fulfil the basic conditions for a polystylistic work, i.e. they comprise a multitude of different stylistic layers which are brought together in various, often incongruous combinations for the sake of fully utilising their narrative potential.

As for Schnittke’s reasons for toning down the excesses of his first symphony, Richard Steinitz’s observation on George Crumb’s quotation-filled compositions is applicable here; he argues that quotations

²⁷ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 113.

²⁸ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 131.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 138.

³⁰ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 278.

³¹ Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Bd. 2, 689. See *ibid.*, 699, for further observations on monostylistics.

worked only as long as tonal and atonal were strictly separate categories, implying a similarly strict separation between ancient and modern. Once composers began re-establishing tonality, and working again in traditional genres [...] such quotations as Crumb's lost the shock, the inadmissibility, on which their sentimental effect depended.³²

This is a valid point, and in this respect, it is possible to argue that Schnittke reduced the number of quotations and other direct musical references in his later works because they had lost the ability to surprise and excite, and because their continued employment would have resulted in the works sounding dated and predictable.

Schnittke's Piano Quintet, begun in 1972 was the first of his works to employ the 'meditative dramaturgy'.³³ The Quintet's five movements are unified by a single musical thought; apart from thematic unity, there is an overall uniformity of dynamics, tempo and character of the entire cycle, and all movements are joined *attacca*. Ivashkin observes that '[t]he music generally sounds quite traditional, but it is impossible to say which tradition comes to mind,' and he eventually labels it 'a post-avant-garde presentation of the Romantic interpretation of a Baroque ideal'.³⁴ The fifth movement is cathartic and triumphant; Schnittke has explicitly linked this 'brightening' of mood towards the end with the idea of 'overcoming death'.³⁵ The Quintet is dominated by the motif B-A-C-H, which would find great use in Schnittke's later works. Apart from this monogram, the sequence 'Dies irae' also features prominently – thus establishing a link to Schnittke's Symphony No. 1.³⁶

³² Quoted in Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 160.

³³ Kholopova and Chigariova use another term, 'non-conflicting dramaturgy', introduced by V. P. Bobrovskii. See Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 114. According to them, this is not a dramaturgy of action, overcoming difficulties, qualitative transformation, but a dramaturgy of stasis, remaining/existing in a chosen mode.

³⁴ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 131.

³⁵ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 113–114; Shul'gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al'freda Schnittke*, 75–76.

³⁶ I have analysed sketches for the Quintet in: Medić, 'On Stolen Sketches, Missing Pages and Playing a Musical Detective.'

The Concerto Grosso No. 1 for two violins, harpsichord, piano and string orchestra is another important work predating the Symphony No. 2. With its profusion of quotations and simulations, superposition of different styles, contained within a resurrected old Baroque genre, the Concerto Grosso follows the theatrical polystylistic line as seen in the Symphony No. 1. Three stylistic layers collide in the Concerto Grosso: the composer's own music, the layer of quotations, ersatz-quotations and stylistic allusions to the music[s] of the past, and the paraphrases of the banal music of everyday world – which, again, recalls the Symphony No. 1. However, the overall form of the Concerto Grosso anticipates that of the Symphony No. 2, as both works unfold in six movements that constitute more-or-less symmetrical cycles.

Schnittke's Symphonies Nos. 2 and 4 (1984) are closely related, not only because both works belong to the genre of vocal symphony (quite common in the Soviet Union at the time), but also because both deal with religious topoi and, by means of quotation, paraphrase or simulation, engage with sacred music. However, in the Second Schnittke relates to the Catholic tradition, while the Fourth reveals his ecumenical conviction. As discussed by Emilia Ismael-Simental, the traditions represented in this work include:

Russian Orthodox music as represented by a major tetrachord taken from Butsko's model of the extended Znamennyi mode [...] plus references to the style of processional hymns. Catholic Church music is evoked by a minor tetrachord and allusions to plainchant. The Protestant faith is invoked through a six-step scale (B-C#-D-E#-F#-G#) plus textural features from Lutheran chorales. Jewish synagogue music is hinted at with a chain of trichords (A#-B-C, D#-E-F and so forth) transposed a fourth each time.³⁷

Although Schnittke was not an ethnic Russian, Ismael-Simental shows that he made extensive use of the *Znamennyi rospen*, one of the main systems of chant in the Russian Orthodox Church, in a number of his works starting from 1966 until the late 1980s.³⁸

³⁷ Emilia Ismael-Simental, 'Alfred Schnittke and the Znamennyi rospen', in Gavin Dixon (ed.), *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 33.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 30–58.

Schnittke's Symphony No. 2 offers an uneasy mix of the genres of mass and symphony. Schnittke occasionally allows the two genres to blend in together (by means of thematic, harmonic and structural connections), only to separate and confront them again; and the polystylistic mixture comes almost as a side-effect. This symphony demonstrates a shift from the overtly theatrical polystylism typical of its predecessor towards a less flamboyant idiom, which nevertheless embraces and juxtaposes various pre-tonal, tonal and post-tonal styles, ranging from quasi-archaic polyphony to serialism and micropolyphony. The *quotations* of Gregorian chant form the basic thematic core of the symphony. However, Schnittke also employs *quodlibets*, *paraphrases*, *modelling* and *stylistic allusions*. All these references to various historical styles or specific works are assigned a precise semiotic purpose, i.e. the composer selects musical codes and styles most appropriate for the depiction of a Biblical narrative. In particular, the central segment of the symphony, 'Credo,' showcases an almost cinematic representation of Christ's life and death, with quotations of Gregorian chants utilised for the initial and final declarations of faith and encompassing the harshly dissonant 12-note passacaglia of the Crucifixion and the micropolyphonic reverberation of the Resurrection. Throughout the work Schnittke employs a variety of compositional devices to represent the symbol of the Cross and convey religious imagery.³⁹ In several movements he does not even attempt to integrate chants into the symphonic fabric; this is related to his idea of 'crossing' two sound worlds, which are gradually brought closer together towards the middle sections of the symphony, only to be separated again in the final two movements. This idiosyncratic half-mass/half-symphony reflects Schnittke's quest for his elusive national, cultural and religious identities. He felt cut off both from the symphonic matrix of the German/Austrian symphonic tradition (exemplified here by the composer who inspired him – Anton Bruckner), and from the Catholic confession and its cultural heritage. Thus, the symphonic tissue represents Schnittke's comments and reflections on the Mass: sometimes genuinely faithful, sometimes doubtful, sometimes joyful, sometimes ecstatic and sometimes unrelated to the mass – like afterthoughts.

³⁹ I have analysed Schnittke's depiction of the Cross in the Symphony No. 2 in: Medić, 'Crucifixus etiam pro nobis: Representation of the Cross in Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*'.

Arvo Pärt: Symphony No. 3

Estonian composer Arvo Pärt (born in 1935) wrote his first three symphonies between 1966 and 1971. Each one of them is unique and quite different from the Shostakovichian symphonic model that was prevalent among this generation. In particular, Pärt's Symphony No. 3 is an unusual and striking work, unlike anything else written in the USSR at that time.⁴⁰

Arvo Pärt showed an early promise already in 1959 when he won the first prize at the All-Union Young Composers' Competition. By the time he graduated from the Tallinn Conservatory in 1963, he could already be considered a professional composer, because he had been working as a recording engineer with the Estonian Radio and writing music for the stage and film. In spite of living in the 'provincial' Baltic republic of Estonia, Pärt was at the forefront of the belated 'second avant-garde', and his 1960 *Nekrolog* op. 5 was one of the first compositions in the USSR to employ serial technique; moreover, his music was well known in the Soviet capital Moscow, at least among his fellow non-conformist composers. Pärt continued to use serialism until the mid-1960s, albeit combined with other compositional methods. His 1964 *Collage über BACH* was one of the first examples of what was to become known as Soviet polystylism.⁴¹

Written in 1971, Pärt's Symphony No. 3 is often dismissed as a product of his creative crisis. It is the only work completed during the otherwise unproductive eight-year period between *Credo* (1968), Pärt's final polystylistic piece,⁴² and a rush of works from 1976–1977 which

⁴⁰ Some parts of this chapter were previously published in: Medić, 'The Challenges of Transition: Arvo Pärt's 'Transitional' Symphony No. 3 between Polystylism and *Tintinnabuli*,' 140–153. Reprinted with permission granted by the publisher.

⁴¹ For a comparison of the role and significance of polystylism in Pärt's and Schnittke's oeuvres see Medić, "'I Believe... In What?,' 96–111.

⁴² *Credo* is one of Pärt's numerous 'Bach' works: it is based on the C major Prelude from the first volume of J. S. Bach's *Well-Tempered Clavier*. Pärt's other 'Bach' works include the already mentioned *Collage über B-A-C-H* for oboe and strings, as well as *Wenn Bach Bienen gezüchtet hätte* for piano, wind quintet, string orchestra and percussion (1976) and *Concerto piccolo über B-A-C-H* for trumpet, string orchestra, harpsichord and piano (1994).

introduced his new *tintinnabuli* style. In the early 1970s, Pärt wrote a few ‘transitional’ compositions in the spirit of early European polyphony, but the Symphony No. 3 is the only finished work that he did not withdraw. He also continued to write applied, incidental music to make a living, however he excluded these works from his catalogue.

According to Paul Hillier, in the mid- to late-1960s Pärt developed a keen interest in Orthodox Christianity; he found a role model in Heimar Ilves, one of the most outspoken (and overtly religious) professors at the Tallinn Conservatory, who was dismissive of contemporary music.⁴³ His view of atonal music as music without the presence of Divine Spirit ‘powerfully fuelled Pärt's own growing disenchantment with the avant-garde.’⁴⁴ Pärt's *Credo* caused a furore after its premiere, not because of the employment of avant-garde techniques (which by 1968 had already become old hat), but because of its obvious religious connotations.⁴⁵ In spite of the abundance of avant-garde techniques, paired with an overall constructivist procedure, *Credo* revealed Pärt's ‘loss of faith’ in serialism and other avant-garde techniques (which are here used to depict ‘the evil’) and anticipated his evolution from serial constructivism to the minimalist constructivism of his *tintinnabuli* works. As I have observed in my analysis of *Credo*, the explicit and implicit dualisms confronted in this work – tonality versus atonality, order versus chaos, construction versus destruction, peace versus war, forgiveness versus vindictiveness, Christianity versus atheism, affected the composer very intensely; his future works would not be based either on traditional tonality, serialism, or aleatorics – it seemed that Pärt had exhausted these techniques in *Credo* and had no intention of ever using them again.⁴⁶ Thus he began looking for other alternatives to the socialist realist canon.

⁴³ On Ilves's influence on Pärt see Paul Hillier, *Arvo Pärt*, Oxford University Press, 1997, 67–68.

⁴⁴ Ibid. In contrast to Pärt, some of his non-conformist contemporaries, such as Nikolai Karetnikov, were happy to continue writing serial music despite undergoing religious conversion and becoming practising believers.

⁴⁵ On the circumstances surrounding the premiere and reception of this work see Hillier, *Arvo Pärt*, 58; Nick Kimberley, ‘Starting from Scratch’, *Gramophone* Vol. 74, No. 880, 1996, 14.

⁴⁶ Medić, ‘I Believe... In What?’ 102.

In order to develop his abstractly-tonal (but, actually, not functionally tonal) *tintinnabuli* style and to dissociate it completely from socialist realism, Pärt had to return to the origins of tonality. Thus, after completing *Credo*, he immersed himself into a study of pre-tonal music including Gregorian chant and French and Franco-Flemish choral music from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries: Guillaume de Machaut (c. 1300–1377) Johannes Ockeghem (c.1410–1497), Jacob Obrecht (c.1457–1505), Josquin des Prez (c.1450–1521) et al. This music was literally unknown in the USSR at that time and was only in the early stages of its revival by the newly-founded ensembles such as Volkonskii's *Madrigal*. Hence in the Symphony No. 3 serialism, aleatorics and tonality are bypassed in favour of old church modes and various pre-classical polyphonic techniques.

This transitory phase did not entirely satisfy the composer and he entered into another five-year period of creative silence, while he resumed his study of early music. Finally in 1976 Pärt re-emerged with a new compositional technique that he invented and to which he has remained devoted to this day. He called it *tintinnabuli* (in Latin, 'little bells') and said:

I have discovered that it is enough when a single note is beautifully played. This one note, or a silent beat, or a moment of silence, comforts me. I work with very few elements – with one voice, two voices. I build with primitive materials – with the triad, with one specific tonality. The three notes of a triad are like bells and that is why I call it tintinnabulation.⁴⁷

Having found his new voice, there was a rush of new works: *Für Alina*, *Fratres*, *Cantus in Memoriam Benjamin Britten*, *Tabula Rasa* etc. As Pärt's music began to be performed in the West, whilst his frustration with Soviet officialdom grew, in 1980 he and his family emigrated, first to Vienna and then to Berlin, where he still lives.

Symphony No. 3 is cast in three movements, played without a break. David Fanning has described it as a study in rhythmic layering which

⁴⁷ Cited in: Richard E. Rodda, liner notes for Arvo Pärt *Fratres*, I Fiamminghi, The Orchestra of Flanders, Rudolf Werthen (Telarc CD-80387).

translates the archaic statements into modern terms.⁴⁸ As such, this symphony is unique both in the context of Pärt's oeuvre and Soviet symphonism in general, although it does bear certain resemblances to Pärt's previous two symphonies. The movement titles in his Symphony No. 1 (1964) suggest pre-classical polyphonic models ('Canon,' 'Prelude and Fugue'). Pärt employs a variety of polyphonic techniques for the purpose of creating neo-stylistic syntheses, and then mixes them with freely employed twelve-note segments and almost minimalistic repetitive passages. In that respect, especially remarkable is the 'Fugue', which does not sound like a fugue at all, and occasionally resembles early minimalist works (although it actually predates them).

The differences between Pärt's Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3 are more remarkable. Similarly to *Credo*, his Symphony No. 2 is characterised by a free employment of twelve-note rows, quotations, sonoristic effects, neo-baroque forms, all of these presented on the background of a quirky interplay of tonality and atonality. Remarkable is a quotation of Petar Ilyich Tchaikovsky's children's piece *Sweet Daydream* towards the end of this predominantly bleak and tragic piece. As observed by Merike Vaitmaa: 'The naïve beauty of the Tchaikovsky quotation [...] sounds fragile and defenseless in the immediate presence of an aggressive nightmare created by modern expressive means.'⁴⁹

In his Symphony No. 3, Pärt does not set the tonal and atonal forces in confrontation. All main motifs are modelled on Gregorian tunes, featuring a narrow intervallic span and gradual movement in seconds; moreover, a majority of them are mutually related and/or derived from one another. However, as mentioned, Pärt does not employ actual quotations. If we add to this equation the odd minimalistic-repetitive moment, and the unusual effect produced by the Ars Nova cadential turn known as the 'Landini cadence',⁵⁰ the overall impression is that of a mock-archaic early modernism. The most obvious role model is Igor

⁴⁸ David Fanning, 'The Symphony in the Soviet Union (1917–91),' in: Robert Layton (ed.), *A Guide to the Symphony*, Oxford University Press, 1995, 292–325.

⁴⁹ Merike Vaitmaa, liner notes to CD *Arvo Pärt: Symphonies 1–3 – Cello Concerto – Pro et Contra – Perpetuum Mobile* (BIS CD 434).

⁵⁰ David Fallows, 'Landini Cadence,' *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusic-online.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/15943>

Stravinsky (1882–1971) – from his early neo-classical works including the *Symphony of Psalms* (1930) to the late ‘religious’ works, such as *Canticum Sacrum* (1955) and *Requiem Canticles* (1966). One also finds echoes of an earlier Northern European symphony, Jean Sibelius’s *Symphony No. 6*, completed in 1923 and influenced by Palestrina. Moreover, some of Pärt’s homophonic textures closely resemble Erik Satie’s (1866–1925) ‘religious’ works written during his *Order of the Rose and Cross* period, while the relentless, repetitive textures anticipate early minimalism.

The symphony’s three movements are joined *attacca*, emphasising its seamless flow and organic development. The form of the entire cycle can be argued to be a combination of sonata form and sonata cycle. The form of the first movement falls into following sections: introduction (from rehearsal 1) containing the main theme, exposition (rehearsal 3), and development (rehearsal 9) with a brief coda (rehearsal 14).⁵¹ This formal division is merely provisional, because the exposition is actually developmental, and the entire movement is based on a free interplay of short motifs, all of them closely related to one another. Pärt employs polyphonic and homophonic textures in alternation, in order to produce some contrast; however, the overall thematic and harmonic unity of the movement decisively contributes to a predominantly non-conflicting dramaturgy of the piece.

The introduction contains two motifs, the first one ‘a’ based on an embellishment of a single note, performed by oboe and clarinet in unison, with an addition of a trumpet from bar 7 emphasising the intervals of perfect fourths and fifths, while the second motif ‘b’ is derived from it, but contains a leap upwards and contrasts the ‘a’ with the brutish sound of low brass. The motif ‘a’ is actually an old musical trope known as the ‘circular figure’ (*circulatio*); according to Tim Smith, this figure, characterised by departures and returns to the central note, was first described in 1650 by Atanasius Kircher as the aural equivalent of the circle, representing either God or the Sun.⁵² Smith argues that

⁵¹ My analysis differs from Hillier’s in several important respects. Compare to Hillier, *Arvo Pärt*, 68–73.

⁵² Tim Smith, ‘*Circulatio* as Tonal Morpheme in the Liturgical Music of J. S. Bach,’ *Ars Lyrica: Journal of Lyrica Society for Word Music Relations* 11, 2000, 78.

Bach was familiar with this extra-musical connotations of this figure at least since 1732, and that he employed it rather consistently in conjunction with the words ‘Christus’ (Christ) and ‘Kreuz’ (Cross).⁵³ And since Bach was one of Pärt’s role models and a common point of reference, it is hardly a surprise that he would often draw on Bach’s musical symbolism.

Gottfried Eberle has discussed the use of the *circulatio* trope in Schittke’s Piano Quintet,⁵⁴ while I have discussed Schnittke’s depiction of the Cross by various means, including the *circulatio*, in his Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*.⁵⁵ However, the employment of the *circulatio* by Arvo Pärt in the Symphony No. 3 actually predates both Schnittke’s works by several years. And while it is possible that Pärt’s employment of this figure was merely accidental, I would argue that, in the light of the fact that the Symphony No. 3 was preceded by the *Credo*, a work which expressed Pärt’s admiration for Christ’s teaching, and followed by his spiritually infused *tintinnabuli* works, it is very plausible that the *circulatio* figure is employed in the Symphony No. 3 deliberately and with a full awareness of its connotations, i.e. with the purpose of representing Christ’s suffering and crucifixion. This, in turn, lends a wholly new extra-musical undercurrent to this work of ‘absolute music’. While it is not my intention to offer a ‘programmatic’ reading of this symphony, the reader should be aware of the fact that the dramaturgy of the piece might have been inspired by Christ, and that some of the formal idiosyncrasies could be explained by this hidden programmatic content.

Both motifs from the introduction, ‘a’ and ‘b’, end with an *Ars Nova* cliché, the ‘Landini cadence’. The *circulatio* and the Landini produce a remarkably archaic effect, although it is unclear which exact past they evoke, as these influences are actually separated by several centuries.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Gottfried Eberle, ‘Figur und Struktur von Kreuz und Kreis am Beispiel von Alfred Schnittkes Klavierquintet,’ in: Jürgen Köchel et al. (eds.), *Alfred Schnittke zum 60. Geburtstag*, Hamburg, Hans Sikorski, 1994, 46–54.

⁵⁵ See Medić, ‘*Crucifixus etiam pro nobis*: Representations of the Cross in Alfred Schnittke’s Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*.’

I movement

- Introduction** beginning – [3] Motifs 'a' and 'b' in G# minor
- Exposition** [3] – [6] First theme ('c') in B ♭ minor, followed by a fugato
[6] – [9] Second theme ('d') in G# minor
- Development** [9] – [14]
- Closing group** [14] – [16] ends in F minor

II movement (begins attacca)

- Development** [16] – [30] begins in D minor, ends in F minor

III movement (begins attacca)

Continuation of Development

- Section 1** [30] – [37] in D minor
- Section 2** [37] – [46] in D (Phrygian)
- Recapitulation** [46] – [48] Introduction ('a') in B minor (Dorian)
[48] – [50] First theme ('c') in G# minor
[50] – [51] Second theme ('d') in G# minor
- Coda** [51] – end G# minor

The exposition of the first movement begins with the motif 'c' also derived from 'a', performed by clarinets in parallel octaves and distinguished by a swift movement in triplets; it takes up the role of the first theme of the sonata. A *fugato* ensues with different instrumental groups imitating the theme: however, all imitations are at the interval of prime/octave, so there is no contrast between *propostae* and *rispostae*. The second theme 'd', starting from rehearsal 6, although also based on minor seconds, achieves a degree of contrast by being presented in a homophonic texture of majestic chords and perfect fifths. The quasi-archaic sound-world of this exposition is given an ironic twist by being placed in decidedly non-archaic keys (B flat minor for 'c' and G sharp minor, already announced in 'b', for 'd').

The development begins at rehearsal 9 with the return of ‘c’ in an even faster motion, with the keys gradually sliding down from G# to G minor and F minor while approaching the culmination at ten bars after rehearsal 13. Pärt employs the *fugato* technique to build up the tension, which is only resolved by a general pause just before rehearsal 14. There is no recapitulation, only a brief closing section based on augmented ‘c’ in F minor. This conclusion is pretty inconclusive, and the development is expected to continue in the next movement – which, indeed, happens.

The second movement begins *attacca* at rehearsal 16; it extends the first movement and utilises the same materials, only in a slower tempo. The textures and the alternation of polyphonic and homophonic segments ending with Landini cadence also replicate those from the first movement. Thus, in comparison to the first movement, the main contrast is timbral, achieved by means of a sombrero orchestral sound, featuring the high woodwinds and strings. If one should relate it to the extra-musical ‘meaning’ of the *circulatio* trope, this could be the depiction of Christ’s final moments and the mourning by the believers.

The initial theme (at rehearsal 16) is derived from the inverted and augmented motif ‘a’; I have labelled it ‘a1’.⁵⁶ From rehearsal 17 it is added a counterpoint in semibreves, also derived from ‘a’. These motifs are developed in free imitation until the culmination is reached at rehearsal 22 with the return of ‘b’ from the first movement, followed by ‘a1’. The motif ‘c’ then returns at rehearsal 23 with its distinctive triplets; however, it is transposed to D minor, the ‘tonal’ centre of the second movement. At rehearsal 24 the ‘a’ from the first movement returns. After slowing the musical course down to achieve maximum tranquillity (with ‘little bells’ in celesta at rehearsal 25 followed by a ‘lament’ in strings), the second movement ends with sudden ominous chords in the full orchestra and a dramatic solo for timpani in F which prepares the third movement. If one should relate it to the biblical narrative, this would be the moment of Christ’s death at the Cross.

The third movement starts at rehearsal 30 with the motif ‘a’ in D minor, and its ‘antiphone’ responses in woodwinds, based on a

⁵⁶ Tim Smith has shown that the compressed versions of the *circulatio*, such as this one, are also frequently found in J. S. Bach’s works. Smith, ‘*Circulatio* as Tonal Morpheme in the Liturgical Music of J. S. Bach.’

syncopated motif 'a2' derived from 'a' and 'd'. The first section (until rehearsal 37) is mostly based on 'a' and 'a2', ending with the 'Landini cadence' in D, which then becomes a basis for the next, polyphonic segment. It begins at rehearsal 37 with an augmented 'c' in double-bass solo in D (Phrygian), followed by a free imitation moving swiftly through many tonal centres but without settling for any particular key.

The recapitulation on the level of the entire symphonic cycle begins at rehearsal 46 with a return of the motif 'a' from the introduction in *ff* in B minor (Dorian). At rehearsal 48 Pärt repeats the first sonata theme of the first movement 'c', in G# minor, with counterpoint based on motifs 'a' and 'd'. It is followed by the second theme 'd' at rehearsal 50, and then by a Coda from rehearsal 51 with the final hint of 'd' in the last two bars. It is very tempting to interpret the recapitulation, with its reappearance of the *circulatio*, as the moment of Christ's resurrection.

Aside from the thematic unity of the entire cycle, harmonic progressions also support the interpretation of this cycle as a unified whole. The main key is G# minor, but the first movement actually ends in F minor. The second one begins in D minor (the key a tritone apart from G#, i.e. its polar tonality), but also ends in F. The third movement returns to G#, thus emphasising the recapitulative effect; moreover, both in the first and the final movement (i.e. the exposition and the recapitulation) both sonata themes are in the same key, G# minor.

Pärt's musical rhetoric in this work is seemingly anti-Romantic: this clean-cut symphony demonstrates his penchant for conciseness and reductionism, suggests an affinity with Stravinsky's modernist aesthetics and anticipates early minimalist works. While Pärt aims towards objectification, there are musical 'signs' that suggest an 'extra-musical' meaning, although musical symbolism is not nearly as obvious as in Pärt's *Credo* or in Schnittke's Symphony No. 2, the two works that closely follow biblical narratives. Pärt's Symphony can be labelled 'polystylistic' only conditionally: although he pours the simulations of plainchant into a classical symphonic mould, this results in a restoration of old music in a modern context, rather than a deliberate and incongruous clash of aesthetically and diachronically opposed styles, as was the case with his older polystylistic works. To overview once again the symptoms of Pärt's 'transition' from polystylism to *tintinnabuli*, we could say that Pärt's Soviet and polystylistic past is revealed in the following features:

- the employment of the genre of symphony – quite typical of Soviet aesthetics, which regarded the symphony as a supreme genre;⁵⁷
- a free interplay of different stylistic traits, without committing to any particular one;
- the employment of musical ‘signs’ – although, in contrast to what Pärt had done in *Credo*, here they do not follow an overt narrative;
- unlike the majority of Pärt’s Soviet contemporaries who relied on Shostakovich’s symphonic model, the most obvious influence on his symphony is Stravinsky’s late oeuvre.

As to the features that anticipate Pärt’s *tintinnabuli* style, one may observe the following:

- the employment of a minimum of thematic material – all main motifs are derived from one another and/or mutually related;
- the entire work unfolds by means of developing these laconic motifs. There is hardly any thematic contrast between the movements, and the development transgresses the boundaries of individual movements; hence the formal divisions are merely provisional;
- this principle of diminishing thematic contrast leads to repetitiveness, which would become one of the key traits of Pärt’s *tintinnabuli* style;
- harmony is vaguely tonal, but there are no customary tonal cadences, and the distribution of keys seems quite arbitrary; this is achieved by means of bypassing the major/minor dichotomy in favour of old church modes and pre-tonal cadential turns;
- finally, by referencing the plainchant and the *Ars Nova* polyphony, Pärt confirms his interest in Christianity, which would infuse his *tintinnabuli* works.

If one should summarise the ‘meaning’ of this symphony, it could be argued that the composer seeks inspiration and solace in the idealised distant past, but also uses it as a means of ‘reviving,’ ‘purifying’ and reaffirming the symphonic genre. However, Pärt’s employment of a covert but nevertheless readable musical symbolism (in particular when seen in the context of his works that surround this Symphony) makes it very tempting to hear this work as a continuation of the topic already

⁵⁷ See the chapter on Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1 in this book.

explored in the *Credo*, i.e. the depiction of the holy figure of Jesus Christ and of his death and resurrection.

While in his Symphony No. 2 *St Florian* Schnittke quotes Gregorian tunes, Pärt only *models* his themes to resemble them, and then subjects those quasi-Gregorian themes to a full symphonic treatment – while Schnittke treats his Gregorian quotations as entities quite separate from the main symphonic course, and only occasionally allows them to mix and merge with his own themes.

Pärt's rhetoric is generally anti-Romantic, as it demonstrates his penchant for conciseness, effectiveness and reductionism, while Schnittke frequently goes over the top. Pärt's symphony comprises three closely-knit movements, which utilise identical thematic material, and the formal design features a fusion of sonata form and sonata cycle. Schnittke's Symphony, on the other hand, contains six movements (and some of them consists of several independent sections), and his extended symphonic cycle embraces highly contrasting thematic materials.⁵⁸ Pärt's clean-cut symphony suggests an affinity with Stravinsky's modernist aesthetics and anticipates early minimalist works, while Schnittke reveres the German-Austrian models, from Bach to Berg (although the influence of Stravinsky is not to be overlooked). Schnittke focuses on the narrative/expressive potential of various styles and techniques, while Pärt aims towards objectification and avoids direct expressiveness.

In the final analysis, Arvo Pärt's Symphony No. 3 can be considered polystylistic only conditionally: although the composer pours simulations of Gregorian melodies into a classical symphonic mould, the result is more that of a restoration of old music in a modern context than a deliberate and incongruous clashing of aesthetically and diachronically opposed styles.

⁵⁸ See Medić, 'Crucifixus etiam pro nobis.'

Galina Ustvol'skaia: Symphony No. 2 'True and Eternal Bliss'

Born in 1919 (died in 2006) and some 10–15 years older than the 'generation of the sixties,' Galina Ustvol'skaia can hardly be considered a member of the 'Second avant-garde,' although she did share a decisively non-conformist attitude with some of these composers. A pupil of Shostakovich, Ustvol'skaia tried her best to escape from the shade of his overpowering personality, and later in her life she severed all professional and private ties with her mentor. She claimed that she had no role models and that her music was a completely unique phenomenon;⁵⁹ in order to reinforce such a statement, she deliberately distanced herself both from the establishment and the avant-gardists.

Her early life did not indicate that she would evolve into 'the lady with the hammer.'⁶⁰ As her official biography states,⁶¹ from 1926 to 1936 she studied composition and cello at the Leningrad Capella; afterwards, she took composition lessons at the Leningrad College for two years. In 1939 she entered Shostakovich's composition class at the Leningrad Conservatory. After the war broke out, she was evacuated to Tashkent, then to Komi ASSR where she was getting combat rations serving as a sentry. In 1944 she returned to Leningrad and finished her undergraduate and postgraduate studies. The traumas of the war, including the catastrophic two-and-a-half year siege of her native city of Leningrad, left a deep mark on her creative work, which is profoundly tragic. From 1947 to 1977 she taught at the Leningrad Rimsky-Korsakov

⁵⁹ Many authors have accepted the composer's own assessment: see Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 241; Frans C. Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' liner notes to CD *Galina Ustvol'skaya – Four Symphonies*, Megadisc MDC 7854, 2; Viktor Suslin, 'Preface' to the Catalogue of Ustvol'skaia works, <http://www.sikorski.de/>, 1; Frank Denyer, liner notes to CD *The Barton Workshop Plays Galina Ustvol'skaya*, Etcetera KTC 1170, 2. For example, Lemaire states: 'nothing like it was ever written, not by anyone. These are truly unique pages, written without any compromise whatsoever. They constitute a clean break with musical history.' While not entirely untrue, such a statement is certainly exaggerated.

⁶⁰ Elmer Schönberger, 1992, cited in Ian McDonalds, 'The Lady with the Hammer. The music of Galina Ustvol'skaya,' *Music Under the Soviet Rule*, <http://www.siu.edu/~aho/musov/ust/ust.html>

⁶¹ 'About the composer,' <http://ustvol'skaya.org/eng/>

College of Music. Although she was held in high esteem by her students at the college, she was never offered a teaching post at the Leningrad Conservatory.

As one of the very few female composers active in the Soviet Union, Ustvol'skaia unwittingly drew attention to herself.⁶² Aside from being described by various authors as 'barbaric,' 'minimalist,' 'ascetic,' 'austere,' 'non-lyrical,' 'uncompromising,' 'fanatical,' 'piercing,' 'absolutistic,' 'edgy,' 'tense,' 'fierce,' 'urgent,' etc. Ustvol'skaia's style is commonly dubbed – 'unwomanly' or 'unfeminine'.⁶³ Levon Hakobian pegged her as an 'unclassifiable outsider';⁶⁴ Viktor Suslin compared her to 'a lonely rocky island in the ocean of twentieth-century compositional trends';⁶⁵ and Frans Lemaire called her 'the most ferocious and enigmatic Russian composer of the twentieth century.'⁶⁶

On the other hand, David Fanning observes that Ustvol'skaia, together with almost all of her Soviet contemporaries, did show 'affinities with deeper-lying aspects of Shostakovich's musical language: which is to say, with its extremes of motion and non-motion, and with its various kinds of musical symbolism'.⁶⁷ Hakobian also admits that she inherited from Shostakovich 'the penchant for consistent elaboration of motivic "embryos" bringing to the rise an "intense dramaturgy of large spaces"',⁶⁸ and notes that Ustvol'skaia shared with her contemporaries 'the elemental "gnosticism" and the consciousness of being "more than

⁶² Medić, "'Drugarice" Ustvol'ska i Gubajdulina. O statusu kompozitorke u Sovjetskom Savezu,' 69–92.

⁶³ See Valentina Kholopova, 'Boris Tishchenko: striking spontaneity against a rationalistic background,' in: Valeria Tsenova (ed.), *Underground Music from the Former USSR*, Amsterdam, Harwood Academic Publishers, 1997, 51; Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 243, MacDonald, 'The Lady with the Hammer – The Music of Galina Ustvol'skaya,' Suslin, 'Preface,' 1.

⁶⁴ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 219.

⁶⁵ Suslin, 'Preface.'

⁶⁶ Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' 1.

⁶⁷ David Fanning, *Shostakovich: String Quartet No. 8*, Aldershot/Burlington, Ashgate, 2004, 8.

⁶⁸ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 240.

a...” deeply rooted.⁶⁹ The list of other composers who could have inspired Ustvol’skaia includes Bartók, Stravinsky, Orff, early Hindemith, Messiaen, as well as her Polish contemporaries Andrzej Panufnik, Henryk Górecki and the Polish school in general. However, all these influences are merged into a style that is idiosyncratic and instantly recognisable as Ustvol’skaia’s own.

Her first mature works date from 1949 (Trio for piano, clarinet, and violin and the Piano Sonata No. 2): Hakobian argues that ‘[t]he manner of writing peculiar to Ustvol’skaya has remained practically unchanged since. Hence, every separate piece of hers gives a complete idea about her language and her idiosyncrasies.’⁷⁰ Hakobian also states:

This persistently dissonant music, exempt from every element of anecdote, bewitching by its rhythmic ostinatos and tone-clusters, rich in long, intense, suggestive pauses, shocking by abrupt transitions from fortissimo to pianissimo and vice versa, could bring to its author but the most serious troubles.⁷¹

There has been a great deal of speculation on the exact nature of Ustvol’skaia’s relationship with Shostakovich and the reason(s) why she rejected him so ferociously later in life.⁷² It is known that Shostakovich valued Ustvol’skaia’s work very highly and said of her:

I am convinced that the music of G. I. Ustvol’skaya will achieve worldwide renown, to be valued by all who perceive truth in music to be of paramount importance.⁷³

It is also known that Shostakovich sent some of his unfinished works to Ustvol’skaia, attaching great value to her comments, and that he cited her music in his own: for example, he employed the second theme of

⁶⁹ Ibid., 219.

⁷⁰ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 240–241.

⁷¹ Ibid., 243.

⁷² E.g. MacDonald, ‘The Lady with the Hammer – The Music of Galina Ustvol’skaya.’

⁷³ Cited in: <http://ustvol’skaya.org/eng/>

the Finale of her *Trio* throughout the String Quartet No. 5 and in the *Michelangelo Suite* (No. 9).⁷⁴ While many biographers have implied that the reasons for Ustvol'skaia's dismissal of Shostakovich were of a personal nature, it is also possible that the rift between them was caused by her professional and moral concerns.

It is likely that Ustvol'skaia perceived Shostakovich's readiness to compromise as a symptom of his political and moral weakness. In the beginning of her career she wrote a number of socialist-realist works – cantatas, tone poems, choruses and various incidental scores. Some of them were performed by leading musicians at the most prestigious concert halls of the city; for example, *Stepan Razin's Dream* for bass and symphony orchestra opened four successive seasons at the Leningrad Philharmonic's Grand Hall.⁷⁵ But gradually her name disappeared from the concert repertoires; she became isolated, 'since she did not want to participate in social and political life, and her music was too far from the Soviet ideals.'⁷⁶ She excluded her socialist-realist works from her first catalogue, published in 1990 by Sikorski. This catalogue originally contained 21 compositions, only comprising about six hours of music that was deeply personal, hermetic, and thus destined to stay in the drawer for many decades. Sometime later, four less radical older scores were also added: *Stepan Razin's Dream* (1948), Suite for orchestra (1955), and two symphonic poems originally entitled *The Lights of the Steppes* (1948) and *The Exploit of the Hero* (1959); however, these two poems were stripped off of their socialist-realist monikers and renamed Symphonic Poems Nos. 1 and 2.⁷⁷

A specific treatment of religious or spiritual topoi can be seen in Ustvol'skaia's Symphonies 2–5; her Symphony No. 1 (1955) is the only

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ On Ustvol'skaia's selection of compositions for the catalogue, see Viktor Suslin, 'The Music of Spiritual Independence – Galina Ustvol'skaya,' in: Valeria Tsenova (ed.), *Ex Oriente... I: Ten Composers from the Former USSR*, Berlin, Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 2002, 108–109.

one without a religious subtext.⁷⁸ All of Ustvol'skaia's instrumental pieces written from the early 1970s onwards and alternately called Compositions (1970–1975) and Symphonies (1979–1990) carry religious (sub)titles. I have chosen to discuss here Ustvol'skaia's Symphony No. 2 *True and Eternal Bliss*, for orchestra and solo voice. In his piece – as well as in its successors, Symphonies No. 3 *Jesus Messiah, Save Us* for orchestra and narrator (1983) and No. 4 *Prayer* for trumpet, tam-tam, piano and contralto (1985–1987) – she uses texts written by Hermanus Contractus de Reichenau (1013–1054), a Benedictine monk of noble origin. He was disabled and almost unable to speak – hence his name (Hermann the Cripple). However, he was renowned for his knowledge in diverse fields, ranging from mathematics and astronomy to pietistic poetry and music. He was beatified in 1863.⁷⁹ In the Introduction to the score of the Symphony No. 2 Ustvol'skaia revealed that she found Hermanus' writings in the volume *Monuments of Mediaeval Latin Literature from the Tenth to the Twelfth Centuries*, published in Moscow in 1972.

All of Ustvol'skaia's symphonies based on Hermanus's texts consist of one short movement each, and they are not scored for a full orchestra. Instead, Ustvol'skaia opts for unusual instrumental combinations and adds a human voice that does not sing, but recites, pleads and sighs.⁸⁰ Even in her early Symphony No. 1 which is, outwardly, 'more symphonic,' she favours wind instruments (possibly inspired by Stravinsky's *Symphonies for Wind Instruments* and *Symphony of Psalms*) while young boys sing the verses by Italian communist poet Gianni Rodari. On the other hand, Ustvol'skaia's 'religious' symphonies are the exact opposites of the Soviet 'great symphony'; her musical statements are extremely condensed and concentrated, and devoid of traditional broad symphonic rhetoric.

As to her attitude towards religion, Ustvol'skaia has stated:

⁷⁸ In recent years more attention has been paid to Ustvol'skaia's specific position in the Soviet cultural context; see the list of recent books and films dedicated to her work at http://ustvol'skaya.org/films_books.php

⁷⁹ Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' 3–4; Suslin, 'The Music of Spiritual Independence,' 106.

⁸⁰ However, Ustvol'skaia has said: 'My music is never chamber music, not even in the case of a solo sonata?' Quoted in: Suslin, 'The Music of Spiritual Independence,' 108.

My works are not, it is true, religious in a liturgical sense, but they are infused with a religious spirit, and to my mind they are best suited to performance in a church, without scholarly introductions and analyses. In the concert hall, that is, in secular surroundings, the music sounds different...⁸¹

When refusing commissions for new works, Ustvol'skaia stated: 'I would gladly write something, but that depends on God, not me.'⁸² Thus Frank Denyer has remarked:

The vision is predominantly religious but nevertheless full of bleak despair and obsessional violence. Her prayers, despite their incredible intensity, never cause the heavens to open and choirs of revelatory angels to descend in light, but on the contrary, she seems to turn to God because in extremity there is nowhere else to turn. We do not know if her agonizing appeals are heard but we cannot but be torn by the heartrending desperation of them.⁸³

Although Ustvol'skaia's symphonies contain religious titles and texts (in the case of her Symphony No. 5, the Lord's Prayer), Ian MacDonald has aptly noted:

That her concept of God is both vividly apprehended and thoroughly idiosyncratic is clear from the absence of tenderness and redemption in her music, which seems predominantly apocalyptic in tone and outlook.⁸⁴

Ustvol'skaia's Symphony No. 2 unfolds in a free, arch-like form, with a single culmination. The form comprises a series of sections, all of them developed from the same thematic core, consisting of just a few short motifs. This ascetic material is given an equally ascetic treatment. The text is also extremely condensed and aphoristic, consisting of utterances 'Ay!' and three verses:

⁸¹ Quoted in: Suslin, 'Preface,' 2.

⁸² Quoted in: Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' 1.

⁸³ Denyer, *The Barton Workshop Plays Galina Ustvol'skaya*, 2.

⁸⁴ MacDonald, 'The Lady with the Hammer.'

Istinnaia i blagaia vechnost'.
Vechnaia i blagaia istina.
Istinnaia, vechnaia, blagost'!

Truthful and blissful eternity.
Eternal and blissful truth.
True, eternal, bliss!⁸⁵

At first glance, the score even *looks* odd. The rhythmic pulse consists almost exclusively of crotchets; dynamic contrasts are extreme, with abrupt juxtapositions of *pppppp* and *ffffff*. This music is violently dissonant from the beginning to the end, its intervallic content limited almost exclusively to the intervals of seconds, sevenths and ninths, with addition of clusters. By employing sparse, ascetic motifs and a uniform rhythm, Ustvol'skaia shuns all rhetorical gestures, all socialist realist grandeur, and creates a work charged with almost unbearable tension.

The first motif 'a' consists of fierce piano and percussion 'hits,' while the second section at bar 12 introduces the motif 'b' derived from 'a' and consisting of clusters in woodwinds and brass. The 'melody' outlined by these clusters bears some distant generic resemblance to church chants, as it consists of seconds in gradual movement. The entire ensuing orchestral course is derived from these two short motifs. At 25 the piano takes up the motif 'b' and transforms its regular pulse in crotchets into a somewhat 'limping' rhythm. In the third section (bar 33) the winds perform 'b' in *ppp(p)*, while the piano confronts them.

The fourth section, starting at bar 53 with a new motif 'c', introduces a greater degree of contrast, because the vocalist/narrator recites 'Gospodi!' (or exclaims 'Ay!' in the original Soviet score). The fifth section at 71 marks a return of 'a' in the trombone, to be followed by the final motif 'd' consisting of a single note played *crescendo*. The sixth

⁸⁵ The composer's intention was to have exclamations 'Gospodi!' [Lord!] before the verses. In the score published by Sovetskii kompozitor in 1982, the word 'Gospodi' is consistently replaced with 'neutral' cries 'Ay, ay, ay!' Only in the revised score published by Sikorski the invocations of the Lord have been reinstated. Lemaire wrongly states that 'the interjection Gospodin (Lord) and the words Vechnost (eternity) and Istina (truth) are thrice repeated and that is all.' See Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' 4.

section (bar 91) features various versions of ‘a’, ‘b’ and ‘d’ and it is framed by transitions based on motif ‘c’.

The seventh section (bar 111) is the longest and contains the culmination. The piano performs ‘a’ and ‘d’ while the winds play versions of ‘b’, in an increasingly louder dynamics, supported by heavy battery, and the section ends in *fffff* at bar 155, followed by a general pause. The following section introduces a startling contrast, because the vocalist recites Hermanus’s hermetic, haiku-like verses. In the ninth section (bar 182) the reciting ends, and for the first time Ustvol’skaia introduces dotted rhythm. In the concluding tenth section (bar 213), all motifs are joined together, leading into a Coda (bar 249) where the soloist utters ‘Gospodi’ for the last time.

This blow-by-blow description can by no means do justice to Galina Ustvol’skaia’s powerful work. In her musical universe, more is less: she achieves maximum expression through a maximum compression of her musical means and makes a most terrifying yet impressive declaration of faith in the Lord. Ustvol’skaia spent her entire life in St Petersburg – the city that had seen some of the worst horrors of the twentieth century; hence, the violent orchestral music that surrounds the narrator can be interpreted as a kind of musical exorcism. One could also argue that Ustvol’skaia self-identifies with the severely disabled Hermanus, whose daily existence must have been a constant agony. Since he could barely speak, his cries were sparse and heartrending; and yet, he indulged in religious ecstasy and experienced ‘true, eternal bliss.’ MacDonald even presumes that ‘the extremity of Hermannus’ [*sic*] predicament appeals to a corresponding extremity – perhaps even a martyr-complex – in Ustvol’skaia.⁸⁶ In any case, one cannot deny a powerful, brutal, yet cathartic impact of this work.

If one compares Ustvol’skaia’s dark masterpiece to a work such as Schnittke’s Symphony No. 2 *St Florian*,⁸⁷ the differences are striking, despite the fact that both works belong to the genre of vocal symphony and fail to conform to Soviet symphonic standards both in form and content. While Schnittke’s symphony is polystylistic, Ustvol’skaia’s is

⁸⁶ MacDonald, ‘The Lady with the Hammer.’

⁸⁷ For a detailed analysis of Schnittke’s symphony see Medić, ‘Crucifixus etiam pro nobis’, 3–29.

uncompromisingly monostylistic and monolithic; she only uses expressive codes that evoke fear, anguish, terror, forcefulness and refuses to employ quotations, or anything that could resemble someone else's music. Her music is dissonant, disturbing and expressive from the beginning to the end; she refuses to conform and cuts out all ear-pleasing solutions. Schnittke quotes Gregorian melodies in an attempt to establish a dialogue with the tradition he feels he had been alienated from, while Ustvol'skaia neither quotes nor evokes religious rites of any kind; she takes up an a-historical (or anti-historical) stance, erecting her own pedestal of independence from all influences. However, the relentless insistence on the same material and a uniform rhythmic pulse give Ustvol'skaia's work a peculiar ritualistic quality; despite the lack of obvious religious references, her symphony is no less a statement of faith.

Schnittke has a penchant for broad symphonic rhetoric which utilises diverse descriptive/illustrative/narrative codes; a variety of musical materials are delivered by immense orchestral forces complemented with mixed chorus and soloists. In contrast, Ustvol'skaia's music is quite 'stiff,' elemental, 'primitivist' even; she works with the most basic materials. Her textures are dense, coarse and sparse, and just like her motifs, her orchestration is stripped down, economical and efficient. Ustvol'skaia compresses the entire symphony into one short, monolithic movement, while Schnittke needs no less than six diverse movements to fully convey his idea.

Frans Lemaire mistakes Ustvol'skaia's a-historism for postmodernism and claims:

By using this anti-anthropomorphic compositional method, by dissecting musical history in this particular fashion, the composer from St Petersburg has, before the word was even invented, inadvertently written the first postmodern compositions of the twentieth century.⁸⁸

This is an entirely wrong assessment, because Ustvol'skaia never actually attempted to dissect musical history; she did not evoke or analyse earlier

⁸⁸ Lemaire, 'Galina Ivanovna Ustvol'skaya,' 5.

styles, and her compulsive, fanatical urge to remain independent from trends and only do what nobody else had done before confirmed her stubbornly modernist attitude. She said:

Originality is essential in creative work. Every talent, even the most modest, is only interesting when it finds its own path. And it immediately becomes uninteresting if it cannot produce anything original.⁸⁹

Nothing is more alien to a postmodern attitude towards creation than Ustvol'skaia's 'manifesto' cited above. If anything, one may argue that she questioned the tradition by deliberately distancing herself from it.

⁸⁹ Quoted in Suslin, 'The music of spiritual independence,' 109.

Sofia Gubaidulina's Spiritualism

The critics provoked by Galina Ustvol'skaia's 'unfeminine' personality were probably relieved when introduced to the work of another Soviet female composer to whom they could attach stereotypes associated with the 'écriture féminine'. The creative output of the remarkable composer Sofia Asgatovna Gubaidulina embodies not only spiritualism, which imbues her entire oeuvre, but also all three main features of late Soviet meta-pluralism, which will be discussed later: its all-inclusiveness, auto-reflectiveness and anti-progressivism. However, Gubaidulina's attitude towards tradition is quite different from that of her contemporaries.⁹⁰

Gubaidulina's 'otherness' when compared to the dominant paradigms of that time (male, socialist-realist, traditionalist, bombastic-utopian) was amplified by her 'exotic' background. She was born in 1931 in Chistopol, Autonomous Tatar Republic, in a then-unusual marriage between a Tatar man and a Russian woman. Her paternal grandfather was a Muslim mullah and, although her parents were atheists, Gubaidulina later stated that, even as a child, she was fascinated with religion.⁹¹ Although she eventually chose to be baptised in the Russian Orthodox Church, Gubaidulina's relationship towards religion was never strictly based on Christian doctrines; instead, it incorporated elements of many other religious, spiritual and mystical teachings, resulting in a peculiar pantheistic synthesis. Moreover, she transferred her memory of Muslim worship, with its alternation of melismatic reading of parts from Koran with periods of meditative silence, to her works – even to those (such as *Introitus* and *Offertorium*) explicitly based on Christian themes. Unlike Ustvol'skaia, who battled her demons in her music, Gubaidulina imbued her music with spiritual ideas and equated her creative act with piety.

As a woman in a 'male' profession, a practicing believer in the atheistic Soviet Union, a person of mixed Tatar-Russian background in a largely xenophobic society, a member of non-conformist, partisan artistic groups in a state-controlled culture, Gubaidulina spent several decades fighting stigmatisation and exclusion. The fact that she was banned

⁹⁰ Some parts of this chapter were published in: Medić, 'Gubaidulina, Misunderstood,' 103–123. Reprinted with permission granted by the publisher.

⁹¹ Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 60.

from travelling to the West to attend premieres of her works until 1984⁹² is just one example of the harassment that she was subjected to. In spite of being treated as a ‘black sheep’ due to her biological, cultural, racial, confessional and political ‘otherness’ – or maybe because of it – Gubaidulina created a distinctive personal style. The fact that she was considered an ‘outsider’ and thus stayed off the official Soviet radar for a long time actually meant that she could dodge the prescribed rules and favoured solutions, and write music in accordance with her ‘inner need’, to use Wassily Kandinsky’s term.⁹³

Gubaidulina is commonly regarded as one third of the leading triumvirate of what Hakobian has labelled ‘Moscow avant-garde,’ together with Schnittke and Denisov.⁹⁴ Still, Gubaidulina’s brand of ‘avant-gardism’ is quite accessible and fully rooted in tradition. Her ‘unofficial’ position was mostly conditioned by her links with the Moscow dissident circles.⁹⁵ She started studying composition in Moscow after graduating in piano in Kazan, and she was several years older than her colleagues. As mentioned before, Gubaidulina and her Soviet peers were introduced to techniques of both pre-war and post-war avant-garde simultaneously in the early 1960s; however, unlike her peers, already in the 1960s Gubaidulina saw dodecaphony and serialism as finished styles/traditions and expressed her doubts about the merits of the rigid employment of these compositional methods:

Musical theory explains us that dodecaphony appeared as a result of the evolution of musical language. But why a system based on the identical value of pitches is preferable to that organized hierarchically? [...] The technique of dodecaphony was born as an answer to the suffering of the atonal musical material; it flattens the surface in order to prepare a sounding ground for the properties of the future condition of music.⁹⁶

⁹² Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 177.

⁹³ Kandinsky, *Concerning the Spiritual in Art*, 19.

⁹⁴ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 284.

⁹⁵ On her connection with the Moscow dissidents, see Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 68.

⁹⁶ Quoted in Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 286–287.

Although Gubaidulina did eventually study and assimilate the entire spectrum of contemporary techniques and experimented with free improvisation and electronics, she distilled those influences through her artistic temperament and resented the appeal of novelty *per se*.⁹⁷ In many interviews Gubaidulina voiced her opposition to labelling her art ‘avant-garde’ and stated her reservations about the very concept of constant innovation in music.⁹⁸ She has refused to ascribe the ‘avant-garde’ techniques any kind of supremacy (moral, spiritual, technical) over more traditional artistic means; in her view, all compositional methods are equally valid and all can be employed as desired.

Gubaidulina is commonly considered a polar opposite to Ustvolskaia because her music lacks the qualities of forcefulness and aggressiveness, so typical of her older colleague.⁹⁹ Gubaidulina’s music is unrestrainedly beautiful, plastic, arabesque, despite the abundance of contemporary compositional techniques; the composer’s ‘exotic’ origin and her gender made it easy for critics to dwell upon the ‘feminine’ qualities of her music, as opposed to Ustvolskaia’s supposed ‘unfemininity.’ Gubaidulina herself can be said to have encouraged such an interpretation, because her discourse on music often refers to musical material as a living being that needs care, nourishment and ‘curing.’ For example:

I experience the material as very aggressive substance. Its richness is in its excess. I call this an illness. The material requires the artist to find a solution for healing the pain. To the extent of my ability, I want to cure the material with the process I just described. I am absolutely convinced that resolving dissonance to consonance with regard to time proportions heals the material.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ On Gubaidulina’s ‘belated’ turning to the study of twelve-note music see Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 65. On her attitude towards the notion of ‘novelty’ see *ibid.*, 138.

⁹⁸ Vera Lukomsky, “‘My Desire is Always to Rebel, to Swim Against the Stream!’” Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina, *Perspectives of New Music* 36/1, 1998, 5–41, esp. 8–10.

⁹⁹ [Ustvolskaya’s] art – in contrast to that of the another great female composer, Sofia Gubaydulina – lacks in such aesthetical categories as plasticity, charm, constructive clarity...’ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 243.

¹⁰⁰ Lukomsky, ‘Hearing the Subconscious,’ 29.

A majority of Gubaidulina's compositions employ a bare minimum of thematic material, which is then allowed to develop. She fully believes in the spiritual purpose of art and, for her, the employment of traditional expressive means is conditioned neither by disillusionment nor by disorientation. She does not think in categories of style; instead, she regards music matter as a unified sonic substance in the broadest of terms, and when choosing her material she is predominantly concerned with its symbolism.¹⁰¹ Although this is not to say that Gubaidulina is unconcerned with maintaining musical integrity, the knowledge of her symbolism is crucial for a complete understanding of her creative objectives.

* * * * *

Since the early 1980s Gubaidulina has gradually achieved recognition in the West, mostly due to the immense success of her violin concerto *Offertorium*, championed by Gidon Kremer. In the past four decades she received numerous prestigious commissions, became a member of the German and Swedish Academies of Arts, received honorary doctorates from the Universities of Chicago and Yale, and won numerous prizes. Her music was released on the Deutsche Gramophon, Phillips, Sony Classical and other prestigious labels. But while Gubaidulina's music has won approval of listeners worldwide, reviews of her works have often been resoundly negative. Western critics in particular are baffled by her penchant for (over)long durations, blatant dualisms, her employment of seemingly literal musical symbolism verging on the kitsch and, last but not least, the composer's religious fervour. Using as a starting point the reviews of the two ambitious events that took place in 2006 and 2007 and served as introductions of Gubaidulina's music to British audiences, I will address the main objections directed at her oeuvre. Then, I will analyse Gubaidulina's major works written before the dissolution of the USSR and discuss how these works responded to the cultural challenges of that time and place. I will argue that Gubaidulina's idiosyncratic compositional aesthetics has been misunderstood by Western critics and that her works cannot be appreciated without taking into consideration the context from which they originated.

¹⁰¹ Lukomsky, 'Hearing the Subconscious'; idem., 'My Desire is Always to Rebel'; idem., "'The Eucharist in My Fantasy': Interview with Sofia Gubaidulina,' *Tempo* 206, 1998, 29–35.

The mini festival titled *Dancers on a Tightrope – Beyond Shostakovich*, which took place between 13 and 15 October 2006 in London's Southbank Centre, showcased the music of Gubaidulina among her other prominent (post-)Soviet peers – Russians Galina Ustvolskaia and Alfred Schnittke, Ukrainian Valentin Sil'vestrov, Georgian Giia Kancheli and Estonian Arvo Pärt – as well as their common 'ancestor', Shostakovich. While on this occasion Gubaidulina's works were not reviewed individually, the critics pointed to the overall impression of 'sameness'¹⁰² and 'mawkishness'¹⁰³ of the music of Shostakovich's musical 'offspring.'

In January 2007, The BBC Composer Weekend subtitled *A Journey of the Soul* offered a retrospective of Gubaidulina's entire career; most importantly, it was the first significant exposure of British audiences to her orchestral music. It was also the first time that this long-running annual series spotlighted a female composer. While the BBC press release stated that she was chosen on the basis of being 'one of the world's most original, respected and emotionally powerful musical voices' and 'the most important Russian composer since Shostakovich',¹⁰⁴ a critic for *The Independent* has pointed out that the decision to feature Gubaidulina was also 'a loud riposte to those offended by the absence of female composers from last year's Proms.'¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² 'However, one prevailing feeling left with us is that most of the powerfully expressive works chosen to represent them are better heard standing alone or in mixed programmes.' Peter Grahame Woolf, 'Review of *Dancers on a Tightrope – Beyond Shostakovich*,' *Musical Pointers*, 16 October 2006, <http://www.musicalpointers.co.uk/festivals/uk/dancerstightrope.htm>.

¹⁰³ 'Yet, if *Dancers on a Tightrope* has proved anything, it is that blanket programming of these composers does them no favours. Heard in isolation, several of these pieces might have seemed a powerfully personal statement of despair. In relentless succession, they began to seem merely mawkish.' Erica Jeal, 'Review of *Dancers on a Tightrope*,' *The Guardian*, 19 October 2006, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2006/oct/19/classicalmusicandopera/print>.

¹⁰⁴ BBC Press Office, 'A Journey of the Soul – The Music of Sofia Gubaidulina', 31 October 2006, http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/10_october/31_composer.shtml.

¹⁰⁵ Anna Picard, 'A Journey of the Soul: The Music of Sofia Gubaidulina,' *The Independent*, 21 January 2007, <http://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/reviews/la-fille-du-regiment-royal-opera-house-covent-garden-londonbra-journey-of-the-soul-the-music-of-sofia-gubaidulina-barbican-london-433089.html>

The event comprised three days (12–14 January) of concerts, talks, screenings of films dedicated to her music etc. The BBC Singers, BBC Symphony Chorus, BBC Symphony Orchestra, Kremerata Baltica and London Symphony Orchestra, with a host of renowned soloists and conductors, performed a selection of Gubaidulina's works, focusing on the composer's post-Soviet period. The following pieces were performed: Triptych *Nadeyka*, dedicated to the composer's late daughter: *The Lyre of Orpheus*, *The Deceitful Face of Hope and Despair*, *A Feast During the Plague*; *The Canticle of the Sun: Fairytale Poem*; *Offertorium*; *Pro et Contra*; *The Light of the End*; *Under the Sign of Scorpio*; and *Alleluia*. Approximately one half of these works were either British or European premieres.

Although the event received substantial coverage in the press, reviews were overwhelmingly negative; in particular, Gubaidulina's recent works fared poorly compared to the music from her Soviet period. Richard Whitehouse noted that 'Gubaidulina's music is best heard in small and strategically programmed doses.'¹⁰⁶ Tim Ashley's quip that 'the more one listens to Sofia Gubaidulina's music, the less one likes it' is based on his observation that the illumination of extremes of despair and elation constitutes 'her sole mode of perception and expression' and that the outcome is a 'sermonising rant rather than visionary spirituality.'¹⁰⁷ Anthony Holden complained about Gubaidulina's 'hectoring religiosity' which resulted in music that was 'highly derivative and reeking of incense'.¹⁰⁸ Ivan Hewett bluntly compared her religious music to 'hot air' and concluded that '[a]ll Gubaidulina had achieved with her bullying symbolism was to crush the spiritual impulse that music always has, when given the freedom to be itself.'¹⁰⁹ Anna Picard objected to

¹⁰⁶ Richard Whitehouse, 'Feature Review – *A Journey of the Soul: The Music of Sofia Gubaidulina* (Orchestral and Choral Works)', *The Classical Source*, January 2007, http://www.classicalsource.com/db_control/db_features.php?id=4105

¹⁰⁷ Tim Ashley, 'Gubaidulina,' *The Guardian*, 16 January 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2007/jan/16/classicalmusicandopera.albumreview>

¹⁰⁸ Anthony Holden, 'Life and Tortured Soul of the Party,' *The Observer*, 21 January 2007, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2007/jan/21/classicalmusicandopera>

¹⁰⁹ Ivan Hewett, 'A Composer Crushed by her own Symbolism,' *The Telegraph*, 16 January 2007, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/classicalmusic/3662587/A-composer-crushed-by-her-own-symbolism.html>

Gubaidulina's didacticism and lack of humour, and asserted that 'her *Weltanschauung* is unremittingly dour.'¹¹⁰

One might conclude that these critics' distaste for Gubaidulina's music was provoked by her bombast musical symbolism and the unreservedly bleak outlook on life. The main issue may actually be that, while the composer has resided in Germany since 1992, she has stayed true to the method established during her Soviet years. By disregarding the change of political and personal circumstances, Gubaidulina has not done favour to her earlier works, because her entire oeuvre has started to look somewhat uniform. Therefore, I will now attempt to restore the original context of her landmark 'spiritual' works and, by doing so, to question some of the critics' harsher assessments.

* * * * *

One of Gubaidulina's most dramatic works is *Hour of the Soul*, based on the poetry of the remarkable Russian poet Marina Tsvetaeva. This work can be said to belong to the genre of concerto because of its prominent part for a solo percussionist; however, the inclusion of a mezzo-soprano part towards the end brings it closer to the genre of cantata. The first version for wind orchestra and mezzo-soprano was completed in 1974; however, Gubaidulina had no chance of having it performed. Therefore, she rewrote the piece for a solo percussionist, mezzo-soprano and large orchestra (1976) and dedicated it to the exceptional percussion player Mark Pekarskii, who managed to obtain a permission to perform the piece. This second version was again revised in 1986 and published by Sikorski; it is now considered the definitive version of the piece. By choosing the poetry of the tragic Tsvetaeva who was persecuted by the Soviet state and who committed suicide in 1941, Gubaidulina chose to speak about all oppressed artists, all outsiders, all victims of the regime:

I feel a very special connection to Marina Tsvetaeva. Marina ended her own life (in suicide) in the small town Elabuga, very close to Chistopol, my place of birth [...] Her fate was extremely tragic: she was destroyed by the vulgarity of Soviet ideology, the aggressiveness of the Soviet system.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰ Picard, 'A Journey of the Soul: The Music of Sofia Gubaidulina.'

¹¹¹ Lukomsky, 'The Eucharist in My Fantasy,' 30–31.

Gubaidulina has chosen the second of the three songs that form Tsvetaeva's cycle, written in August 1923.¹¹² The poem, which ends with the verses 'Make bitter: darken / Grow: reign' only appears in the Coda, in a haunting mezzo-soprano part, as a summary of the triumph of a free spirit over adversity. The rest of Gubaidulina's piece unfolds as an instrumental drama, in which Tsvetaeva's soul is tormented by the world around her.

Hour of the Soul belongs to the period when Gubaidulina was still searching for her own compositional voice. The fact that Gubaidulina, just like a majority of her 'unofficial' peers, earned a living by writing music for film and theatre, enabled her to experiment and gain proficiency in writing music saturated with symbolism and capable of illustrating diverse phenomena. Gubaidulina was not particularly interested in polystylism as exhibited by Schnittke and Pärt; instead, she typically only used quotations as 'epigraphs.' However, in *Hour of the Soul* she confronted two different styles to represent two opposing protagonists – Tsvetaeva and the Soviet state. The result is a polystylistic drama akin to Schnittke's Symphony No. 1, in which destructive forces are represented by trivial music genres. Gubaidulina attended both performances of Schnittke's work (in Gorky, 1974, and in Tallinn, 1975) and was deeply impressed with it. When asked whether she was inspired to use the popular songs in *Hour of the Soul* in a manner similar to Schnittke's, Gubaidulina confirmed and added: 'At that time I had no idea or expectation that polystylism would become so fashionable, I just decided to try it – in just this one episode.'¹¹³

In *Hour of the Soul*, Marina Tsvetaeva's 'irrationality and mysticism' are represented by aleatoric music for percussion instruments, while her musical antagonists are Soviet popular and patriotic songs; in the composer's words, they represent 'vulgarity and the aggressiveness of the common crowd as bred by the Soviet system.'¹¹⁴ Gubaidulina explained that she chose percussion instruments to represent Tsvetaeva

¹¹² The English translation of this poem is available in: Marina Tsvetaeva, *In the Inmost Hour of the Soul. Selected Poems by Marina Tsvetaeva* (trans. Nina Kossman), New York, Humana Press, 1989, 107.

¹¹³ Claire Polin, 'Conversations in Leningrad, 1988,' *Tempo* 168, 1989, 19.

¹¹⁴ Lukomsky, 'The Eucharist in My Fantasy,' 31.

not only because the poet allegedly had a personal preference for percussion, but also because she found the ‘mystical’ and ‘rebellious’ quality of percussion suitable to represent the mystical and protesting soul of the poet; and also because, in Gubaidulina’s view, Tsvetaeva had a dominant masculine side.¹¹⁵ In order to emphasise Tsvetaeva’s masculinity and somewhat repressed femininity, Gubaidulina instructed that the mezzo-soprano should be hidden amongst the orchestra throughout the piece, and only make herself visible in the Coda. At the same time, the male percussion player is required to travel in a circle around the orchestra: in the beginning of the piece, he is standing at the right-hand corner of the stage at the timpani; then he travels to other percussion instruments (cymbals, bells, tom-tom, piano).

The music that depicts Tsvetaeva is confronted with a crude polystylistic episode, a *mélange* of popular and mass songs, certainly familiar to Gubaidulina’s Soviet listeners. This episode, very similar to the episodes of ‘chaos’ found in the first, second and fourth movements of Schnittke’s Symphony No. 1, begins at rehearsal 60 and lasts until rehearsal 71, when it is finally silenced by a solo cadence on the tom-tom. Throughout the episode the soloist only plays *glissandi* on the strings of the piano, while the pianist is pressing the sustain pedal.

Critics such as Hewett were unhappy with this polystylistic episode, stating that ‘the lame little swing-jazz phrases tossed into the *Hour of the Soul* were ineffective and banal; Hewett interpreted this episode as the composer’s intention to demonstrate how ‘banality intrudes into the spiritual quest.’¹¹⁶ However, the composer’s actual intention was to represent ‘a terrible destructive force;’ she has explained:

When the percussionist begins his solo, I feel in the sounds of the tom-tom his indignation and protest. It is Tsvetaeva’s protest against the vulgarity and aggressiveness of the people, of the entire society. Vulgarity and aggressiveness are the murderers that killed the poet.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ Polin, ‘Conversations in Leningrad, 1988,’ 19.

¹¹⁶ Hewett, ‘A Composer Crushed by her own Symbolism.’

¹¹⁷ Lukomsky, ‘The Eucharist in My Fantasy,’ 31.

While Tsvetaeva's life ended tragically, in Gubaidulina's piece the poet's soul overcomes the polystylistic chaos and triumphs over adversity, thus denying the critics' observation that Gubaidulina's works are gloomy and pessimistic. The solo percussionist completes the full circle and finds himself in front of the orchestra, standing next to the female singer and playing a Chinese instrument *chang*, while the singer interprets the verses that proclaim Tsvetaeva's spiritual independence. The poet's feminine and masculine side, the Yin and Yang, the Animus and Anima, are showcased together, thus rounding up Tsvetaeva's musical portrait.

* * * * *

The first work by Sofia Gubaidulina to gain international fame was *Offertorium*, the violin concerto written for Gidon Kremer and premiered in Vienna in 1981. Since then, it has become one of the most popular contemporary concertos, due to the astounding virtuosity of the violin part and brilliant orchestration, which can be said to continue Russian tradition dating as far back as Tchaikovsky and The Five. The concerto was revised twice, and the final 1986 version is the one that is usually performed today. Arguably Gubaidulina's best work, *Offertorium* is a triumph of dramatic intensity and spiritual power. Although the concerto does not contain quotations or paraphrases of religious music, its title is a reference to a part of the Proper of the Mass, sung just after the Credo, while the priest is preparing the bread and wine and offering them upon the altar. Gubaidulina was inspired by the notions of sacrifice and offering: 'The musician's sacrifice of himself in self-surrender to the tone [...] The sacrificial offering of Christ's crucifixion... God's offering as He created the world...'¹¹⁸ When she told her partner, musicologist and conductor Piotr Meshchaninov about the central idea of 'offering' for her violin concerto, he suggested that she use the 'royal theme' of Frederick the Great, immortalised by Johann Sebastian Bach's *Musical Offering* BWV 1079.¹¹⁹ Gubaidulina agreed, and built the concerto on the basis of 'sacrificing' and 'resurrecting' this theme.

A majority of Gubaidulina's works are organised according to the principle of basic oppositions, such as horizontal/vertical, chromati-

¹¹⁸ Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 149.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*

cism/diatonicism, dissonance/consonance, staccato/legato, movement/stasis etc. These musical polarities were codified in Gubaidulina's chamber and orchestral works from the 1970s onwards, including *Concordanza* for ensemble (1971), *Rumore e silenzio* for harpsichord and percussion (1974), *Introitus* for piano and chamber orchestra (1978), *In croce* for cello and organ (1979), *Seven Words* for cello, bayan and string orchestra (1982) etc. She regards these antitheses as the oppositions of the ordinary (earthly) and spiritual (transcendental) phenomena respectively.¹²⁰

Gubaidulina has singled out the mysticism of Nikolai Berdiaev as the most decisive influence; in particular, she was attracted to his thoughts on artistic creation. According to Berdiaev, God created man in his own image, hence man is a 'theurg,' a divinely inspired creature who participates in the endless creative process. Of course, Berdiaev equates 'man' with 'male'; nevertheless, Gubaidulina has recognised the connection between his teachings and her own understanding of the creative process.¹²¹ Moreover, Gubaidulina has described musical material as a living being, as a 'child' that needs nurturing and care, in order to grow and develop: 'Musical material is a living organism. It has a history, an evolution of its own [...] We do not invent it; it is like soil, like nature, like a child – it asks for, it wants, it needs something...' ¹²² One could say that Gubaidulina sees herself as a life-giving goddess, the 'Mother' who gives birth to musical material, nurtures it and allows it to develop its full potential. In her artistic consciousness music and religion merge into a single, spiritually-infused creative experience. She has said: 'Art is the *religio* (connection) to God in our fragmented, quotidian life,'¹²³ and 'I am convinced that serious art can be distinguished from the ephemeral by its connection to God [...] any convincing form of worship is a path to His Throne. Music is a form of worship.'¹²⁴

Offertorium is distinguished by constructive clarity; its simple formal design is in perfect accord with Gubaidulina's spiritual idea. The

¹²⁰ Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 287.

¹²¹ Lukomsky, 'Hearing the Subconscious,' 30.

¹²² Hakobian, *Music of the Soviet Age*, 287.

¹²³ Kurtz, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 96.

¹²⁴ Claire Polin, 'The Composer as Seer, but not Prophet,' *Tempo* 190, 1994, 16.

Section I (Exposition):

Beginning

The entire theme minus the finalis D; begins with D and ends with E

Var. 1 – Reh. [8]

The theme has lost D (at the beginning) and E (at the end); it begins with F, ends with F

Var. 2 – 3 bars after reh. [17]

The theme has lost F and F; begins with A, ends with G

Var. 3 – Reh. [25]

The theme has lost A and G; begins with B ♭, ends with D

Var. 4 – 1 bar after reh. [38]

The theme has lost B and G; begins with C#, ends with A

Var. 5 – 2 bars after reh. [43]

The theme has lost C# and A, (but H and C# are also omitted); begins with A, ends with D

Var. 6 – 2 bars after reh. [53]

The theme has lost A and H; begins with A ♭, ends with C# (D ♭)

Var. 7 – Reh. [54]

The theme has lost A ♭ and D (but not C#); begins with G, ends with C# (D ♭)¹²⁷

Var. 8 – Reh. [55]

The theme has lost G and C#; begins with G ♭, ends with E ♭

Var. 9 – 6 bars after reh. [55]

The theme has lost G ♭ and E ♭; the only remaining notes are F and E

Var. 10 – Reh. [56]

The theme has lost F; the only remaining note is the central E

The first six statements of the theme are separated by lengthy ‘dialogues’ of the soloist and the orchestra, built out of the same thematic material. However, from the Variation 6 onwards, as the theme becomes very short, it is repeated five times in close succession. The final two

¹²⁷ I do not know if this is a printing error in the score or the composer’s own decision to substitute D with D flat (i.e. C#).

notes remaining are E and F, which recall the first entry of the soloist at rehearsal 1. At rehearsal 57, the *fff* of the orchestra and the soloist's dramatic leaps depict the moment of Crucifixion and anticipate a remarkably tragic solo cadence which, in the composer's own words, symbolises Christ's suffering at the Cross. I believe that the exact moment of Christ's death is represented just before rehearsal 60, as the soloist reaches a static F# and remains on that note until the end of rehearsal 60, for a total of 17 bars. This moment also announces the beginning of the third section, in which the theme is gradually rebuilt – 'resurrected' – in a process reverse to that seen in the Section I. While the resurrection does not unfold as systematically as the sacrifice, the segments of the theme are still clearly heard in various instrumental groups, separated by sonoristic passages. From rehearsal 115, the theme can be heard in the solo violin accompanied by low strings, in a mournful chorale resembling Russian Orthodox Church music.

In the third section, fragments of the theme can be heard both in direct and retrograde movements: for example, at rehearsals 124–125, the segment from the tenth to the sixteenth note of the theme (F to D) can be heard in direct motion in the piano and harps, while at the same time the solo violin plays the ascending chromatic movement reminiscent of the second half of the theme, but in retrograde motion. The final statement at rehearsal 134 (which announces the beginning of the short Coda) is the only appearance of the complete theme; however, it is retrograde. In Gubaidulina's own words, this is the moment of 'Transfiguration: "The theme has returned, but nobody can recognise it."¹²⁸

In her review of the Gubaidulina weekend, Anna Picard has claimed:

Pro et contra, the *Nadeyka* Triptych, *The Light of the End*, and even *Offertorium* all promote the same message: that this world is one of torment and travail, and the next is one of bliss. [...] But Gubaidulina says it in musical flash-cards, alternating three-minute sections of apocalyptic terror with three-minute sections of radiance, and a dash of glissandi – often in contrary motion – to distract the listener as she switches from one to the other.¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Lukomsky, 'My Desire is Always to Rebel,' 27.

¹²⁹ Picard, 'A Journey of the Soul: The Music of Sofia Gubaidulina.'

However, as the analysis above has shown, *Offertorium* is not based on random use of these musical images, but on a clearly stated and consistently executed constructive principle. Furthermore, Gubaidulina does not attempt to blatantly illustrate the events described in the Gospels, but only to evoke Christ's final moments and to remind the listeners of his sacrifice; the composer's message is not the promise of eternal bliss after death but, quite the opposite, the overcoming of death. A less misinformed critic Tim Ashley reads *Offertorium* as 'a massive theology lesson that weaves together the musical iconography of different Christian traditions in a broadly ecumenical manner.'¹³⁰

Furthermore, the concerto should not only be read through religious imagery, but also as a parable of any suffering and oppressed individual, forced to sacrifice his or her identity to the collective. The fact that Gubaidulina's protagonist manages to rise from the ashes and rebuild himself/herself is a testimony to the composer's faith in the individual's inner strength. Gerard McBurney also points to the essentially optimistic, darkness-to-light trajectory of *Offertorium*.¹³¹ Instead of indulging in self-loathing or predicting doomsday, Gubaidulina offers hope and solace. For Soviet citizens, living under an oppressive regime, this hidden message was particularly poignant.

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Written in 1986, *Stimmen... verstummen...* [Voices... silenced...] was Sofia Gubaidulina's first major symphonic work and a perfect embodiment both of her aesthetics of 'poverty',¹³² characterised by an ability to generate enormous energy from the most elementary sound substance, and of her penchant for blunt dualisms. Just like *Offertorium*, the symphony *Stimmen... verstummen...* (which can also be dubbed a 'Concerto for conductor and orchestra,' because of a prominent 'solo' for the conductor) belongs to the group of large-scale works from the late 1970s to mid-1980s, which established Gubaidulina as a distinctive

¹³⁰ Ashley, 'Gubaidulina.'

¹³¹ Gerard McBurney, 'It Pays to be Poor', *The Guardian*, 12 August 2005, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2005/aug/12/classicalmusicandopera.proms20051?INTCMP=SRCH>

¹³² Ibid.

compositional voice throughout Europe. These works are very typical of Gubaidulina's mature style, and each one of them gives us a complete picture of all her idiosyncrasies.

In Gubaidulina's artistic consciousness, the basic polarity of horizontal and vertical is best embodied in the symbol of Cross; she finds it necessary 'to crucify the vertical of the multidimensional divine sense against the horizontal of time [...] That's why any work of art appears to me as a crucifix.'¹³³ This also applies to her understanding of the difference between the full vibrating sound (especially of a string instrument) and the flageolet:

Sound can have an earthly, only too 'human' expressiveness. And yet if you touch the same spot of the string in another way, if you change a bit your attitude, you are carried away from earth to heaven.¹³⁴

An understanding of these musical polarities, codified in her numerous chamber and orchestral works from the mid-1970s onwards, is crucial for the interpretation of her 1986 symphony, because the duality of contrasting spheres of 'earthly' and 'divine' is the fundamental feature of this work. As observed by McBurney, 'her interest in sheer sound and in the symbolism of religion are to her indivisible, allowing her a whole vocabulary of what she calls "musical metaphor" or "instrumental symbolism".'¹³⁵

The entire twelve-movement symphony *Stimmen... verstummen...* is built out of several diminutive motifs: a D major triad represents the sphere of the 'divine,' while the 'earthly' sphere of martyrdom and suffering is represented by chromatic movements and glissando. The basic outline of the symphony is very simple. It consists of twelve movements in which these two spheres alternate; hence, the form is that of double variations. Another prominent duality is that of sound and silence, as indicated by the very title of the work, which originated from

¹³³ Quoted in: Valentina Kholopova and Enzo Restagno, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, Moskva, Kompozitor, 2008, 64.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 38.

¹³⁵ McBurney, 'Encountering Gubaydulina,' 120.

the final verse in Gubaidulina's 1983 work *Perception*, the text of which is based on her correspondence with the poet Francisco Tanzer.

The odd movements (Nos. 1, 3, 5, 7) are almost completely static and impenetrable: the celestial perfection, the cosmic harmony depicted by the 'twinkling' of the D major chord in high registers of strings and winds, does not require any modification or development. However, these 'heavenly' movements get progressively shorter and culminate in – silence. In the ninth movement, Gubaidulina prescribes a silent 'solo' for the conductor. On the other hand, the even movements (Nos. 2, 4, 6, 8) are progressively longer and more ominous; the silence of the ninth movement is an outcome of the apocalyptic predicament presented in the longest, and the most dramatic, eighth movement. After the ninth movement, the situation is reversed: the even movements are now associated with the celestial major chords and the odd eleventh movement with chromaticism.

This unusual disposition of movements is based on proportions related to the 'Golden section' and the Fibonacci sequence, both of which are among Gubaidulina's favourite means of organising rhythmic and metric proportions of a piece. Gubaidulina assigns a symbolic/mystic significance to the Golden section and to the Fibonacci sequence, in which every number is the sum of the previous two:

0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, etc.

Gubaidulina believes that the rhythms based on the Fibonacci sequence reflect the laws of life.¹³⁶ The 'silent' ninth movement coincides with the point of the Golden section of the entire symphony. Also, the progressively decreasing number of quavers in the 'heavenly' movements corresponds with the numbers of the Fibonacci sequence. Gubaidulina has said:

The Ninth movement is a 'rest': it is a solo for the conductor. It is as if music had come to 'zero': in the first movement there was 55 quarters [*sic*], in the third – 34, in the fifth – 21, in the seventh – 13, and, finally, in the ninth – zero.¹³⁷

¹³⁶ Kholopova and Restagno, *Sofia Gubaidulina*, 111–112.

¹³⁷ Lukomsky, 'Hearing the Subconscious,' 30.

However, I have actually counted 55 dotted quavers of the D major chord in the third movement, 34 in the fifth, and 21 in the seventh. It is not known to me whether the composer was misquoted, or she made a mistake. Either way, these numbers still correspond to the Fibonacci sequence.

While the conductor ‘performs’ the rhythm of the silence in the ninth movement, the constantly changing metre comprises bars that contain the numbers of crotchets related to the Fibonacci row:

3/4, 5/4, 8/4, 13/4

Near the end of the ‘solo’, the conductor is instructed to make progressively wider movements with his/her hands, to correspond to the following time units:

1-2-1; 1-2-3-2-1; 1-2-3-5-8-13-8-5-3-2-1

Again, Gubaidulina structures time according to the Fibonacci series in an attempt to reinstate the cosmic balance, destroyed in the previous movements. However, the reinstatement is not embodied by a D major chord; in the beginning of the tenth movement the organ and violins play a G major chord in high register. According to the composer, the G major triad symbolises ‘eternal light’ which begins to shine after the catastrophe in the cleared lucid space.¹³⁸

The ‘earthly’ movements, on the other hand, are characterised by a disjointed linear movement: the chromatic, micropolyphonic canons and menacing glissandos. The brief ‘tonal’ centres are interspersed with rising and falling chromatic scales: as if Gubaidulina is hinting at the possibility of the existence of ‘heaven on Earth,’ but then quickly denying it. In the eighth movement, the ‘apocalypse’ is depicted by aleatoric passages, chromatic lines clashing with one another, harsh polytonal chords, and from rehearsal 70 with diatonic and pentatonic passages in organ. The movement ends with the glissandos that the second movement had begun with.

The final confrontation of the two spheres takes place in the twelfth movement. The ‘earthly’ sphere dominates the movement, but the

¹³⁸ Ibid., 31.

'heavenly' D major chord makes a return at rehearsal 29 and concludes the symphony; thus, the outcome of the confrontation between good and evil is left ambiguous, though potentially optimistic. One could argue that the composer's message is that the two spheres are destined to coexist, sometimes crossing paths, with the earthly realm of human activity occasionally trying to emulate the celestial perfection, and occasionally trying to disturb the cosmic order; but the divine sphere remains unaffected.

However, the symphony *Stimmen... verstummen...* can also be read entirely differently, as a political metaphor for the oppression and the brutal 'silencing' of the voices of Soviet citizens. Written at the dawn of *perestroika*, the symphony reflects on the gloomiest days of terror, but also shows that the Soviets have managed to survive and to have their voices heard again. While the composer herself has never hinted at this as being her hidden 'programme,' the very title of the piece, as well as its dramaturgy, readily offer it to such an interpretation and rebuke Ivan Hewett's claim that the main problem with Gubaidulina's music is that 'idea and effect are locked into a pre-set pattern by the composer' and that the listeners are 'deprived of any freedom to interpret what we heard.'¹³⁹

When compared to the works of her exact contemporaries, fellow 'spiritualists' and 'postists', one could say that the sound world that Gubaidulina creates in the symphony *Stimmen... verstummen...* is rather similar to the apocalyptic postism of Valentin Sil'vestrov's Symphony No. 5, which will be discussed below; however, unlike Sil'vestrov, Gubaidulina does not employ obvious stylistic allusions. Although her music is as beautiful as Sil'vestrov's, it lacks the desolate 'creepiness' of his Symphony No. 5.

In a 'realist' manner very typical of the representatives of Hakobian's 'Second avant-garde', Gubaidulina employs compositional techniques of heterogeneous origin to narrate cosmological stories. In that sense, her approach bears no significant difference to Sil'vestrov's or Schnittke's. However, a closer comparison of Gubaidulina's *Stimmen... verstummen...* to Schnittke's works reveals the specific features of these composers' personal responses to a common artistic 'mission.' For Schnittke,

¹³⁹ Hewett, 'A Composer Crushed by her own Symbolism.'

European classical tradition has reached a (dead-)end; he refers to various historical styles with a mixture of worship, pathos and mockery. None of this can be seen in Gubaidulina, who regards musical material as a unified sonic substance in the broadest of terms, and feels free to use any portions of that substance as she sees fit. In comparison to her peer group, Gubaidulina became involved with serialism much later, and she perceived it as a finished tradition, which could be utilised and manipulated in an impartial way.

Although both Schnittke and Gubaidulina came from mixed ethnic and religious backgrounds, Schnittke had a more complex relationship with his heritage and with his status as a Soviet/Russian composer. Gubaidulina has never identified with any single tradition; her pantheistic meta-pluralism, inspired by the Russian mysticism from the early twentieth century, elevates this concept by offering consolation in the form of a mystical union with divine forces, which are conveyed by numerical proportions and major chords.

As my discussion above has hopefully shown, despite Gubaidulina's readiness to provide mystical 'programmes' for her works, her actual symbolism is never entirely literal and banal. The harsh criticism directed towards her works was a consequence of Western critics' unwillingness to view her works in appropriate contexts and to understand the composer's messages. In a closed and paranoid Soviet system, where all cultural values were redefined and all art expected to contribute towards the new socialist society, Gubaidulina courageously wrote music inspired by her religious and moral convictions and voiced her protest against persecution of creative artists, but also of common people. The three analysed works can be read as religious parables, but they also provide a commentary on life under tyranny and problematise the relationship between the individual and the system. In all three works, the forces of good are battered and bruised but not entirely defeated; there is hope amidst despair. And the resurrection that *Offertorium* ends with signifies that, while it is impossible to recreate something in its original form, it is possible to revive its main features and to transform them into a new creation. This could well be a summary of Gubaidulina's mission as a creative human being.

Postlude to Spiritualism

All composers whose works were discussed in this chapter employed compositional techniques of heterogeneous origin to narrate cosmological stories. The composers' spiritual quests corresponded with the Soviet intelligentsia's desire to reengage with its long-taboo religious heritage(s) and to find substitutes for the discredited communist ideology. The (re)discovery of various church music traditions (Orthodox, Gregorian, Lutheran) and the revival of the early twentieth-century mysticism not only enabled the composers to take up the roles of moral and spiritual guiding lights, but also enriched the scope of creative solutions and compositional techniques. Stylistic artefacts extracted from various contexts were put in the service of the narratives that were considered problematic and/or challenging in the Soviet context; at the same time, they offered a viable alternative to the still reigning official canon. Moreover, the works by these new believers were diverse enough to avoid potential accusations of uniformity. Namely, although Pärt's, Ustvolskaia's and Gubaidulina's works analysed in this chapter were products of the same cultural and aesthetic stance, the actual ways in which these composers expressed their faith were quite diverse and resulted in highly individual, if sometimes blunt and manneristic works. While such works would have been quite indigestible if written in a different society, in the context of late Soviet music they are entirely justified. As I wrote in my discussion of Schnittke's and Pärt's *Credo* works:

It may be that the blunt immediacy with which these narratives are expressed may hinder their status as canonic works; yet the composers' courage in the context of their times is clear, and the raw communicative power of these declarations of faith remains as impressive testament to their creative imperatives.¹⁴⁰

¹⁴⁰ Medić, 'I Believe... In What?', 107.

META-PLURALISM

As I have mentioned in the Introduction to this book, I chose *meta-pluralism* as an umbrella term for a late Soviet stylistic tendency that is habitually mistaken for postmodernism. To my knowledge, this is the first time that this term has been used in musicology, although it has been widely used in philosophy, politics, literary theory, legal science and other disciplines.¹

For example, the *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* offers a definition of metapluralism as ‘pluralism about pluralism.’

The preference for one kind of pluralism over another is typically motivated by epistemic virtues or constraints. Metapluralism, pluralism about pluralism, is obviously conceivable in similar terms, as it can be found in the formulation of the so-called pluralist stance (Kellert, Longino and Waters 2006). The pluralist stance replaces metaphysical principles with scientific, or empirical, methodological rules and aims that have been ‘tested’...²

In addition to being auto-reflective, meta-pluralism also implies thinking *beyond* pluralism and offering multiple perspectives on an already pluralistic worldview. Richard Sylvan argues for a ‘radical pluralism’ as ‘an alternative to realism, anti-realism and relativism’³ and states:

¹ In the available literature, the term is also spelled ‘metapluralism’ or ‘meta pluralism.’

² Jordi Cat, ‘The Unity of Science’ in Edward N. Zalta, ed., *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall 2017 Edition), <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/scientific-unity/>.

³ Richard Sylvan, ‘Radical Pluralism – An Alternative to Realism, Anti-Realism and Relativism,’ in Robert Nola (ed.), *Relativism and Realism in Science*, Dordrecht, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1988, 253.

Pluralism thus comes in two distinct forms: theory or *meta-pluralism* [emphasis mine], according to which there are many correct theories (especially larger philosophical positions) but at most one actual world; and radical or deep pluralism which goes to the root of these differences in correctness, to be found in things, and discerns a plurality of actual worlds as well as of theories.⁴

In his substantial review of Wayne S. Booth's book *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism*,⁵ James Phelan asks himself and his readers: 'Is genuine pluralism possible, or does it soon become either sophisticated monism or relativism? [...] On what grounds does one pluralistically relate different pluralisms to each other?'⁶ Moreover, Darren Hutchinson warns of the danger of 'developing a meta-pluralism that would govern and set the law for all the rest.'⁷ On the other hand, in their broad definition of legal pluralism, Sue Farran and Niklas Hultin argue that pluralism 'can refer both to the state of affairs as well as the discursive articulation and sense making of that state of affairs.'⁸ Consequently, they highlight

the importance of a kind of 'meta pluralism', or how different legal discourses themselves identify and view pluralism [...] every definition of legal pluralism and the attendant assessment of the various component of that pluralism originate in a particular legal tradition and/or context.⁹

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Wayne S. Booth, *Critical Understanding: The Powers and Limits of Pluralism*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1979.

⁶ James Phelan, 'Pluralism and Its Powers; Metapluralism and Its Problems,' *College English* Vol. 46 No. 1, 1984, 64.

⁷ Darren Hutchinson, 'The Performance of Pluralism and the Practice of Theory (For Richard Rorty),' *The Pluralist*, Vol. 9 No. 2, 2014, 103.

⁸ Sue Farran and Niklas Hultin, 'Introduction', Special Section: Legal Pluralism and its Contribution to the Global South – Global North Paradigm, *The Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law*, Vol. 48 No. 3, 347.

⁹ Ibid., 349.

My introduction of the term meta-pluralism into the discussion of late Soviet symphonic music was a result of my attempt to understand how Soviet composers experienced and interpreted their own position(s) at the moment when multiple stylistic options became available to them. At that point they were forced to reflect both on the lack of historical stylistic continuum, caused by the decades-long reign of the socialist-realist doctrine, and on their own attempts to overcome this ahistoricity, as well as their exclusion from European currents. The biggest problem with equating this late Soviet style to Western postmodernism is the fact that in the Soviet context it did not emerge as a critique of radical modernism.

Throughout the 1950s and 1960s boundaries of the officially promoted socialist realism gradually stretched and eventually dissolved; the ‘Second avant-garde’, polystylism and spiritualism played important roles in this process. Meta-pluralism was a reaction both to the maverick progressivism of the Western avant-garde, whose apologists dismissed the creative efforts of their Soviet contemporaries as epigonic and historically irrelevant, and to the stale post-historicist stance of socialist realism. Here I rely on the work by the art historian Boris Groys who argued that the Soviet project of socialist realism was both ‘a total work of art’ and a mature post-historical culture.¹⁰ Groys highlights the dialectics of cultural streams, which has decisively contributed to the development of Soviet meta-pluralism.

While many different labels were used by various authors to point to the essentially same phenomenon – e.g. *postism* (Taruskin), *late thinking* (Levaia, Redepenning), *stylistic pluralism* (Kholopova and Chigariova) etc. – I suggest *meta-pluralism* as the most appropriate umbrella term for various manifestations of late Soviet composers’ desire to (re)engage with the past(s). The word ‘pluralism’ is broad enough to encompass the entire scope of the composers’ responses to this artistic challenge, while the first part of this term points to the fact that they offered commentaries on the ‘already completed’ traditions, but also on their modernist critiques. The ‘generation of the sixties’ was exposed to advanced twentieth-century compositional techniques simultaneously and belatedly, hence they could only assimilate them and comment on

¹⁰ Boris Groys, *The Total Art of Stalinism*.

them from a meta-perspective. Western postwar musical avant-garde, which at some point had served as a source of inspiration and liberation for the young Soviet ‘avant-gardists,’ thus came to be treated as a finished tradition, something that belonged to a museum, together with all other historical styles. As members of the ‘Second avant-garde’ started to break from their ‘underground’ status and reach broader audiences, they started to merge avant-garde techniques with elements of more accessible styles. Consequently, the Second avant-garde spilled over into the all-inclusive, but nevertheless challenging polystylism, although it still maintained the role of the critique and/or an alternative to the soundworlds of socialist realism and populist kitsch – while the cultural context itself was inevitably changing. The result of this merger can be argued to be a return to Scherbachiov’s original concept of *polistilistika*:

[a] highly individualized and flexible ‘metastyle’ in which stylistically marked passages could be juxtaposed, contrasted, and like any simpler or stylistically ambiguous material, be submitted to a developmental process.¹¹

Moreover, meta-pluralism resulted in the rapprochement of formerly separated compositional camps; namely, some of the composers who eventually embraced meta-pluralism had not started as avant-gardists at all, but as moderated modernists, and they gradually broadened their expressive range by assimilating elements of compositional techniques associated with the avant-garde, until they arrived at a style very similar to the one adopted by the (former) avant-gardists.

While these groups of composers reached meta-pluralism by following different paths, they shared a common urge to (re)establish the historical continuum, to (re)engage with various traditions and to (re)assess their own historical positions. The loss of faith in progressivist modernism in the West conveniently coincided with the Soviet composers’ efforts to become internationally relevant and encouraged them to revisit old styles (and, in some cases, to disassociate themselves from their older avant-garde efforts).

¹¹ Haas, *Leningrad’s Modernists*, 102.

In her books *Theory of quotations*¹² and *Paradigms of the 20th Century – Avant-garde and Postmodernism*¹³ Croatian literary theorist Dubravka Oraić Tolić defined four quotational procedures: two of them characteristic of modernism, the other two of postmodernism. The modernist models are ‘Polemic with the Institutions of European Art and Culture’ and ‘Dialogue with the Treasury of European Cultural Values,’ while the postmodern models are ‘Museum of Modern Art’ and ‘Catalogue of Contemporary Civilisation.’ The postmodern models originate from the modernist ones, but they are functionally different. All four models follow each other diachronically, however, based on some of their features, they actually establish a symmetrical pattern, because *polemic* is analogous to *catalogue*, and *dialogue* to *museum*.

According to Oraić Tolić, exponents of the *polemic* model were artists at the centre of the avant-garde culture in the 1910s, whose texts did not relate to other individual texts, but to the entire institution of European art and culture. This quotational procedure is characterised by an abandonment and denial of European cultural tradition and its institutional(ised) forms and meanings, using the principle of *aleatoric montage*. Its aggressive monological consciousness aims towards a utopian future and a ‘revaluation of all values’ (Nietzsche), which should result in the demolition of the European civilisation as we know it.¹⁴

In Oraić Tolić’s view, exponents of the *dialogue* model were artists working in the broader zones of modernism; it was prevalent in the 1920s and 1930s. This quotational procedure is characterised by a construction of new intercultural meanings using the principle of *intellectual montage*. Its impersonal consciousness is oriented towards the reader and aims for a revaluation of European cultural tradition, wishing to preserve it on a new level.¹⁵

¹² Dubravka Oraić Tolić, *Teorija citatnosti* [Theory of Quotations], Zagreb, Rotulus/Universitas – The Graphic Institute of Croatia, 1990.

¹³ Dubravka Oraić Tolić, *Paradigme 20. stoljeća: avangarda i postmoderna* [Paradigms of the 20th Century: Avant-garde and Postmodernism], Zagreb, The Institute for the Science on Literature of the Faculty of Philosophy, 1996.

¹⁴ Ibid., 92–95.

¹⁵ Ibid., 95–98.

According to Oraić Tolić, the *museum* model emerged in the 1960s, at the dusk of the mega-culture of modernism; it gathers together all modernist and avant-garde art using the principle of *anthological montage*. Thus the intertextual relation is usually established between one's own text and the very institution of modern(ist) and avant-garde art. Its nostalgic consciousness recalls its own modernist and avant-garde past and wishes to include modernist and avant-garde art into the treasury of the 'eternal' European cultural values. Hence this model reconstructs the avant-garde quotational *dialogue* in the new (i.e. postmodern) context.¹⁶

Finally, Oraić Tolić argues that the *catalogue* model appeared in the late 1960s and blossomed in the postmodern art and culture of the 1970s and 1980s. It gathers together all available remnants of modern civilisation, completely stripped off of their meaning, using the principle of *catalogue montage*. Its dispersed nomadic consciousness with no sense of time aims to store the entire modern civilisation in a gigantic archive. This model deconstructs the avant-garde quotational *polemic*.¹⁷

When this theoretical model is applied to the Soviet cultural context, one realises that their 'order of appearance' was somewhat different than the one sketched out by Oraić Tolić, and conditioned by external circumstances. The works of the early Leningrad modernists of Shcherbachiov's school serve as good examples of the *dialogue* model, which chronologically matched the occurrence of this model in other arts throughout Europe. The artists of this group aimed at embracing the entire treasury of European art music, and employing it for the sake of creating new artworks of eternal value. On the other hand, the early output of the musicians gathered around the Association of Proleterian Musicians (RAPM), which confronted modernism from the late 1920s, was a kind of *polemic*, because the RAPM-ists adopted a militant, anti-bourgeois and anti-institutional stance, and claimed to be writing music for 'a new man.' Thus Taruskin makes a plausible argument that the 'first' avant-garde in Russia/Soviet Union was embodied by composers of the RAPM group.¹⁸

¹⁶ Ibid., 98–101.

¹⁷ Ibid., 101–103.

¹⁸ Taruskin, 'Safe Harbors,' in: *Defining Russia Musically*, 86–96.

As for the subsequent socialist realism, it does not belong to any of these theoretical pigeonholes (because it was neither modernist/avant-garde nor postmodern). However, as pointed out by Groys, the socialist-realist thinkers argued that they were selecting politically progressive elements from the entire history to create a mature, post-historical culture.¹⁹ Thus, paradoxically, their ideology most closely resembles the model of the postmodern *catalogue*: whilst making an essentially post-historical or a-historical proclamation that there was no need for further progress (because the utopian project of building an ideal society had – allegedly – already been completed), proponents of socialist realism efficiently extinguished both modernist models – the *polemic* of the RAMP group and the *dialogue* of the Shcherbachiov school.

Since socialist realism promoted itself as a post-historical culture, what was left for the artists who matured after the Thaw and wanted to confront this cultural and ideological construct? Post-post-historicism? Meta-historicism? In a way, yes; but more than anything, the time was ripe for a fresh *polemic* with the official ideology, and in that sense Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 indeed re-actualised the model of avant-garde *polemic*, albeit in a completely different manner from what the artists of the RAPM circle had been doing. As noted earlier, in the Soviet context, theatricalised clashes of styles and an employment of various musical references in Schnittke's early polystylistic works did not imply a quest for accessibility; instead, it was an avant-garde riot. Thus, one might argue that Schnittke's quotation-fueled Symphony No. 1 engaged in an avant-garde *polemic* with the immediate past, i.e. with Soviet triumphant symphonism, but also with other types of officially approved Soviet kitsch.

One may now apply Oraić Tolić's model to Schnittke's subsequent symphonies as well: thus, his Symphony No. 2 *St Florian* can be said to engage in a modernist *dialogue* with the tradition that Schnittke feels he should have been a part of. Schnittke overcomes his need for denial, as showcased in the Symphony No. 1, and instead exhibits a 'hungry' curiosity directed at a long-tabooed tradition of religious music; hence his 'dialogue' in the No. 2 is aimed at transcending temporal and cultural barriers.

¹⁹ Groys, *Total Art of Stalinism*, 42; 46–47.

As for Schnittke's Symphony No. 3, as the ensuing analysis will show, the situation is more complex. In his discussion of musical post-modernism, Paul Griffiths states that the most important feature of modernism was the 'project of perpetual revolution'; but in the post-modern world, 'the individual composer is no longer a partner in the grand enterprise of music [...] the composer stands outside, as observer rather than participant.'²⁰ Griffiths assumes that '[t]he postmodern composer is free to make use of everything except the most advanced music of the last hundred years';²¹ but the examples of Berio's *Sinfonia* and Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 prove otherwise. In fact, when discussing the composers who have situated 'their quarrel with modernism' on the ground of 'unbridled fancy and audience appeal,'²² Griffiths actually describes the fourth stage of Oraić Tolić's systematisation, that of the postmodern *catalogue*; while Schnittke's No. 3, as we shall see, corresponds to the model of the *museum*.

In the Symphony No. 3, the *dialogue* with the past is no longer possible, but only an acknowledgement of the stalemate situation. Just like the exponents of the *museum* model, Schnittke treats modernism and avant-garde as finished projects, and approaches them from a distance. He attempts to reaffirm the ideal order of musical styles and to determine his own place in history; by doing so, he wishes to add himself to the long list of 'historically relevant' German composers and to secure his place in the museum. However, unlike true exponents of the *museum* model, i.e. the early Western postmodernists such as Berio or Ligeti, who had been active participants in the postwar avant-garde exploits and who could comment on their immediate past with a mixture of nostalgia and curatorial reverence, Schnittke and his Soviet peers embraced all avant-garde techniques at once, as ready-mades, and already from a vantage perspective. They could only reflect on modernism and avant-garde in opposition to the canon of socialist realism, because they did not participate in the avant-garde cultural process in the broader European context, but only locally.

²⁰ Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 263.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *Ibid.*, 265.

On the other hand, the model of the postmodern *catalogue* is completely alien to Schnittke and his Soviet contemporaries. Schnittke never denied either the causal relations among his musical references or their original contexts. Although Schnittke did share the belief that the institution of modern art has come to an end with the exponents of the *catalogue* model, he assembled and edited the remains of this institution into an anthology of greats. Musical references employed in his Symphony No. 3 are not deprived of their original meanings; instead, they maintain their semiotic/signalling power and enable the composer to indulge in his meta-pluralistic, historiographic narrative.

With regard to the Symphony No. 3, my main concern is Schnittke's attitude towards tradition, especially the great German/Austrian symphonic tradition which he worships, questions and mourns in equal measures. One could argue that this symphony should be regarded as part of the broader European postmodern context because, at this point of his career, Schnittke was no longer writing music for Soviet audiences only: the Third was written for a German (albeit, East German) institution, and thus could be regarded as a reaction to the European cultural 'state of play' at the time.

In his 1997 book *Defining Russia Musically*, Richard Taruskin argued that Schnittke's early polystylistic scores (including the Symphony No. 1 and Concerto Grosso No. 1) were 'securely modernist in attitude.'²³ However, in his 2005 *Oxford History of Music*, he includes Schnittke in his chapter on postmodernism, stating that the Symphony No. 1 'contradicts modernist assumptions' and that the Concerto Grosso No. 1 suggested 'the postmodern way out:'

The Concerto Grosso established the pattern that would distinguish Schnittke's version of postmodernist collage. No longer despairingly helter-skelter like the First Symphony, Schnittke's polystylism now took shape through bald, easily read contrasts.²⁴

²³ Taruskin, *Defining Russia Musically*, 100.

²⁴ Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Volume V, 465–466.

For Taruskin, the most important signifier of Schnittke's (and generally Soviet) 'postmodernism' from 1977 onwards is the fact that 'nothing was off-limits any longer' and 'one could construct contrasts of a previously inconceivable extremity.'²⁵ However, this contradicts the general consensus that in the Symphonies Nos. 2 and 3 (and other works from the late 1970s onwards) Schnittke actually toned down stylistic contrasts, as compared to his earlier polystylistic works (such as *Serenade*, Violin Sonata No. 2 or Symphony No. 1). For Paul Griffiths, the main issue here is Schnittke's 'panic at the collapse of history into a meaningless simultaneity, and the trepidations of a man belonging to and reporting from a culture passing from tight constraint into unchecked freedom.'²⁶

Kholopova and Chigariova claim that in this symphony Schnittke achieved 'neither polystylism not collage, but stylistic pluralism – a total mixture of all styles framed by the individual artist's style.'²⁷ However, these authors never explain to what extent they consider polystylism different from either collage or 'stylistic pluralism' (or 'monostylism' for that matter). The ensuing analysis will attempt to resolve some of these issues.

²⁵ Ibid., 467.

²⁶ Griffiths, *Modern Music and After*, 252.

²⁷ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 178.

Alfred Schnittke: Symphony No. 3

Throughout his career Alfred Schnittke often problematized his complex national, cultural and religious identities.²⁸ Being of German extraction, and having spent some of his formative years in Vienna, Schnittke possibly felt that he should have been a part of the great German/Austrian musical tradition; however, his life circumstances forced him to approach it as an alien observer instead.

Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 for large orchestra (1980–1981), commissioned for the inauguration of the new Gewandhaus concert hall in Leipzig,²⁹ seemingly offers a straightforward narrative – the composer searches in vain for his own 'lost' Germanness and attempts to establish a link between himself and the 'pantheon of greats' who he considers his predecessors, by including references to landmark German composers from J. S. Bach to Karlheinz Stockhausen. However, is it really so?

My analysis of Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 is based on my study of his sketches from the Juilliard Manuscripts Collection. On the one hand, they provide plenty of information on Schnittke's manipulation of thematic material and the overall constructive principles. On the other hand, although the sketches fail to broach a coherent narrative, or to give a definite answer to the imminent question 'But what does this all mean?', they do hint at Schnittke's hidden intentions and provide clues for an informed reading of this idiosyncratic work and its possible meanings. While it is generally considered that the work represents a celebration of German music and culture in general, I will argue that Schnittke's homage to German musical tradition is rather ambivalent and disturbing, and that Schnittke here 'narrates' two related stories, the first one being of the development of German music and its 'degeneration' into serialism, and the second – of the decline of the entire German nation and its culture in the twentieth century.

²⁸ Several large portions of this chapter were previously published in the following article: Medić, 'The Sketches of Alfred Schnittke's Symphony No. 3, and What They (Don't) Tell Us,' 169–213. Reproduced with permission granted by the publisher.

²⁹ Köchel (ed.), *Alfred Schnittke zum 60. Geburtstag: Eine Festschrift*, 87.

Although my reading of the symphony will be partially based on the hermeneutical method, which is nowadays considered somewhat 'outmoded,' I find Lawrence Kramer's concept of 'close reading'³⁰ entirely appropriate for the analysis of Soviet music, saturated as it is with various types of 'intonatsiia' – to use Asaf'ev's term for the smallest semantic unit in instrumental music.

Schnittke's extravagant scores have often been criticised; Robin Holloway declared to be 'appalled' by Schnittke:

Throw in a sardonic yet arbitrary snatch of Haydn, Beethoven, Johann Strauss, subvert with more baleful rent-a-crowd expressionism, juggle all these ingredients for half-an-hour or so till everyone is convinced that they've undergone a deeply pulverising and meaningful experience...³¹

Anna Picard is equally harsh in her assessment of Schnittke:

After identifying the musical influences much as you might spot the hidden words in a puzzle book (a post-modern game for post-modern music), clocking the use of electric guitars and harpsichord in a symphony orchestra (gosh!) and agreeing with the composer's extensive argument that B against C is discordant (double gosh!), I found nothing. Take away the quotations and the page is bare.³²

However, my encounter with Schnittke's sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection proved that his seemingly random, redundant and chaotic scores actually unfolded according to elaborate designs and

³⁰ Cf. the exchange between Lawrence Kramer and Gary Tomlinson on the pages of *Current Musicology* 53, 1993 (Tomlinson, 'Musical Pasts and Postmodern Musicologies: A Response to Lawrence Kramer,' 18–24; Kramer, 'Music Criticism and the Postmodernist Turn: In Contrary Motion with Gary Tomlinson,' 25–35; 'Tomlinson responds,' 36–40).

³¹ Robin Holloway, 'Appalled by Schnittke', *On Music: Essays and Diversions*, Claridge Press, 2003, 301.

³² Anna Picard, 'Classical Music – Desperately seeking the soul of Schnittke,' *The Independent*, 21 January 2001, <http://www.highbeam.com/doc/1P2-5148711.html>

precise calculations. Since I have already recounted the story of my discovery and ‘deciphering’ of Schnittke’s sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection in several articles (most recently in my contribution to the book *Schnittke Studies*),³³ I will just note that there are 63 sketches for the Symphony No. 3 (Nos. 181, 183–208, 213, 235, 459–490 and 497–498), which is one of the largest batches in the collection.

By 1981, the year in which the Symphony No. 3 was completed, Schnittke’s style had already undergone several major changes and incorporated many different influences. Even as Schnittke minimised the employment of collages of quotations in his works from the mid-1970s onwards, he still refused to conform to a single creative ideology and continued to combine ready-made styles. Although the Symphony No. 3 does not contain outright quotations, it still qualifies as a polystylistic work, due to the range of styles alluded to, in particular in its second and third movements. These styles have enabled Schnittke to execute his historicist idea and to demonstrate how the tradition that is the subject of his symphony was changing during the centuries of its development.

In spite of its wealth of stylistic references, the symphony is essentially conceived as a whole, following the mainstream four-movement design based on the principle of recurring themes and motifs. The overtone-based theme serves as a primary thematic material and unites all the other themes. Schnittke said:

I imagined music related to the scale of natural overtones, achieved by the piling up of the overtone spectrum, where groups of notes derived from higher overtones appear and then separate themselves from the gravity of their original note and pass into an acoustical modulation. This was a Utopian plan [...] A part of this idea could, however, be realized in the final version of the symphony (which was to be my Third), namely in the first movement, although only in tempered approximation.³⁴

³³ Ivana Medić, ‘Revised catalogue of Alfred Schnittke’s Sketches in the Juilliard Manuscript Collection,’ in: Gavin Dixon (ed.), *Schnittke Studies*, Abingdon/New York, Routledge, 2016, 209–257.

³⁴ Köchel, *Alfred Schnittke zum 60. Geburtstag: Eine Festschrift*, 87.

Aside from this main theme, Schnittke also incorporates paraphrases of German and Austrian music, as well as thirty-four ‘monograms’ – twenty-eight composers’ names and six symbolic words: ‘Erde,’ ‘Deutschland,’ ‘Leipzig,’ ‘Thomaskirche,’ ‘Gewandhaus’ and ‘das Böse’ (‘evil’; rendered as ‘das Boese’). The use of a monogram to represent a composer’s name (or any other noun) is a device widely used by composers from J. S. Bach to Shostakovich; however, never have the monograms been used with such an abundance and with such a straightforward narrative purpose as in Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3.

In order to increase the number of available notes, Schnittke not only employs the nine Latin letters that can be ‘converted’ to notes: C, D, S (i.e. E ♭), E, F, G, A, B (i.e. B ♭) and H (i.e. B) – but also E# (i.e. Eis, as in ‘Eisler’), D ♭ (Des, as in ‘Dessau’), A ♭ (As, as in ‘das Boese’), F as Ph (in ‘Joseph’) and D as R (in ‘Erde’). The monograms are treated differently in each movement; Schnittke does not use them mechanically, but treats them as true musical (leit-)themes.

Although only a few of the available sketches for the Symphony No. 3 are dated, they still reveal numerous details as regards Schnittke’s compositional process. Sketches Nos. 480, 497 and 498 show that Schnittke drafted monograms of some of his Soviet compatriots (and his own too), furthermore, monograms of musical greats from earlier epochs, twentieth-century modernists, and even some writers (Table 1). While there is no firm evidence that these monograms were drafted for the Symphony No. 3, it is almost certainly so, because the type of paper and handwriting are consistent with a majority of other sketches for this work, and because the monograms of Hindemith, Orff, Eisler et al. the same as the ones that Schnittke did include into the finished score. (Examples 1a, 1b) These sketches suggest that Schnittke’s ‘museum’ of greats initially had room for many more artists; however, as the idea of homage to the Gewandhaus crystallised in his mind, he eventually narrowed the scope down to German/Austrian composers from J. S. Bach and G. F. Handel to Bernd Aloys Zimmermann and the naturalised German Maurizio Kagel. The fact that Schnittke employs 28 composers’ monograms, but not his own, serves to emphasize a distance between him and the ‘pantheon of great Germans:’ he admires his heroes, but he cannot entirely self-identify with them.

Table 1. Sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection – Schnittke’s preliminary plan for the monograms to be included in the Symphony No. 3

SKETCH No.	MONOGRAMS	NAMES
498	Schnittke’s Soviet contemporaries (including himself)	Dmitrii Shostakovich, Sergei Prokofiev, Alfred Schnittke, Edison Denisov, Alemdar Karamanov, Andrei Volkonskii, Aleksandr Rabinovich, Sergei Slonimskii, Boris Tishchenko, Arvo Pärt (Paert), Roman Ledenev, Sofia Gubaidulina, Rodion Shchedrin, Boris Chaikovskii, Moses (Moisei) Weinberg, Georgii Sviridov, Aram Khachaturian, Evgeni Golubev, Valentin Sil’vestrov, Leonid Grabovskii and Boris Schnapper.
480 497	European composers from XV to XIX centuries	Wolfram von Eschenbach, Walter von den Vogelweide, Gottfried von Strassburg, Hartmann von Aue, Heinrich von Ofterdingen, Neidhart von Reuenthal, Heinrich von Morungen, Konrad von Würzburg, Hans Sachs, Adam Puschmann, Michael Behaim, Hans Rosenblüt, Hans Folz, Heinrich Isaac, Ludwig Senfl, Michael Praetorius, Hans Leo Hassler, Johann Hermann Schein, Samuel Scheidt, Heinrich Schütz, Dietrich Buxtehude, Johann Pachelbel, Johann Jacob Froberger, Johann Kuhnau, Johann Matthesonn, Georg Philip Telemann, Johann Adolf Hasse, Frescobaldi, Josef Matthias Hauer, Claudio Monteverdi, Domenico Scarlatti, Alessandro Scarlatti, Francois Couperin, Antonio Vivaldi, Wilhelm Friedemann Bach, Carl Philip Emanuel Bach, Johann Christian Bach, Antonio Salieri, Franz Lehar, Frederic Chopin and Franz Liszt.
497 498	XX-century modernists and avant-gardists	Igor Stravinsky, Béla Bartók, Edgar Varèse, Claude Debussy, Charles Ives, Heinz Holliger, Witold Lutosławski, Henryk Mikołaj Górecki, Friedrich Cerha, John Cage, György Ligeti, Krzysztof Penderecki, Henri Pousseur, Claus Huber, Bogusław Schaeffer, Pierre Schaeffer, Luc Ferrari and Heinrich Schubel.
498	Writers and artists	Franz Kafka, Thomas Mann, Paul Celan, Margareta Malyschewa, and Schnittke’s own grandmother Thea Schnittke, who was an editor of German-language books for the Moscow publishing house Progress.

Examples 1a and 1b. A. Schnittke, Sketches Nos. 498 and 480 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection — preliminary monograms

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Handwritten musical sketch No. 498 by A. Schnittke. The sketch consists of several staves of music with dense notation, including notes, rests, and dynamic markings. The notation is heavily annotated with handwritten text in Russian and English. Key annotations include:

- Top staff: "1. for us - some type of Transposition" and circled numbers 1, 2, 3, 4.
- Second staff: "Wagner Anatein Mozart Joplin Haydn Chopin Liszt Beethoven" and "Antonin Dvorak Franz Liszt Johann Strauss".
- Third staff: "Crescendo - 4 zaryki" and "poco rallentando".
- Fourth staff: "Carl Orff Maurice Ravel John Cage Gyorgy Ligeti Hans Werner Henze Krzysztof Penderecki".
- Fifth staff: "A. Schnittke Bach D.S.C.H. Alban Berg Brahms Anton Webern Igor Stravinsky Bela Bartok Paul Hindemith Edgard Varèse".
- Sixth staff: "Arnold Schoenberg Pierre Boulez Luigi Nono Luciano Berio Karlheinz Stockhausen Stanis Nienkowski Heiner Rauschen Claude Debussy Dmitri Shostakovich Igor Stravinsky".
- Seventh staff: "Mikhail Shchukin Edvard Remonov Alexander Karamanov Andrej Volkovskij Aleksander Polivanovitch Sergej Shostakovitsch Boris Tschelintsew Henk Baars".
- Eighth staff: "Roman Ledniew Saja Guladzevich Odion Shtekarevich Boris Tschelintsew Moses Weinsteyn Georgij Swiridow Aram Chatschaturian Evgeny Golubev".
- Ninth staff: "Richard Wagner Richard Strauss Robert Schumann Franz Schubert Franz Liszt Frederic Chopin Ludwig van Beethoven".
- Tenth staff: "Valentin Silvestrov Leonid Grigorovits Boris Schjapera Heinrich Shostak Thea Schickler Paul Celan Margaretha Malyutina".

Other annotations include "m. sf. u. sfz", "Appassionato", "poco rallentando", "Crescendo", "poco rallentando", "Robra", and "Taut".

1a. Sketch No. 498 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection

Paul Hindemith | Carl Orff | Hans Eisler | Paul Dessau | Paul Anders
K.A. Hartmann

④ ③ ② ① ④

Wolfgang von Köchelbach Walter von Ungewitter Gerhard von Hoyer
Hansmann von Aln Heinrich von Offenberg Norbert von Rosenthal

Heinrich von Frauenlob Kraus von Vinsberg

Heinrich von Ludwig Spang Michael Probst Hans Leo Hasler Johann Hermann Schein

Samuel Scheidt Heinrich Scheute Dietrich Buxtehude Johann Pachelbel

Johann Jacob Froberger Johann Kuhnau Johann Matheson Georg Philipp Telemann

Johann Adolph Hasse

Handwritten notes on the left margin:
 Vorfragen
 Carl Orff
 Proklagen
 in 2. u. 3. u. 4. u.
 5. u. 6. u. 7. u.
 8. u. 9. u. 10. u.
 11. u. 12. u. 13. u.
 14. u. 15. u. 16. u.
 17. u. 18. u. 19. u.
 20. u. 21. u. 22. u.
 23. u. 24. u. 25. u.
 26. u. 27. u. 28. u.
 29. u. 30. u. 31. u.
 32. u. 33. u. 34. u.
 35. u. 36. u. 37. u.
 38. u. 39. u. 40. u.
 41. u. 42. u. 43. u.
 44. u. 45. u. 46. u.
 47. u. 48. u. 49. u.
 50. u. 51. u. 52. u.
 53. u. 54. u. 55. u.
 56. u. 57. u. 58. u.
 59. u. 60. u. 61. u.
 62. u. 63. u. 64. u.
 65. u. 66. u. 67. u.
 68. u. 69. u. 70. u.
 71. u. 72. u. 73. u.
 74. u. 75. u. 76. u.
 77. u. 78. u. 79. u.
 80. u. 81. u. 82. u.
 83. u. 84. u. 85. u.
 86. u. 87. u. 88. u.
 89. u. 90. u. 91. u.
 92. u. 93. u. 94. u.
 95. u. 96. u. 97. u.
 98. u. 99. u. 100. u.

Handwritten note on the right margin:
 28.10.28

1b. Sketch No. 480 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection

The sketch No. 190 shows that Schnittke initially intended to use 28 monograms based on composers' surnames only; he worked out the melodic shape of the monograms, but also their rhythmical profiles, instrumental colours, possible harmonisations etc. However, Schnittke probably realized that some monograms based only on surnames would be musically limited (for example, 'Mozart' would consist of a single note A), hence he decided to expand them by using the composers' full names. The elaborate calculations of rhythms, intervals, durations and instrumentation prove that the need for rational planning prevailed in this stage of Schnittke's career.

* * * * *

The first movement opens with a tide of strings playing the 'overtone' theme, dubbed by Richard Taruskin as 'Wagner's *Rheingold* prelude cubed and cubed again'³⁵ (Example 2):

Example 2. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 1st movement: 'overtone theme'

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The first monogram is 'Erde' [*sic*], possibly another reference to *Rheingold* (although Wagner's character is called 'Erda'), but also to Mahler's *Song of the Earth*. There are other analogies with *The Ring* tetralogy: apart from the role of first movement as the 'prelude' to the rest of the cycle, Schnittke treats the monograms as 'leitmotifs' representing the symphony's protagonists, i.e. the great German and Austrian composers. These leitmotifs will undergo significant changes throughout the symphony.

The movement unfolds in four 'phases'; each of the first three phases comprises a rising wave based the overtone theme, a series of

³⁵ Taruskin, 'After Everything,' 102.

monograms, and a transition which announces the key of the next phase (the keys being C major, D major and B major respectively). One could argue that, at the beginning of the movement, 'Mother Earth' ('Erde') gives birth to a new German nation ('Deutschland') which, in turn, gives birth to successive generations of talented offspring, as the three tides of composers' monograms are presented on the background of the primordial, major, ascending 'overtone' theme.³⁶ The monograms are aurally almost indistinguishable, because the 'overtone' theme in deep strings dominates the musical course. After a steady 'ascent,' the final phase is based on the inverted, declining theme in C minor, dubbed by Kholopova and Chigariova 'the undertone theme.'³⁷ Characteristically, in Schnittke's previous two symphonies the most important segments of form also unfolded in C major/minor; in particular, the transition that anticipates the 'undertone' theme, with its prominent C minor chord in brass accompanied by the ubiquitous bells, resembles the first theme of Schnittke's Symphony No. 1. By establishing this auto-reference in the first movement of his Symphony No. 3, Schnittke prepares ground for the overtly pessimistic narratives of its third and fourth movements. Also, the pattern of a 'rise-and-fall,' established in the first movement, is perpetuated throughout the symphony in different ways.

The three 'waves' of monograms are performed by different instrumental groups; most notably, the third phase, dedicated to the twentieth-century composers and starting with Schoenberg's monogram, is assigned to a combination of keyboard instruments, electric guitars and percussion, which has been frequently used by Schnittke (Table 2).³⁸

³⁶ When designing monograms, Schnittke tried not to repeat letters/notes within a certain monogram, unless it was necessary (e.g. if a monogram was too short, like 'Erde'). The reason for not repeating letters will become clear in the fourth movement.

³⁷ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 174.

³⁸ The available sketches do not indicate why Schnittke interpoated Bruckner's monogram to disrupt the more-or-less chronological order. Also, Schnittke omitted Carl Maria Weber's monogram from the first movement, perhaps because his monogram is very similar to Anton Webern's. As to Bach's monogram, by presenting it in its 'surname only' form, Schnittke possibly referred to the entire Bach family, and not just to Johann Sebastian Bach.

Table 2. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3: three 'waves' of monograms in the first movement³⁹

WAVE	MONOGRAMS	INSTRUMENTS
1	Erde (E-D-D-E, Reh. 5), Deutschland (D-E-E \flat -C-B-A, Reh. 6), Leipzig (E-G, Reh. 7), Thomaskirche (B-A-A \flat -E \flat -C-B-E, Reh. 8), Bach (B \flat -A-C-B, Reh. 9), Georg Friedrich Handel (G-E-F-D-C-B-A, Reh. 10), Josef Haydn (E \flat -E-F-B-A-D, Reh. 11), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (F-G-A-D-E-E \flat , Reh. 11 ⁺⁴).	Woodwinds, from flutes ('Erde') and piccolos ('Bach') to bassoons ('Georg Friedrich Handel'), and paired with marimba, vibraphone and celesta ('Joseph Haydn' and 'Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart')
2	Ludwig van Beethoven (D-G-A-B \flat -E-B, Reh. 17), Anton Bruckner (A-B \flat -C-E, Reh. 18), Franz Schubert (F-A-E \flat -C-B-B \flat -E, Reh. 19), Johannes Brahms (B-A-E-E \flat -B \flat , Reh. 20), Robert Schumann (B \flat -E-E \flat -C-B-A, Reh. 21), Richard Wagner (C-B-A-D-G-E, Reh. 22), Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (F-E-D-E \flat -B-B \flat -A, Reh. 23), Johann Strauss (B-A-E \flat -[A-E \flat], Reh. 24).	Brass, starting from the tuba ('Ludwig van Beethoven') and moving upwards in register towards clarinets ('Richard Wagner') and high strings ('Robert Schumann,' 'Felix Mendelssohn')
3	Gustav Mahler (G-E \flat -A-B-E, Reh. 30), Richard Strauss (C-B-A-D-E \flat , Reh. 31), Max Reger (A-E-G, Reh. 32), Arnold Schoenberg (A-D-E \flat -C-B-E-B \flat -G, Reh. 33), Alban Berg (A-B \flat -E-G, Reh. 34), Anton Webern (A-E-B \flat , Reh. 35), Paul Hindemith (A-B-D-E, Reh. 36), Hans Eisler (B-A-E \flat -E, Reh. 37), Paul Dessau (A-D \flat -E-E \flat -A, Reh. 38), Carl Orff (C-A-F, Reh. 39), Karl Amadeus Hartmann (A-D-E-E \flat -B-A, Reh. 40), Karlheinz Stockhausen (A-B-E-E \flat -C, Reh. 41), Hans Werner Henze (B-A-E \flat -E, Reh. 42), Bernd Alois Zimmermann (B \flat -E-D-A-E \flat , Reh. 43), Mauricio Kagel (A-C-E, Reh. 44).	Keyboard instruments, electric guitars and percussion

³⁹ Compare to Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 174, footnotes 26, 27 and 28.

* * * * *

The second movement temporarily obscures Schnittke's pessimistic predicament. In this movement Schnittke recounts the last two centuries of German/Austrian classical music by pouring numerous stylistic allusions into a stable sonata frame. The two sonata themes are modelled on Mozart (the first movement of his Piano concerto in A major K 414)⁴⁰ and Wagner (the already used *Rheingold*-inspired 'overtone' theme) respectively. These two themes are mutually related, since both begin with a rising broken major chord.

The sketch No. 185 indicates that Schnittke was working on this movement in July 1980; however, by the time he drafted No. 200 (dated 3 September 1980) he did not yet have a clear idea of the disposition of themes within the sonata form. He intended to use the Mozart theme as the 'Hauptthema' (main material), the medley of monograms (from Bach to Schumann) as the 'Nebenthema' (subsidiary theme), and the overtone theme as the closing section of the exposition. The development would then have been based on the remaining monograms (from J. Strauss to Stockhausen); Schnittke intended to employ three-part counterpoint here, with an unspecified cantus firmus. The draft also shows that Schnittke was unsure of the structure of recapitulation and Coda and whether they were necessary at all; moreover, he wrote (in German): 'The [sense of] fulfilment (false-fulfilment) must be brought to absurdity – or [left to be] dramatically desired (but not too short, or the third movement will not be anticipated).'

Finally, Schnittke found a fine solution, eliminating the monograms from the exposition and recapitulation and preserving them only for the relatively 'free' sections of the sonata form – i.e. the development and Coda. As a result, the movement does not sound like a disjointed corpus of randomly appearing monograms, but as a rounded whole – thanks to melodic links among the themes and a strict hierarchy of thematic materials. Sketches for this movement (and for other orchestral works) reveal that Schnittke usually began by sketching rhythmical values and calculating rhythmic variations and canons. Then, he planned harmonies and pitches, and the instrumentation was the very last element to be

⁴⁰ Kirsten Peterson, *Structural Threads in the Patchwork Quilt: Polystylistics and Motivic Unity in Selected Works by Alfred Schnittke*, PhD diss., University of Connecticut, 2000, 109.

determined – Schnittke would simply scribble intended instrumentation in the margins. (Example 3).

Example 3. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 2nd movement — Sketch No. 486 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection

Tutti et moderato Pizzicato

Clarinet = 3
Trumpet = 3
Trombone = 3
Percussion = 3
Chorus = 1

2 Fl. 1
2 Fl. 2
2 Clar. 1
2 Clar. 2
2 Bb
2 Bassoon
2 Violin
2 Viola
2 Cello
2 Double Bass
2 Trumpet
2 Trombone
2 Percussion
2 Chorus

14 Tromba
13 Tromba

mit Mandolinen
Harfen
Gitarren
Klavier
Orgel
Schlagzeug
Percussion
Chorus

The ‘Mozart’ theme begins in D major – the key of the second ‘phase’ of the first movement – and consists of several segments: ‘a’, ‘b’ (Reh. 2), ‘c’ (Reh. 3), ‘c1’ – ‘chorale’ (Reh. 4), ‘b1’ (Reh. 5). Mozart’s style is simulated by the elegant melody in strings; however, the swiftly modulating harmonic content of Schnittke’s theme is alien to Mozart’s style and actually akin to Wagner’s ‘endless’ melodies and harmonies (Example 4).

Example 4. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 2nd movement: ‘Mozart’ theme

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Allegro

Vni. I

p

The second theme begins at rehearsal 12; it is presented both in its ‘overtone’ and ‘undertone’ outfits. It ends abruptly two bars before rehearsal 16, to make way for – Bach. The development begins with Bach’s monogram followed by a paraphrase of Bach’s C major prelude from *Well-Tempered Clavier I* (transposed to G minor) in the harpsichord part; conveniently, the motif is also based on the broken chord. It is coupled with the ‘chorale’ announced in the first theme, which has by now morphed into the monogram of G. F. Handel. What follows is a series of monograms, dubbed by Taruskin ‘a potted history of classical music.’⁴¹ Thus, Schnittke casts Bach as the originator of the long line of great German composers, ending with Zimmermann (at least in this movement). The monograms, which are constantly supported by the Bach paraphrase in the harpsichord, occupy the largest portion of the development; as in the first movement, they unfold more or less chronologically.

Earlier analyses of the employment of monograms in this movement (including my own) were not fully accurate, because several monograms in this ‘medley’ were not identified (in most cases because they were

⁴¹ Taruskin, ‘After Everything,’ 102.

presented as chords, rather than melodies).⁴² The sketch No. 488 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection has enabled me to locate all previously missing monograms (Table 3).

Table 3. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 2nd movement: The correct order of monograms in the Development and Coda

SEGMENT OF FORM	MONOGRAMS
Development	Bach (B \flat -A-C-B, rehearsal 15 ⁺²), Georg Friedrich Handel (G-E-F-D-C-B-A, Reh. 16 ⁺⁴), Joseph Haydn (E \flat -E-F-B-A-D, Reh. 17), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (F-G-A-G-A-D-E-E \flat [some letters are repeated], Reh. 17 ⁺⁴), Ludwig van Beethoven (D-G-A-B \flat -E \flat -B, Reh. 18 ⁺³), Carl Maria Weber (C-A-E-B \flat , Reh. 19), Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy (F-E-D-E \flat -B-B \flat -A, Reh. 19 ⁺²), Johann Strauss (B-A-E \flat , Reh. 19 ⁺⁴), Franz Schubert (F-A-E \flat -C-B-B \flat -E, Reh. 19 ⁺⁶), Robert Schumann (B \flat -E-E \flat -D-B-A, Reh. 20 ⁺²), Richard Wagner (C-B-A-D-E [should be g; e is probably an error]-E, Reh. 20 ⁺³), Brahms (B \flat -A-B-D \flat [surname only], Reh. 20 ⁺⁵), Anton Bruckner (A-B \flat -C-E, Reh. 20 ⁺⁶), Gustav Mahler (G-E \flat -A-B-E, Reh. 21), Richard Strauss (C-B-A-D-E \flat , Reh. 21 ⁺¹), Max Reger (A-E-G-E [E is repeated], Reh. 21 ⁺³), Arnold Schoenberg (A-D-E \flat -C-B-B \flat -E-G, Reh. 21 ⁺⁴), Alban Berg (A-B \flat -E-G, Reh. 25), Anton Webern (A-E-B \flat , Reh. 25 ⁺²), Paul Hindemith (A-B-D-E, Reh. 26), Karl Amadeus Hartmann (A-D-E-E \flat -B, Reh. 28 – repeated at 29 and 30), Carl Orff (C-A-F, Reh. 28 ⁺³), Karlheinz Stockhausen (A-B-E-E \flat , Reh. 29), Bernd Alois Zimmermann (B \flat -E-D-A-E \flat , Reh. 31).

⁴² Compare to: Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 176; Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 103–104, figure 3.10; Medić, *Alfred Schnittke's Symphonies 1–3 in the Context of Late Soviet Music*, 171–172.

Coda	Georg Friedrich Handel (Reh. 49 ⁺⁴), Joseph Haydn (Reh. 49 ⁺⁶), Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (Reh. 49 ⁺⁷), Ludwig van Beethoven (Reh. 50 ⁺¹), Carl Maria Weber (Reh. 50 ⁺³), Franz Schubert (Reh. 50 ⁺⁵), Brahms (Reh. 50 ⁺⁷), Richard Wagner (Reh. 51), Robert Schumann (Reh. 52), Anton Bruckner (Reh. 52 ⁺⁷), Gustav Mahler (Reh. 53), Arnold Schoenberg (Reh. 53 ⁺²), Alban Berg (Reh. 54), Anton Webern (Reh. 54 ⁺⁴), Karlheinz Stockhausen (Reh. 55), Hans Werner Henze (Reh. 55 ⁻²), Bernd Alois Zimmermann (55 ⁺³).
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In comparison to the first movement, these themes-monograms are notably different, because here they mimic personal styles (or even specific works) of their composers; in other words, aside from being treated as leitmotifs, they have evolved into *allusions* or, in some cases, even *paraphrases*. One can hear echoes of Mendelssohn's *Variations sérieuses*, Schumannesque dense piano arpeggios, a typical Straussian waltz, Stockhausen's angular *Klavierstücke* etc.

From rehearsal 25 the flow of monograms continues, starting with 'Alban Berg'. It is noticeable that, compared to the first movement, the monograms of Paul Dessau, Hans Eisler, Hans Werner Henze and Maurizio Kagel are omitted – possibly because Schnittke found it difficult to model their monograms in a way that would instantly evoke these composers' personal styles; however, Henze's monogram appears in the recapitulation. Also, some monograms have been altered or repeated; Schnittke follows his musical intuition rather than strictly obeying the self-imposed rules.

Kholopova and Chigariova argue that 'the recapitulation starts in the zone of culmination [at rehearsal 49] with the main theme in bells and piano;⁴³ however, I agree with Dixon that the recapitulation begins at rehearsal 32.⁴⁴ In the Coda (rehearsal 49), almost all monograms from the development reappear against the background of the 'Mozart' theme and 'Bachian' arpeggios. However, they do not reappear in the exact same succession; a few monograms are omitted, and almost all of them are rhythmically compressed (see Table 3 above). Schnittke again

⁴³ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 176.

⁴⁴ Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 97–98.

follows his musical imagination, instead of mechanically repeating the monograms as they appeared in the development. Sketch No. 488 shows that Schnittke intended to interpolate Kagel's monogram between Zimmermann's and the final cluster before the recapitulation, but it is missing from the finished score.

The final surprise is a reappearance of the first theme, which has been 'rewritten' in an ersatz late eighteenth-century style (Example 5). This image of untainted beauty and harmony reveals the full extent of Schnittke's admiration for the classics. The theme is joined by the 'cubed' overtone theme in quiet canon, from rehearsal 57 until the end.

Example 5. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3: Coda of the 2nd movement

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Tempo I

56

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The beginning of the third movement instantly crushes this idealised picture that the second movement has ended with. Once again Schnittke presents the historical succession of styles in their chronological order. However, while in the second movement the monograms were modelled in such a way that they resembled their composers' styles, in the third, Schnittke creates diverse stylistic allusions on the basis of a single theme/monogram: 'das Böse'. The harsh, apocalyptic theme with its prominent 'demonic' tritone is initially presented in the tuba, with every note amplified in the rest of brass, and against the background of the organ and a fuzzy electric guitar (Example 6).

Example 6. A. Schnittke, *Symphony No. 3*: beginning of the 3rd movement – the ‘evil’ theme

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Allegro pesante

Tuba

7 (e)S [AS]

13 B (o) E (e)S E [AS]

This theme bears some generic kinship with the ‘beautiful’ themes from the previous two movements, based on broken major chords; in fact, as observed by Dixon, it sounds like a ‘distorted and cruelly mutated’ version of the overtone theme.⁴⁵ While serving as a basis for stylistic allusions/variations, the ‘evil’ theme also acts as *cantus firmus* throughout the movement; Schnittke preserves the material of the previous variation(s) while constantly piling new layers onto it. This procedure closely resembles the fourth movement ‘Crucifixus’ from Schnittke’s *Symphony No. 2 St Florian*, where the 12-note series serves as an ostinato/*cantus firmus* to which new layers are constantly added. However, while the ‘Crucifixus’ unfolds as a steady linear build-up, in the ‘evil’ movement of his *Symphony No. 3* Schnittke applies a more complex procedure. Sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection have again proved very useful here and enabled me to uncover that, when it comes to the disposition of thematic material, this movement is almost entirely symmetrical.

⁴⁵ Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 118–119.

The ‘evil’ theme is transformed throughout the movement in order to create allusions to various historical styles, as well as to some landmark composers’ personal styles, or even to their particular works. If one were analysing a work by a composer less obsessed with the dichotomy of good and evil, one could argue that Schnittke is playing with various musical tools for representing evil forces, and that his stylistic allusions actually parody various ‘scenes of doom’ from the history of music. The available sketches do not reveal which styles Schnittke intended to allude to; however, according to Kholopova and Chigariova (who possibly discussed this issue with the composer himself) they unfold in the following order: organum [rehearsal 2], hoquetus [6], faux-bourdon [7–8], Lutheran chorale [9–10], military march [12], Bach [17], Mozart [18], Beethoven [19], Wagner [20], jazz [21], Hindemith and Weill [22], Mahler [24], and the *avant-garde* [27].⁴⁶ Kholopova and Chigariova argue that Schnittke ‘borrowed’ this idea from Henri Pousseur, because in the ‘Fantastic Gallop’ from his opera *Votre Faust* Pousseur also tried to represent the developmental path of European harmony; the episode starts ‘from Gounod,’ goes through paraphrases of Liszt, Wagner, Schoenberg, and ends with Pousseur himself.⁴⁷ Kholopova and Chigariova correctly observe that some of these transformations of the ‘evil’ theme are actually paraphrases of certain works (for example of Mozart’s Piano Concerto in D minor K 466 at rehearsal 18, or Beethoven’s *Egmont* at rehearsal 19). However, they do not relate the order of appearance of these stylistic layers to the higher structure of the movement. Sketches Nos. 469–476 indicate that Schnittke conceived the overall form of the movement as an alternation of segments marked with ‘A’ and ‘B’ (Table 4; Example 7).

Table 4. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3: form of the third movement

SEGMENTS OF FORM	A1*	B1	A2	B2	A3	B3	CODA
REHEARSAL NUMBERS	1	2	17	21	24	28	37

*marked as A1, B1 etc. (not A, B, etc.) by Schnittke himself

⁴⁶ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 171–172.

⁴⁷ Ibid.


The 'A' and 'B' segments are not distinguishable by their thematic content, because the entire movement is based on various transformations of the 'evil' theme; instead, they simply indicate different stages of the variational/developmental process, which unfolds in several 'waves'. The A1 segment contains the exposition of the main theme; B1 denotes the wave of pre-tonal styles, which is interrupted by the first appearance of a military drum; A2 is dedicated to the landmark German/Austrian composers – Bach, Mozart, Beethoven and Wagner; B2 signifies the infiltration of the popular/jazz idiom into 'serious' music; A3 draws a line from Mahler to the avant-garde; and B3 marks the axis of thematic symmetry.

Kholopova and Chigariova (and those authors who rely upon their analysis) argue that there are 18 different layers of stylistic allusions, and that they appear simultaneously for the first time at rehearsal 37.⁴⁸ However, my study of the sketches has revealed that Schnittke actually intended to have 15 different stylistic layers: I have summarized the order of appearance of these layers and the transformations of the evil theme in Table 5. As the movement progresses, some of the stylistic layers are merely repeated, with or without modifications. For example, the B2 segment is entirely based on layers that have already been introduced previously – only at this point they are transformed/distorted. There is also one unnumbered 'layer', the martial rhythm in percussion; Schnittke probably left it unnumbered because it is not based on the 'evil' theme and because, once introduced, it does not stop until the end of the movement; therefore, it is not dependent on the symmetrical pattern established by the 'numbered' layers.

⁴⁸ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 177. Moreover, in his PhD dissertation Gavin Dixon identified no less than 32 'themes,' i.e. transformations of the main theme; cf. Dixon, *Polystylism as Dialogue*, 122–127.

Table 5. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 3rd movement: transformations of the 'evil' theme

LAYER NO.	MUSICAL CONTENTS – VARIATION OF THE 'EVIL' THEME (beginnings only)	STYLE ALLUDED TO	SEGMENT OF FORM	FIRST APPEARS AT (REH. NO)	SYMMETRY (REH. NO)
1		'Evil' theme	A1	[1]	[36]
2		Organum	B1	[2]	[35]+2
3		Hocketus		[3]	[35]
4		Faux-bourdon		[7]	[34]+3
5		Chorale		[9]	[34]
6		Chorale	[9]	[33]	
7		Chorale	[10]	[33]-2	
--	Martial rhythm in drums	March		[12]	--
8		Bach	A2	[17]	[32]
9		Mozart		[18]	[31]

10		Beethoven		[19]	[30]+2
11		Wagner		[20]	[30]
--		Jazz	B2 (based on 'old' material)	[21]	--
--		Hindemith/ Weill(?)		[22]	--
12		Mahler	A3	[24]	[29]+3
13		? (maybe Hindemith and Weill here)		[26]	[29]+1
14				[26]	[29]
15				Avant- garde (serialism)	[27] – continues until the end of the movement
All themes/layers return in reverse order, from 15 to 1			B3	[28] = AXIS	
All themes/layers reappear simultaneously			Coda	[37]	

The logic of exposition of the layers leads me to conclude that at rehearsal 26 Schnittke intended another stylistic allusion. I would suggest that this is actually where the allusion to Hindemith and Weill takes place, rather than at rehearsal 22 (as argued by Kholopova and Chigariova), because two layers at rehearsal 26 are based on syncopated ragtime and martial rhythms, both of which could evoke certain aspects of Hindemith's and Weill's styles. The last layer to appear is No. 15 at rehearsal 28; from that point onwards the layers are piled onto one another in reverse order, from No. 15 to No. 1. While some of the

layers are almost identical to their original presentations, others are heavily transformed; this is in line with Schnittke's already mentioned procedure where he constructs a firm frame, but then allows occasional deviations.

As shown in Table 5 above, the process of reverse repetition of all 15 'numbered' layers ends at rehearsal 36, where all of them (plus the martial rhythm) appear simultaneously for the first time. Then, at rehearsal 37 – the culmination of the entire movement – they are rearranged, and some of them duplicated, while other layers revert to their original 'outfits' i.e. as they appeared in the first half of the movement.

At rehearsal 37, which marks the beginning of the Coda, all layers are repeated *ad libitum* in *ff* dynamics until they grind to a halt on a single B ♭ – the first note of the finale's initial (and main) monogram, 'Bach.'

While Schnittke has explored the potential for the musical representations of evil in numerous works, this is the first time that he has employed an explicitly named 'evil' theme. Since the evil theme is presented within a symmetrical formal frame and used to represent almost ten centuries of music history, from medieval monody to present-day avant-garde, perhaps Schnittke's moral here is that evil can be found even in the noblest of times and the noblest of arts, that it has always existed and always will. In addition to this theme, Schnittke employs martial rhythms highlighted by a 'military' drum as signifiers of war-related evil. On the other hand, the inclusion of jazzy rhythms and of electric and bass guitars – instruments commonly associated with pop music – brings to mind Schnittke's negative opinion on popular music which, in his view, promoted conformism and subservience.⁴⁹ Taruskin emphasises the role of popular music here:

Absolute evil is represented by references to raucous popular music: its apotheosis comes in the third movement of the Symphony No. 3 [...] where a platoon of anarchic rock guitars spewing feedback distortion attacks a panorama of German classics...⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Alexander Ivashkin, *Besedy s Alfredom Shnitke*, Moscow, Klasika, 2005, 192–193.

⁵⁰ Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music*, Vol. V, 2005, 467.

However, the instruments that actually dominate this movement are the noisy low brass and Schnittke's trademark combination of keyboards, percussion and guitars, which has been coded in some of his earlier works – most notably in the Symphony No. 2 – as related to the sphere of evil.⁵¹ If we now recall that in the first movement of the Symphony No. 3 Schnittke employs this instrumental combination to represent the avant-garde composers from Schoenberg to Kagel, it is possible to argue that Schnittke makes a drastic statement: namely that classical tradition has degenerated into 'evil' serialism and self-destructed.

Moreover, Schnittke's narrative on the rise-and-fall of German music and culture, presented in the first and third movements of this symphony, shows a kinship with his favourite literary work, Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus*, which deals with the corruption and decline of German culture and society in the twentieth century. Schnittke has confessed to being 'obsessed' with *Doctor Faustus* since his early teenage years:

I have read Thomas Mann's *Doctor Faustus* at least five times. The first time – in 1949–1950 – it had only just come out, and somehow my father had acquired it, not permanently, but just to read. Since then, although I read it all the time, I've never fully grasped it.⁵²

It is possible to argue that Schnittke wrote his Symphony No. 3 as an echo of Mann's critique of Germany, the country that had 'sold its soul to the Devil'. Being half-Jewish, half-German, Schnittke must have contemplated the horrors of the twentieth century, in particular World War II and the crimes against humanity. Since the Nazis (ab)used Schnittke's beloved classics for the purpose of war propaganda and demonstration of German alleged superiority, it is plausible to argue that Schnittke used the 'evil' third movement of the symphony – with its references to German classics, but also to military marches and popular music as symbols of tyrants and their blind followers respectively – to

⁵¹ For example, in the 'evil' fourth movement of the Symphony No. 2, the theme of the passacaglia, which depicts Christ's crucifixion, is performed by 2 vibraphones, 3 tam-tams, bass guitar and harp, accompanied by strings. See Medić, 'Crucifixus etiam pro nobis,' 22–25.

⁵² Ivashkin, *A Schnittke Reader*, 38.

recall the country's tragic past and 'lost' greatness, and to remind his listeners that the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust must never be repeated.

* * * * *

The final movement is structured freely, as a series of variations based on the monograms and a number of related themes. The sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection reveal how Schnittke converted monograms into 12-note rows and how he manipulated them. The first monogram is 'Bach': Schnittke casts Bach in the role of the originator of the entire German tradition.

While Kholopova and Chigariova argue that Schnittke included the monograms of Bach's three sons in the violin parts which complement the Bach monogram in lower strings,⁵³ a comparison of the opening lines in Violins I and II to Schnittke's sketch No. 468 proves that there is no similarity between these lines and Schnittke's intended monograms for Bach's sons:

Johann Christian B-A-C-B-E ♭ -A

Philip Emanuel B-E-A-E

Wilhelm Friedemann B-E-F-E-D-E-A

Instead, the violin lines complement the Bach monogram until it completes the 12-note row (Example 9).

Throughout the exposition, the monograms are either presented as 12-note rows, or paired with contrapuntal lines which help complete the 12-note aggregate. (Table 6) Now it becomes clear why Schnittke avoided repetitions of notes in monograms used in previous movements: in a 12-note row no note can be repeated, so Schnittke evidently wanted the monograms to stay similar to their original versions even after they are extended into rows in the finale. Several motifs that are deliberately left shorter, such as 'Bach' (B-A-C-B ♭), 'Wagner' or 'Kagel' (A-G-E) and 'Brahms' (B ♭ -A-B-E ♭), serve as accompanying figures throughout the exposition and fill the 'gaps' between monograms.

⁵³ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Alfred Schnittke*, 179.

Example 9. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3: beginning of the 4th movement
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Adagio

The musical score is for the beginning of the 4th movement of Schnittke's Symphony No. 3, marked **Adagio**. It is in 2/2 time. The first system features Violin I and Violoncello. The Violin I part begins with a *pp sub.* dynamic. The notes in the first system are B, A, C, and H, with fingering numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 respectively. The second system continues with notes 9, 10, 11, and 12, with a box containing the number '1' above measure 11. The Violoncello part provides a harmonic accompaniment with notes corresponding to the Violin I part.

In the light of the fact that Schnittke all but disowned his serial scores from the early 1960s, one could argue that Schnittke here trivialises 12-note music by demonstrating that it is possible to derive rows from something as arbitrary as musical monograms. At the same time, the transformation into 12-note rows deindividualises and dehumanises the composers, because the rows no longer bear any similarities to their personal styles.

Table 6. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3: Exposition of monograms in the beginning of the fourth movement

NAME	FIGURE	INSTRUMENT
Bach*	beginning	in Vcelli, with counterpoint in Vni I
Georg Friedrich Handel	2	in Vni I, with counterpoint in Ob. 1
Joseph Haydn	3	in Ob. and Fg. 1
Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart	3+3	in Vni II, as a 12-note row
Beethoven*	4	in Vni I and II, paired with rows in Cl. 1 and Ob.1
Schubert*	5+2	in Cl, paired with a row in Vn. solo
Robert Schumann	6	in Fl, as a 12-note row
Wagner*	7	in Arpa, paired with rows in Vni I and II
Brahms*	7+2	in Tbn. 1
Richard Strauss	9	in Fl. 1, as a 12-note row
Gustav Mahler	10	in Vni II, as a 12-note row
Max Reger	11	in Fl. 2, as a 12-note row
Arnold Schoenberg	12	in Fl. 1 and 2, as a 12-note row
Carl Orff	15	in Vni. II, as a 12-note row
Hartmann*	16	in Fg. 1, with counterpoint in Vib.
Stockhausen*	17	in Tbn. 1, with counterpoint in Vni. II
Kagel*	17+4	in Ob. 1, with counterpoint in Vni. II
Zimmermann*	18	in Tbn. 1
Anton Bruckner	18	in Harp. and Cel.

* *surname only*

From rehearsal 19 the second stage of the movement begins. All 28 composers' monograms are now extended into 12-note rows and presented in a stretto-like multi-layered texture. They are supported by a succession of alternate major and minor chords in organ, arranged according to the circle of fifths. At rehearsal 27 sixty orchestral parts participate in the culmination, among them all 12-note rows derived from monograms. Sketches Nos. 191, 192, 194, 199, 201 and 206 reveal how Schnittke planned the order of monograms, harmony and rhythm, as well as the instrumentation, all on the basis of the similarities between the composers' names and surnames (Examples 8a – 8d).

Examples 8a, 8b, 8c and 8d. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, fourth movement: Sketches Nos. 199, 191, 194 and 206 from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection

28.08.80 2. Stufe Zusammenstellung der 28 Komponisten - Monogramme - Tonreihen

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1.09.201

28 Hauptinstrumenten (für Explosion des Orchesters)

1	Bach	b	cis	1a	Tuba
2	Handel	g	b	2a	Pos. 4
3	Haydn	es	c	4c	Pos. 3
4	Mozart	f	c	3a	Pos. 2
5	Beethoven	d	as	2c	Pos. 1
6	Schubert	c	f	9c	Cor 6
7	Schubert	f	as	4a	Cor 5
8	Schumann	b	d	5a	Cor 4
9	Mendelssohn	f	c	6a	Cor 3
10	Brahms	b	cis	3c	Cor 2
11	Wagner	c	es	7a	Cor 1
12	Bruckner	a	as	10c	Tuba
13	J. Strauss	h	b	1c	Ob 3
14	Mahler	g	b	8a	Tuba 2
15	R. Strauss	c	g	9a	Tuba 1
16	Reger	a	b	10a	Clf
17	Schubert	a	fis	5c	Fag 3
18	Berg	a	c	11c	Fag 2
19	Wagner	a	c	11a	Fag 1
20	Kandemirli	a	as	6c	Cl 1
21	Orff	c	fis	12a	Cl 3
22	Moraw	a	c	13a	Cl 2
23	Fischer	h	fis	14a	Cl 1
24	Harman	a	c	7c	Ob.
25	Kunze	h	d	12c	Ob 3
26	Stoekhaus	a	as	15a	Ob 2
27	Zimmermann	b	f	8c	Ob 1
28	Kapell	a	es	16a	Picc.

16 Holz
15 Blech

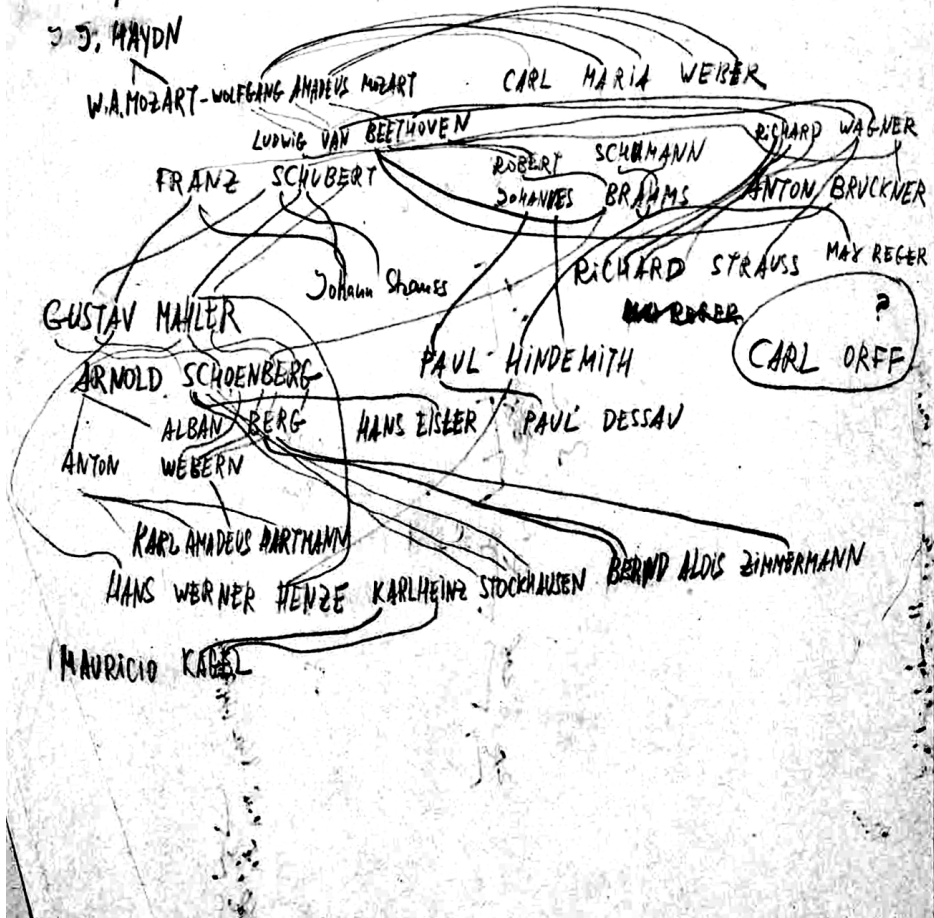
Example 8b – Sketch No. 191 from the JMC

11.02.80
 Baumform; beginnend mit BACH, mit Ästen,
 dabei jeder Ast wachsend, d. h. sich frei entwickelnd,
 Schemata der Verbindungen: ^(mit verwendet andere Töne, aber motiviert!)
 d.h. [variable Sequenzen]

J.S. BACH - J.C.H. BACH - W.F. BACH - Ph. E. BACH.

B.F. HÄNDEL (?)

J. J. HAYDN



Example 8d - Sketch No. 206 from JMC

The final version of the movement deviates to an extent from the structure outlined in the sketches; nevertheless I have located all the monograms used in the culmination (Example 9) and summarized the structure of this segment of form in Table 7.

Example 9. A. Schnittke, *Symphony No. 3*, 4th movement: 28 monograms as 12-note rows

(continues on the next page)

(Johann Sebastian) Bach

Georg Friedrich Handel

Joseph Haydn

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Ludwig van Beethoven

Carl Maria Weber

Franz Schubert

Robert Schumann

Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy

(Johannes) Brahms

Richard Wagner

Anton Bruckner

Johann Strauss

Gustav Mahler

The image displays 14 musical staves, each representing a different composer. Each staff contains a 12-note monogram written in treble clef. The notes are: (Johann Sebastian) Bach: B2, A2, G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1; Georg Friedrich Handel: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Joseph Haydn: C#2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1, B1, A1, G1, F#1; Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Ludwig van Beethoven: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Carl Maria Weber: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Franz Schubert: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Robert Schumann: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Felix Mendelssohn Bartholdy: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; (Johannes) Brahms: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Richard Wagner: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Anton Bruckner: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Johann Strauss: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1; Gustav Mahler: G2, F#2, E2, D2, C2, B1, A1, G1, F#1, E1, D1, C1.

Richard Strauss

Max Reger

Arnold Schoenberg

Alban Berg

Anton Webern

Paul Hindemith

Carl Orff

Paul Dessau

Hans Eisler

Karl Amadeus Hartmann

Hans Werner Henze

Karlheinz Stockhausen

Bernd Alois Zimmermann

Maurizio Kagel

Detailed description: The image displays 13 horizontal musical staves, each representing a different composer. Each staff contains a single line of music consisting of 12 notes, which are the monograms for that composer. The notes are written on a five-line staff with a treble clef. The notes are connected by stems and include various accidentals (sharps, flats, and naturals). The composers listed from top to bottom are: Richard Strauss, Max Reger, Arnold Schoenberg, Alban Berg, Anton Webern, Paul Hindemith, Carl Orff, Paul Dessau, Hans Eisler, Karl Amadeus Hartmann, Hans Werner Henze, Karlheinz Stockhausen, Bernd Alois Zimmermann, and Maurizio Kagel.

Example 9. All monograms as 12-note rows (continued)

Table 7. A. Schnittke, Symphony No. 3, 4th movement: all 28 monograms as 12-note rows

NAME	REHEARSAL	INSTRUMENT	HARMONY	REASON FOR GROUPING
Alban Berg	19	Woodwind: Cl. 1	C major g minor	name begins with A
Bernd Aloys Zimmermann	19	Fl.		
Arnold Schoenberg	19+2	Ob.	D major	
Alban Berg (2)	19+2	Cl. basso		Berg & (Schoen)Berg
Alban Berg (3)	19+3	Fg. 2	a minor	surname begins with B
Anton Bruckner	19+4	Cl. 2 & Cl. basso		
Brahms (Johannes)	19+4	Fg. 1	E major	
Ludwig van Beethoven	19+4	Cor. ing.	b minor	
Anton Bruckner (2)	20	Cor. 1	F# major c# minor A flat maj.	name Anton
Anton Webern	20+3	Cl. 2	e flat min.	surname begins with W
Carl Maria Weber	20+3	Tr. 1 (brass)	B flat maj.	
Richard Wagner	20+3	Ob.		
Richard Wagner (2)	20+5	'basso' instr.: C. fag.	f minor	name Richard
Richard Strauss	21	Strings: C. basso	C major	
Johann Strauss	21+1	Vle.	g minor	surname Strauss name Hans, Johann(es)
Richard Strauss	21+2	Vni. II	D major	
Hans Werner Henze	21+3	Vcelli	a minor	
Bach (Johann Sebastian)	21+4	Vni. I	E major FROM B MIN. TO B FLAT MAJOR	
Brahms (Johannes) (2)	21+4	Vla. solo	f minor	
Hans Werner Henze (2)	21+6	Vni. II	C major	
Richard Strauss (3)	21+6	Vcello solo		surname begins with S
Robert Schumann	22	Vni. II	g minor	(initials RS)

Karlheinz Stockhausen	22+1	Vni. I	D major a minor	
Franz Schubert	22+1	Vni. I	E major	
Karlheinz Stockhausen (2)	23	Vcelli	b minor	name Carl, Karl(heinz)
Karl Amadeus Hartmann	23	Vcelli		
Carl Orff	23	Vle.		
Carl Maria Weber (2)	23+1	Vle.	F# major	
Karl Am. Hartmann (2)	24-1	Vni. I	c# minor	surname begins with H
Paul Hindemith	24	Vni. II	A flat maj.	
Joseph Haydn	24+1	Vni. II	e flat min.	
Hans Werner Henze (3)	24+2	Vni. I	B flat maj.	
PAUL HINDEMITH (2)	24+2	Vni. II	f minor	name Paul
Hans Werner Henze (4)	25	Vle	C major	name Hans
Hans Eisler	25	Woodwind: Cl.		
Hans Eisler (2)	25+1	'basso' instr.: Cl. Basso	g minor D major	
PAUL DESSAU	25+1	C. basso		
Karl Am. Hartmann (3)	26-1	STRINGS+WOOD: VNI. I AND FL.	a minor E major	middle name Amadeus
Wolfgang Am. Mozart	26/01/11	Brass: Cor.	b minor	
Wolfgang Am. Mozart (2)	26+1	VNI. II, OB., CL.	F# major	surname begins with M
Gustav Mahler	26+1	Cor.		
Wolfgang Am. Mozart (3)	26+2	Cor., Tbn., Tuba	c# minor	
Felix Mendelssohn	26+3	Tr. 1	A flat maj.	
Max Reger	26+3	VNI. II AND FL.	e flat min.	name begins with M
Maurizio Kagel	26+4	Piccolo (the 'foreigner!')	B flat maj. f minor	

Table 7. All 28 monograms as 12-note rows (continued)

At rehearsal 28 this mass of sound ‘returns to the source’ i.e. to the ‘Bach’ theme in the unison of 32 violin parts. Schnittke had already utilised the idea of ‘returning to Bach’⁵⁴ in his *Prelude in Memory of Dmitri Shostakovich* (1975); moreover, he employed Bach’s monogram in a host of other works including his Violin Sonatas No. 1 (1963) and No. 2 (1968), the music for *Glass Accordion* (1968), Piano Quintet (1975), Symphony No. 2 *St Florian* (1979), Concerto Grosso No. 3 (1985) etc.

In almost all of these works, including the Symphony No. 3, Schnittke casts Bach as a saving grace against dissonant evil forces. This reference to Bach is followed by reminiscences to several motifs from previous movements, including ‘Deutschland’, the ‘Mozart’ theme and ‘Erde’, paired with the somber, resigned, descending ‘undertone’ theme. But just as it seems that the symphony is about to end on a pessimistic note, Schnittke repeats the ‘Deutschland’ motif, followed by the initial, ascending ‘overtone’ theme, played by a solo flute, while the strings perform the row of harmonics up to the 16th partial. After the ‘overtone’ theme, the flute turns again to the ‘Bach’ motif, and finishes on the note C# – the 17th partial of the overtone row, which, as Kholopova and Chigarëva have observed, had not been a part of this theme before.⁵⁵ Hence, the composer’s message here might be that the end is at the same time a new beginning, and that the only way for German/Austrian music (and culture in general) to regain vitality and credibility is to return to its primordial state and to start completely anew.

* * * * *

The study of available sketches for Alfred Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3 provides a new insight into the composer’s creative process and the types of creative decisions that he was making at different stages of writing this symphony. The sketches from the Juilliard Manuscript Collection reveal the genesis of this work, from the vague initial idea of working with the overtone series, through the development of themes and ‘monograms’ and the overall design of individual movements, to the finished work. These sketches also help reveal the hitherto hidden structure of the third and fourth movements of this symphony and

⁵⁴ Shul’gin, *Gody neizvestnosti Al’freda Shnitke*, 89.

⁵⁵ Kholopova and Chigariova, *Al’fred Shnitke*, 180.

demonstrate that Schnittke carefully planned even the most minute details of this complex work. Additionally, they suggest that, although the work was supposedly written as a celebration of a German orchestra, it contains a clandestine critique of German culture, because Schnittke regards it as a culture that has reached its pinnacle and has been in the state of decline since the onset of modernism and avant-garde. While the diachronic disposition of monograms and the pattern of a gradual ascent and decline are reiterated throughout the symphony, the work is not repetitive because Schnittke constructs all movements differently and transforms the monograms in various ways. The possible reason why Schnittke did reiterate some facets of the work is his desire to strengthen the communicative power of his musical symbols and to ensure that all listeners have grasped his message.

While in a host of Schnittke's works the Apollonian ideals of balance and beauty played a subordinate role to the political and moral statements that he wanted to make – which sometimes led him to leave his works without a sleek finish – in the Symphony No. 3 Schnittke's overzealous communicative urgency is tempered by a clear yet ingenious constructive principle. And while a brilliant conception cannot guarantee value in a work of art, my analysis of Schnittke's sketches (as well as the finished work) has hopefully demonstrated a high level of sophistication at the intentional level. As to the definitive meaning of the symphony, it remains elusive and ambiguous, but at least it is certain that Schnittke's admiration for the 'great Germans' was by no means unconditional, and that he saw German culture as being in a state of *malaise* that could only be cured by returning to its 'roots' and starting anew.

Valentin Sil'vestrov: Symphony No. 5

Born in Kiev in 1937, Valentin Sil'vestrov is one of the most interesting composers to emerge from the former Soviet Union. He belongs to the same generation as Schnittke and the rest of Soviet 'non-conformists'. Having lived in a conservative Ukraine, he was forced into an almost-dissident status.⁵⁶ However, this did not discourage Sil'vestrov from assimilating the entire 'avant-gardist spectrum of expressive means: first, classical dodecaphony, [...] the post-Webern pointillistics, sonoristics, and aleatory.'⁵⁷

From the very beginning of his career Sil'vestrov used avant-garde devices in a programmatic/realist manner and explored their potential for conveying philosophical, metaphysical and political messages. When these devices were finally 'officially approved,' Sil'vestrov abandoned them in favour of a retrospective style. Sil'vestrov's first 'retro' works resemble Schnittke's Symphony No. 1 in that they confront various, mutually incompatible stylistic layers with the intention of depicting the cultural – and, perhaps, social – apocalypse.

Savenko argues that 'Sil'vestrov treats the polystylistics not only as a cultural-historical "human" conflict but as a global collision of cosmic magnitude'⁵⁸ – which brings him into the realm of Scriabinesque ideas. Sil'vestrov's works from 1972, *Drama* and *Meditation*, lacked the quotational and improvisational madness typical of Schnittke's No. 1; still, they were no less polystylistic and, to his Soviet listeners, they sounded disturbing enough to be perceived as avant-garde.

However, Sil'vestrov's next creative phase, from 1974 onwards, shocked his contemporaries, critics and supporters alike, because he settled into 'a "metaphorical" style in the vein of new traditionalism or neo-romanticism' – as aptly described by the composer himself, who even

⁵⁶ On Sil'vestrov's early years and his status of an 'avant-gardist' in the Soviet Ukraine, see Svetlana Savenko, 'Valentin Silvestrov's Lyrical Universe,' in: Valeria Tsenova (ed.), *Ex Oriente... II: Nine Composers from the Former USSR*, Berlin, Verlag Ernst Kuhn, 2003, 66.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 67.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 70.

coined a term ‘weak style’ for his works.⁵⁹ According to Savenko, professional musicians regarded Sil’vestrov’s works such as *Kitsch Music* for piano (1974) and *Quiet Songs* for voice and piano (1974–1977) as ‘a betrayal of the avant-gardist ideals and as renunciation of his own individuality.’⁶⁰ This is not unlike the comments provoked by the early postmodern works by George Rochberg or Krzysztof Penderecki, who also baffled their first listeners by turning to a deliberate and unapologetic eclecticism and neo-romanticism respectively. However, Sil’vestrov insisted that he was staying true to his own creative impulses and refusing to conform to expectations: ‘I have to write what I like but not what the others like, not what is dictated by the times...’⁶¹

In his works from the mid-1970s Sil’vestrov freely recycled Romantic clichés – in *Kitsch Music* the model for stylistic allusions was Romantic piano music by Schumann, Brahms and Chopin, while the *Quiet Songs* were modelled after Russian sentimental romances from the nineteenth century. However, as observed by Redepenning, these neo-Romantic works did not only evoke the good old times; rather, they problematised the distance.⁶²

Aside from indulging in neo-Romanticism, Sil’vestrov was also expanding the concluding sections of his works, which eventually evolved into an independent genre of *postlude*. Similarly to his first retrospective and ‘kitsch’ works, Sil’vestrov tested this new artistic methodology in the realm of chamber music, starting with *Postlude DSCH (Homage to Dmitrii Shostakovich)*⁶³ for chamber ensemble. Sil’vestrov’s *post-* and *meta-*works include: *Postlude DSCH* for soprano, violin, cello and piano (1981); *Postlude* for violin solo (1981); *Postlude* for cello and piano (1982); *Symphony No. 5 – Postsymphony* (1982); symphonic poem *Postludium* for

⁵⁹ Quoted in: *ibid.*, 70; 72.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 71.

⁶¹ Quoted in *Ibid.*, 66–67.

⁶² Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Bd. 2, 720–721.

⁶³ Sil’vestrov’s *Postlude DSCH (Homage to Dmitrii Shostakovich)* is, predictably, based on the *motto* theme – Shostakovich’s monogram. However, unlike B. Tishchenko – whose *Symphony No. 5*, also written on occasion of Shostakovich’s death, will be analysed below – Sil’vestrov writes a gentle and reflective homage.

piano and orchestra (1984); *Postscriptum*, Sonata for violin and piano (1990); and *Metamusic* for Piano and Orchestra (1992). The genre of postlude reached its full potential in Sil'vestrov's Symphony No. 5 *Post-symphony*. David Fanning calls it 'one of the best-kept secrets of the ex-Soviet symphonic repertoire' and 'the finest symphony composed in the former Soviet Union since the death of Shostakovich.'⁶⁴ Peter Grahame Woolf describes it as 'an extensive orchestral monologue, "after-music," "end-music," music from beyond...'⁶⁵ The composer's own definition of the genre of 'postlude' reads like a true manifesto of 'postism:'

There has now arisen a new situation in music, perhaps we are on the threshold of the all-embracing universal style. Having reached, to a large extent thanks to the avant-garde, the boundaries of the acoustic world, we have perceived and even overstepped them...

The author's text blends with the world that is incessantly speaking. Therefore, I believe that in the advanced artistic consciousness there can hardly emerge now the texts beginning, figuratively speaking, 'from the beginning'. A postlude, to my mind, represents a collection of reverberations, a form which presumes the existence of a certain text not actually included in a given context but interrelated with it. Therefore, a form is exposed, not at the end, which is more habitual, but at the beginning.

A postlude is [...] virtually a certain state of culture when the forms reflecting a life-music by analogy with a life-novel, for instance, a music drama, come to be replaced by the forms commenting on it. And this is not the end of music as an art, but the end of the music in which it may stay for a very long time.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ David J. Fanning, review of CD *Valentin Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5 – Postludium*, Sony Classical SK 66825, <http://home.wanadoo.nl/ovar/sovrev/silvestrov/si66825.htm>

⁶⁵ Peter Grahame Woolf, review of CD *Valentin Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5 – Symphony 'Exegi Monumentum'*, Megadisc MDC 7836, <http://home.wanadoo.nl/ovar/sovrev/silvestrov/meg7836.htm>

⁶⁶ Quoted in: Savenko, 'Valentin Silvestrov's Lyrical Universe,' 75. This article was published in a rather poor English translation, so Sil'vestrov's words may have been somewhat altered.

Here Sil'vestrov emphasises three main features of meta-pluralism: its all-inclusiveness, auto-reflexivity and anti-progressivism. Although these features have already been obvious in Schnittke's Symphony No. 3, Sil'vestrov's Symphony No. 5 elevates them to a whole new level.

While in his earlier symphonies Sil'vestrov explored a variety of sonoristic and serial devices and experimented with non-standard orchestral forces, his No. 5 is post-romantic from the beginning to the end. Sil'vestrov turns its single movement into a 45-minutes long Mahlerian 'Adagi(etto),' and evokes the late Romantic master by writing expansive, nostalgic melodies. However, while in Mahler's symphonies the moments of peace are frequently intercepted by disturbing, tragic or banal passages, in Sil'vestrov's Fifth, such unsettling passages are rare, occurring only twice – at the very beginning of the piece, and in the central section of the arch form. The music 'explodes' in the very first pages of the score, leaving behind dispersed fragments, which are left to glide peacefully in all directions and provoke reflection and contemplation. They cannot be put back together; hence the disjointed feel of this music, which circulates freely and seems capable of stopping at any point. (Of course, this is just an aural experience; a closer look into this score reveals that the form is carefully planned.) Instead of evoking a sense of progression and directness, the composer creates an immense, fluid ambience, filled with wrecked Romantic gestures and textures. This is a postlude to the entire Romantic tradition, and especially to Mahler.

Fanning observes that Sil'vestrov's Symphony No. 5 is deliberately nostalgic:

a symphony composed, as it were, after the death of the genre and consisting only of poignant memories. In musical terms those memories are of the melodic and accompanimental figures characteristic of nineteenth-century song; so the structure consists of quietly ecstatic extended melodies spaced by even more ecstatic efflorescences of piano-accompaniment-derived textures.⁶⁷

Savenko traces the origins of the Symphony back to Sil'vestrov's *Quiet Songs* (although there are no self-quotations, but only stylistic

⁶⁷ Fanning, review of CD *Valentin Silvestrov: Symphony No. 5 – Postludium*.

allusions),⁶⁸ while Redepenning observes that ‘the conceptual tags such as “neo-Romanticism” or “meditative music” seem to apply only partially [...] the addition of the prefix “neo-” points to a stylistic direction which is basically foreign to the work.’⁶⁹

Redepenning is right in that there is really nothing ‘neo’ (i.e. new) in this music and, in his ‘manifesto of postism’, the composer negated the possibility of creating anything new. Redepenning compares Sil’vestrov to some of his peers from the Caucasus and remarks that

[b]ecause of the clear relation to the West-European type of history, [Sil’vestrov’s] symphony originates from completely different conditions than the one-movement symphonies by Giia Kancheli and Avet Terterian, which are rooted in Georgian and Armenian traditions respectively. While Sil’vestrov’s meditative mood looks back to what he feels is a finished tradition, both Caucasian symphonists understand themselves as parts of vividly felt traditions.⁷⁰

Sil’vestrov’s symphony is structured as a single movement that comprises nine sections, creating an arch-like, symmetrical form, with its central section V serving as the axis (Table 1). Savenko argues that ‘one can easily discern in his symphony the contours of sonata form,’⁷¹ however, this is not plausible, since the symphony lacks both thematic dualism and the development.

⁶⁸ See Savenko, ‘Valentin Silvestrov’s Lyrical Universe,’ 76.

⁶⁹ Redepenning, *Geschichte der russischen und der sowjetischen Musik*, Bd. 2, 711–712.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 712.

⁷¹ Savenko, ‘Valentin Silvestrov’s Lyrical Universe,’ 76.

Table 1. Form of Silvestrov's Symphony No. 5

Part	Rehearsal no.	Material	Tonality
I	beginning – [7]	Clusters, whole-tone motifs, perfect fifths, semiquaver sextuplets	A minor, whole-tone scale
II	[7] – [20]	Tritone, broken chords, melody in solo violin; Impressionistic	Whole-tone scale, diminished (octatonic) scale
III	[20] – [1 bar before 34]	Broken chords, figurations; Impressionistic, but with a 'chorale' in low brass	F sharp / G flat, but never confirmed
IV	[1 bar before 34] – [45]	The same as in Part III, plus a Mahlerian melody in strings	The most 'tonal' section; E flat (mostly)
V	[45] – [2 bars after 61]	Piano sextuplets, clusters, perfect fifths etc. from Part I	The most 'atonal' section
VI	[2 bars after 61] – [1 bar before 67]	'Barcarola' in piano and flute, plus bits from Parts I and V	G minor (mostly)
VII	[1 bar before 67] – [4 bars after 75]	The same as part II	The same as part II
VIII	[4 bars after 75] – [3 bars before 85]	The same as before, plus a new 'folkish' melody in clarinet	G major (mostly)
IX	[3 bars before 85] – end	Solo violin from Part II [2 bars before 92] perfect fifths from Part I [3 bars after 93] 'Impressionistic' flute [3 bars after 94] Folkish melody from Part VIII	

As the table above shows, the central, fifth section repeats material from the introductory section, and serves as the dramatic and dynamic culmination of the symphony. From that point on, several materials from the previous sections are repeated. The final, ninth section serves as a Coda, as it sums up the material from the entire movement. As the scheme above indicates, some sections are more ‘tonal’ than the others; but even in the ‘tonal’ sections, Sil’vestrov often makes the key very ambiguous, by employing the symmetrical whole-tone and octatonic scales and emphasising their ‘axis’ i.e. the tritone. Of course, from time to time Sil’vestrov does use major and minor chords, thus making the tonality slightly more obvious, but the overall feeling is that of fluid tonal ambiguity.

Although Sil’vestrov does not employ actual quotations or paraphrases, he alludes to several composers’ recognisable personal styles: aside from Mahler (whose presence is obvious in the long violin melodies in IV), we are also reminded of Debussy (for example, in the ‘ornaments’ of flutes and harps in III), Stravinsky (in the ‘brassy’ segments of V), Tchaikovsky (the ‘barcarola’ at rehearsal 62, VI), and Mahler again (the pastoral melody in Cl. in VIII). Another overwhelming influence is that of Alexander Scriabin’s late orchestral music, and many pages of Sil’vestrov’s symphony are strikingly similar to works such as *Prometheus – Poem of Fire* or *Mystery*.⁷²

Sil’vestrov displays mastery in writing slow and sparse music: although the score is filled with lengthy passages in *ppp*, long rests, and the same short motifs repeated all over again, the composer manages to maintain interest and even tension. In a bid to explain this quality, Savenko has analysed Sil’vestrov’s unconventional treatment of the following features: 1) the employment of rests, 2) incoherence, 3) infinite variation, 4) harmonisation, and 5) the texture of themes;⁷³ (however, she

⁷² Scriabin died in 1915 before he could finish his ambitious, utopian *Mystery*, and its prefatory act, *Preparation for the Final Mystery*. He left 72 pages of sketches, on the basis of which Alexander Nemtin reconstructed the work – a task that took him 28 years to accomplish. A recording of *Preparation for the Final Mystery* with Vladimir Ashkenazy conducting the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester was released by in 1999 (DECCA 466329 1–3).

⁷³ Savenko, ‘Valentin Silvestrov’s Lyrical Universe,’ 76.

analyses them in the context of sonata form, which I have chosen to disregard). The most interesting observation deals with the textural specifics of the themes:

The melodic line is constantly ‘spotlighted’ by the kindred and resonant timbres [...]

These textural ‘doubles,’ however, are not precisely following the principal voice, there arise heterophonic variants, with separate notes ‘being held up,’ among them the most ‘inadequate’ ones, such as the subsemitonal and passing notes.⁷⁴

Savenko calls this type of texture ‘sonoristic monody,’ ‘pedal envelopment’ and ‘notated reverberation.’ These ‘reverberations’ visually resemble Sil’vestrov’s older, ‘sonoristic’ scores, heavily influenced by Gyorgy Ligeti and the ‘Polish School’ (for example Sil’vestrov’s Symphony No. 3 *Eschatophony*, 1966), although they sound very different when placed in a new, tonal context. Moreover, they resemble similar ‘reverberations’ from Schnittke’s works such as Symphony No. 2 or *Requiem*. It is difficult to determine whether Schnittke influenced Sil’vestrov or vice versa, but their musical kinship is undeniable. Speaking of their common traits, Schnittke and Sil’vestrov share the same starting point – a belief that the great European symphonic tradition has come to an end. However, they deal with this ‘fact’ quite differently, and resort to two different types of postism. Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3 suggests that this tradition degenerated into serialism and died, so all we can do is mourn the loss and hope for a rebirth. On the other hand, Sil’vestrov’s Symphony No. 5 suggests that the tradition imploded, and all we can do is meditate on what is left of it, i.e. the directionless, meaningless remnants. Despite the variety of employed motifs/monograms, Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3 is essentially based on a single theme – the overtone row. Sil’vestrov effectively compresses Schnittke’s concept, thus his entire Symphony No. 5 is a single, broad, Coda-like movement.

Alexander Ivashkin argued that Schnittke’s Symphony No. 3 could be regarded as a huge coda/postlude to the symphonic tradition:

⁷⁴ Ibid.

Schnittke, just like Shostakovich and Tchaikovsky, might end a work with a long, unstructured slow movement or, at the most extreme, completely turn the whole movement or even the whole work into a massive and slow 'postface.' This happened in the Third Violin Concerto, the epilogue from Peer Gynt, the Viola Concerto, and in the Third, Fourth and Fifth Symphonies.⁷⁵

However, when compared to an actual Coda-work such as Sil'vestrov's No. 5, Schnittke's No. 3 comes across as a much more dramatic symphony; in Asaf'ev's terms, it is 'more symphonic.' Schnittke confronts various historical styles, musics standing for various 'ethical indices'; the themes are subjected to different types of transformation and often violently contrasted. On the other hand, Sil'vestrov's dramaturgy is non-conflicting, static, repetitive and almost self-indulgent, with only two points of increased tension – one placed at the very beginning of the work, the other at its central spot. While Schnittke employs the overtone series to represent the natural state of things and to demonstrate how the 'natural' was mediated by the 'cultural,' Sil'vestrov evokes the sounds of nature by pastoral, quasi-folk melodies and chorales in wind instruments; he treats them as remnants of a distant, idealised, unreachable past, and merges them with the 'cultural' context in which they act as reminiscences.

Schnittke pays respect to the entire tradition of European art music, although his main point of reference is the classic/romantic symphonic tradition. On the other hand, Sil'vestrov alludes to the composers who worked in the last decades of the nineteenth and the first decades of the twentieth century: Mahler, Tchaikovsky, Stravinsky, Scriabin, Debussy. Schnittke reserves the most obvious evocation of Mahler for the Coda-like Finale of his Symphony No. 3 (although he uses Mahler's monogram throughout the score), while Sil'vestrov mixes Mahler's sentimental ethos with echoes of Tchaikovskian sentimental romances, impressionists' fauns and nymphs and Scriabinesque apocalyptic soundscapes. Both works are historicist: but while Schnittke places various historical styles next to one another as if exhibited in a museum or gathered in an anthology, Sil'vestrov's historical remnants are so shattered that they are

⁷⁵ Ivashkin, *Alfred Schnittke*, 166.

almost undistinguishable. Schnittke's pessimistic approach to the 'death' of the symphonic tradition pushes him to write deliberately 'ugly,' dissonant, disturbing, apocalyptic, mournful music. On the other hand, Sil'vestrov's attitude towards the lost tradition is nostalgic, if slightly morbid, and he opts to write ear-pleasing music, verging on the kitsch.

Although by the early 1980s Schnittke's polystylism evolved into a less flamboyant style, his Symphony No. 3 can still be regarded as a polystylistic work, due to the range of styles alluded to in its second and third movements. In this work Schnittke is still tormented by the dualism of good and evil, by the state and status of music in contemporary world, and by his own feelings of rootlessness and alienation. Sil'vestrov's No. 5, though not without 'external' references, can hardly be categorised as a polystylistic work, because his musical handwriting is a lot more synthetic, devoid of stylistic clashes. One might say that, after the polystylistic drama of his works from the early 1970s, Sil'vestrov achieved peace with(in) himself; he no longer suffers from an identity crisis and feels no need to cast himself in a role of an heir of any particular tradition (except the broadly understood European classical tradition). Consequently, he is happy to stay in the Coda zone for as long as needed – perhaps forever.

Boris Tishchenko: Symphony No. 5

Born in 1939, Boris Tishchenko was the youngest of the composers profiled in this book. At the age of 15 he entered the Leningrad Musical College, where his first composition teacher was Galina Ustvol'skaia. After studying at the Leningrad Conservatory with Vadim Salmanov, Victor Voloshinov and Orest Evlakhov, he took a postgraduate course with Shostakovich from 1962 to 1965. Upon completing his studies, Tishchenko began teaching at the conservatoire, where he remained until his death in 2010. Shostakovich and Tishchenko held each other in very high regard; as asserted by Gerard McBurney: 'he was probably the last pupil of Dmitri Shostakovich extremely close to that elusive master, trusted and guided by him, and treated with fatherly affection and concern.'⁷⁶ Tishchenko dedicated his Symphony No. 3 to Shostakovich, and after his revered professor died, he wrote the Symphony No. 5 as a monumental tribute to him. This symphony embodies the all-inclusive, auto-reflexive and anti-progressivist tendencies of meta-pluralism in a peculiar way. Namely, while Schnittke and Sil'vestrov reflect on the loss of entire traditions, Tishchenko reflects on the loss of a single person – Shostakovich; and by doing so, he revisits his own oeuvre and discloses the extent of his indebtedness to his mentor.

Valentina Kholopova lists among the main features of Tishchenko's style 'an exceptional gradualness of musical process, imperceptible changes in quality, and formation of contrasts exclusively at a distance.'⁷⁷ She also discusses Tishchenko's manneristic dramatic pattern, found in almost all of his large-scale works:

The first [stage] constitutes the ripening of an inner contrast within the organically growing homogeneity. The second stage amounts to attaining a culmination point through piling up or, conversely, the decomposition of his musical material. The third stage involves the alienation of this material, its comparison with something too remote

⁷⁶ Gerard McBurney, 'Boris Tishchenko obituary,' *The Guardian*, 16 December 2010, <https://www.theguardian.com/music/2010/dec/16/boris-tishchenko-obituary>

⁷⁷ Valentina Kholopova: 'Boris Tishchenko: striking spontaneity against a rationalistic background,' in Valeria Tsenova (ed.), *Underground Music from the Former USSR*, 51.

and unpredictable [...] The fourth stage brings about the reappraisal of values, a transition into another dimension, as if making a transfer from the world of objective realities to the world of purely ethical notions.⁷⁸

Although numerous Soviet composers wrote works on the occasion of Shostakovich's death, Tishchenko's No. 5 (1976) surpasses them all both in its scope and in terms of how profoundly the composer identifies with the object of his dedication. This comes as no surprise, since his entire output demonstrates an explicit and unapologetic kinship with Shostakovich's oeuvre; but nowhere is this kinship more obvious than in this symphony. Its five movements – 'Prelude,' 'Dedication,' 'Sonata,' 'Interlude' and 'Rondo' – all contain the monogram D-S-C-H (or its derivations), as well as numerous references to Shostakovich's works, intertwined with paraphrases of Tishchenko's own. Quite unexpectedly, some of Tishchenko's most tiresome mannerisms – the heightened pathos, the abundance of lengthy 'monologues' of solo instruments, intertwined with occasional violent expressionistic outbursts, glissandos and figurations based on triads, and last but not least, the unapologetic faithfulness to Shostakovichian models – actually find a very good expression in this work, thus making it one of Tishchenko's finest. The very fact that the work is dedicated to the memory of his deceased hero justifies both Tishchenko's reliance upon his master's music, and the overblown emotionality of his musical statements.

Just like the other 'postist' works discussed in this book, Tishchenko's No. 5 is united by the same thematic material dispersed and developed throughout its five movements. The formal scheme of the first movement, 'Prelude' is as follows:

Lament 1 (Cor. ing.)	beginning – [5]
Tutti 1	[5] – [6]
Lament 2 (Cor. ing.)	[6] – [11]
Tutti 2	[11] – [13]
Lament 3 (Fl., Cl., Cor)	[13] – [18]
Tutti 3	[19] – [23]
Codetta	[23] – end

⁷⁸ Ibid., 62.

The first movement is based on juxtapositions of two types of material: the laments in solo instruments, and the violent *tutti* outbursts constructed mainly on the basis of the movement in fourths. The fact that these are two of Tishchenko's favourite types of thematicism has inspired Boris Katz to dub the first movement the composer's 'self-portrait'.⁷⁹ However, Tishchenko is not alone in this musical portrait. The movement begins with two commonplace (leit-)motifs performed by the English horn: the 'sigh' (i.e. descending minor second) and the 'question' motif, made famous by Wagner and also quoted by Shostakovich in the finale of his Symphony No. 15. At rehearsal 1 Tishchenko introduces whole-note ascending tetrachords, also to be widely used in the symphony, and three bars later he quotes Shostakovich's monogram D-S-C-H for the first time. The first *tutti* section, on the other hand, begins with an inverted and transposed monogram, to be followed by sharply accented consecutive descending fourths, which were not only Tishchenko's, but also Shostakovich's favourite device.⁸⁰

The motif with fourths also appears in the second lament, both in ascending and descending motions. The monogram D-S-C-H reappears four more times: at rehearsal 7, then one bar after 12 (in inversion), three bars after 22 (transposed), and finally at rehearsal 23 in its original form in the tuba. As the movement unfolds, laments and *tuttis* get progressively longer, though they remain based on the derivations of the same thematic material.

In the third lament, which begins as a dialogue between a flute and a clarinet, but then expands into a heterophony of various flutes, clarinets and horns, Tishchenko introduces yet another prominent motif – a dotted crotchet followed by a broken chord in triplets, in upward or downward motions. These motifs are developed and expanded, and at rehearsal 16, according to Katz, Tishchenko introduces the first self-

⁷⁹ Boris Katz, *O muzyke Borisa Tishchenko*, Leningrad, Sovetskii kompozitor, 1986, 151–152. Katz's analysis of Tishchenko's Fifth, although lacking in detail, is very useful because the author identifies numerous paraphrases of Tishchenko's own works. Since a majority of these scores were not available to me, I will rely here on Katz's 'identifications' of Tishchenko's self-references.

⁸⁰ See Roseberry, *Ideology, Style, Content and Thematic Process*, 337–340 where he discusses Shostakovich's employment of the motifs based on the intervals of fourths.

quotation, from his Piano Sonata No. 5.⁸¹ At the same time, the increasingly heterophonic texture in woodwinds strongly resembles similar pages from the instrumental portions of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 2; although this is not a direct reference, the spirit of Shostakovich is very much present. Katz notices that the opposition between the horizontal and vertical musical dimensions is the main constructive principle in this symphony.⁸² While I have discussed a similar procedure in Gubaidulina's *Stimmen... verstummen...* as related to the representations of the spheres of the earthly and the divine phenomena respectively, in Tishchenko's case one can only speculate about the dualism of the earthbound vs. heavenly, because the composer never gave us any hints about this being his intention.

* * * * *

As mentioned earlier, 'Prelude' ends with the monogram D-S-C-H, and it becomes the basis for the main theme of the second movement, 'Dedication,' although throughout the movement the monogram never appears in its original form. The main theme in the violin solo comprises all motifs outlined in the first movement: it begins with C-H-D-E, derived from the monogram, which now reveals its kinship with the 'sigh' and the 'question' motifs; besides, Es (S) is replaced with E; the theme continues with the whole-note tetrachord (D-E-F#-A b).

This is followed by a motif consisting of a longer note followed by a triplet, and then the 'sigh' is repeated, with a counterpoint in a solo horn. Katz calls this a 'timbral quotation' because the same combination of instruments (violin and horn) was used by Shostakovich in the recapitulation of the second theme from the first movement of his Symphony No. 5. Katz also suggests that the outline of the main theme of 'Dedication' corresponds to the melodic complexes usually employed by Tishchenko to depict lyrical revelation and declarations of love.⁸³

The movement unfolds in a free form; just like in the third 'lament' in the first movement, the heterophonic texture is gradually expanded by

⁸¹ Katz, *O muzyke Borisa Tishchenko*, 151.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 148–149.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 152.

additions of new instruments – new ‘mourners.’ Variants of the monogram appear at rehearsal 27 (C-H-D-S, transposed) and one bar before 28 (H-C-S-D, transposed); furthermore, another famous monogram, B-A-C-H, also appears twice (four bars after 28 and at 31), although both times transposed. This cannot be a coincidence, because the B-A-C-H motif will reappear in later movements; its programmatic role here might be to suggest that Shostakovich has joined the pantheon of greats symbolised by J. S. Bach. The movement ends with a Stravinskian brio, which alludes to the ‘Danses des Adolescentes’ from *Le sacre du printemps*.

* * * * *

The third movement, ‘Sonata’, begins *attacca*. Despite its title, the movement does not unfold in a conventional sonata form, although its rudimentary contours can be identified:

Exposition

- [beginning – 44] First theme, based on D-S-C-H
- [44] – [45] Transition reference to Tishchenko’s No. 3 plus D-S-C-H
- [45] – [50+4] Second theme, quotation from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8

Development

- [50+4] – [61] uses material from the first and second movements

Recapitulation

- [61] – [64] First theme; D-S-C-H in inversion, plus self-references
- [64] – [67] Second theme; citation from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10
- [67] Codetta – transition (ends with B-A-C-H transposed)

The first theme contains several already familiar motifs: the monogram D-S-C-H, the fourths, the whole-note tetrachord, plus a new ‘martial’ motif consisting of three identical quavers preceded by a rest. The ‘rotated’ monogram (C-H-D-S) also reappears at rehearsal 41.

In the Transition, Tishchenko reverts to the original monogram, preceded by ‘echoes of the third movement of his Concerto for flute and piano,’ as noted by Katz.⁸⁴ Apart from establishing a ‘dialogue’

⁸⁴ Ibid., 151.

between himself and his master, Tishchenko also reveals that the theme from his Concerto is based on ascending fourths – and consequently discloses all fourths-based motifs previously used in the symphony as self-references. The ‘dialogue’ continues when, in lieu of the second theme, Tishchenko employs a lengthy paraphrase from the third movement (‘Toccata’) of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8 in cellos; as observed by Katz, Tishchenko supplements the Shostakovich reference with a counterpart (‘bourdon’) in double-bass, modelled after bourdons he had previously used in his ballet *Yaroslavna* and other works.⁸⁵ The development, once again, reverts to the kind of heterophony already seen in the first and second movements, potentially modelled on Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 2.

The recapitulation is modified: the first theme can only be identified by the monogram, which is inverted and rhythmically stretched; at the same time, the paraphrase of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8, which stood for the second theme, is here replaced by a paraphrase of the famous ‘martial’ culmination from the ‘Scherzo’ of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 10. Katz points out that this paraphrase is preceded by an episode of ‘onslaught’ very typical of Tishchenko’s dramatic works, and especially of his Symphony No. 3; and at rehearsal 63 Tishchenko explicitly references his Third, while simultaneously revealing its kinship with the ensuing theme from Shostakovich’s Tenth.

* * * * *

The third movement ends with the monogram B-A-C-H (transposed) heard in piccolo flute, which leads directly into the fourth movement, ‘Interlude,’ filled with references to Shostakovich. First of all, the form of the passacaglia was probably modelled after the fourth movement of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8, despite the fact that Tishchenko’s ostinato in strings is not entirely consistent throughout the movement.⁸⁶ The very beginning of the movement, with trills and glissandos in the entire orchestra, probably emulates the final act of Shostakovich’s *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* (the scene of Katarina’s realisation of

⁸⁵ Ibid., 153.

⁸⁶ The first three occurrences of ostinato, until rehearsal 70 are identical; after that the ostinato somewhat changes.

Sergei's and Sonia's betrayal), but it also echoes Mussorgsky's 'Gnome' from the *Pictures at an Exhibition* (which might have served as a model for Shostakovich himself). Boris Katz points to another possible model for both Shostakovich and Tishchenko: the scene of Liudmila's abduction from the first act of Glinka's *Ruslan and Liudmila*.⁸⁷ At rehearsal 69 the fanfare in horns allude to Shostakovich's Cello Concerto No. 2, while the solo in the cor anglais at rehearsal 71 recalls several Shostakovich's works (for example, the finale of his Symphony No. 10, the first movement of the Symphony No. 11, the development from the first movement of his Symphony No. 6). The fanfare reoccurs three more times at regular intervals (at rehearsals 72, 75 and 78) interspersed with 'monologues' in solo instruments. Before the final monologue, which reinstates the beginning of the first movement, Tishchenko presents his own 'signature' – a single note B flat ('B' for Boris) in bells.⁸⁸

* * * * *

The final 'Rondo' is a quirky dance, resembling Shostakovich's gavottes, polkas and other stylised dances; moreover, the overall mood of the movement recalls the finale of Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15. The form of the movement is as follows:

Introduction	beginning – [86]
A (Rondo theme)	[86] – [91]
Episode 1	[91] – [103]
A (Rondo theme)	[103] – [106]
Episode 2	[106] – [117]
Transition	[117] – [118]
A (Rondo theme)	[118] – [126]
Coda	[126] – end

⁸⁷ Katz, *O muzyke Borisa Tishchenko*, 154. This is all the more plausible because, as we have seen, Shostakovich referenced Glinka in the finale of his Symphony No. 15; and the finale of Tishchenko's No. 5 would also recall this Glinka connection.

⁸⁸ This entry is remarkable because the bells only appear twice in the score, both times sounding the single note B flat (i.e. 'B' in German nomenclature) – evidently the composer wants his signature to be distinguishable. See *ibid.*, 152.

The movement is thematically related to the preceding four, and the two episodes which occur between the entries of the Rondo theme do not introduce a great degree of thematic contrast. The Rondo theme itself is based on the ‘sigh’ motif, combined with the monogram.

Katz finds similarities between the descending thirds at two bars after 87 with Glinka’s romance ‘K nei’ [To Her] and with the chorus of Naina’s maidens from the fourth act of *Ruslan and Liudmila*.⁸⁹ Although this would have been in tune with Shostakovich’s paraphrase of Glinka in the finale of his Symphony No. 15, Katz’s argument is not entirely persuasive, because the only slight similarity with Glinka’s romance is seen in the sliding harmonies in the last verse of the song; and they do not correspond either harmonically or texturally to Tishchenko’s work.

The first episode begins with arpeggiated perfect fifths in strings, possibly modelled after Shostakovich’s very last work, the Viola Sonata. The episode is based on the same material as the Rondo theme, and four bars after rehearsal 94 one also notices a melody in cellos, which is possibly a paraphrase of the ‘Scherzo’ from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8, already referenced in the third movement. The second episode is more interesting, because it begins with a ‘choral’ section in strings. While Katz argues that this is an allusion to a Monteverdian madrigal,⁹⁰ this mournful chorus can also be heard as a rather generic reference to the music of the Russian Orthodox Church funeral rite, the ‘panikhida.’

The episode continues with another ‘solo’ in horns, which features familiar motifs of ‘sigh’ and rising fourths. It continues with a quotation from the finale of Tishchenko’s Symphony No. 3 four bars after 109 as a solo for the horn, paired with the monogram D-S-C-H in its original form in the violin solo. As we recall, this pairing of violin and horn is a ‘timbral quote’ from Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 5; furthermore, Tishchenko’s theme from his own Symphony No. 3 – the work dedicated to Shostakovich – actually begins in the same way as the finale of Shostakovich’s Symphony No. 8; and this theme can also be regarded as a version of the monogram.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 154. Since Katz’s book was published in Soviet times, it is possible that he was not supposed to write about the Orthodox connection.

According to Katz, the next solo (rehearsal 113) features a quotation from Tishchenko's Piano Concerto;⁹¹ unsurprisingly, the auto-quotation in the violin is soon paired with the horn, whose melody reinstates the motifs of 'sigh' and rising fourths. And in the last two bars of the symphony Tishchenko again couples the monogram D-S-C-H in the piccolo with his own signature B flat in bells, as a final farewell to his hero.

In his Symphony No. 5, Tishchenko reveals how much he actually borrowed from Shostakovich; he is not afraid to disclose that some of his most famous themes were modelled after Shostakovich's own. At the same time, he also reveals some of their mutual influences, especially Russian masters such as Glinka and Mussorgsky. Moreover, Tishchenko shows a kinship with Stravinsky (and, to some extent, with Pärt's and Sil'vestrov's post-polystylistic works) by incorporating the 'alien' influences and making them his own. In the case of his Symphony No. 5, his task is all the easier because his own style resembles Shostakovich's to the point of complete (self-)identification, which makes it almost impossible to discern where Shostakovich ends and Tishchenko begins and vice versa.

A comparison between Tishchenko's Symphony No. 5 and Schnittke's Symphony No. 3 reveals many similarities on the contextual and technical levels. Both composers are 'paying their dues' to the masters who have inspired them. However, Schnittke cannot decide how to deal with the defeat of the tradition and is concerned with finding his place in the history, while Tishchenko openly and unapologetically sings praise to his teacher and assures his listeners that Shostakovich's art, aside from taking its well deserved place in the museum of the twentieth century, would also continue to live through the music of his many admirers.

Schnittke's approach is less individualised: his Symphony No. 3 still qualifies as a polystylistic work, while Tishchenko's No. 5 does not. Even as he alludes to composers such as Glinka and Mussorgsky, Tishchenko treats these references as 'epigraphs' (as Gubaidulina would put it). What Schnittke and Tishchenko have in common is their meta-historical awareness; they see themselves not as isolated, self-sufficient artists, but as the la(te)st representatives in the long chain of composers. But while

⁹¹ See *ibid.*, 151.

Tishchenko self-identifies with his Russian compatriots and sees himself as a successor to the line stretching from Glinka to Shostakovich, Schnittke wants to cast himself in the role of a successor of the German/Austrian tradition; however he realises that the tradition he wishes to identify with is not only geographically remote, but also worn out and doomed. This observation is proved by the composers' employment of monograms as a means of identifying personalities in their musical dramas. Tishchenko works extensively with Shostakovich's monogram, employs the ubiquitous B-A-C-H monogram as a commonplace signifier of 'eternal values', and finally leaves his own imprint with a single B flat. On the other hand, Schnittke employs almost thirty composers' monograms, but not his own – as if to emphasise a distance between himself and the 'pantheon of greats.' Furthermore, while Tishchenko worships his hero, and by means of quotations, paraphrases and allusions completely immerses himself into his master's music, Schnittke is much more ambivalent; in the 'evil' third movement, his 'heroes' (i.e. their monograms) do not confront evil, and the composer concludes that the only way for German/Austrian music to regain vitality and credibility is to start completely anew.

Postlude to Meta-Pluralism

In retrospect, the works analysed in the first part of this book, such as Boris Chaikovskii's Symphony No. 2 and Dmitrii Shostakovich's Symphony No. 15 can be regarded as early specimens of *meta-pluralism*. This label is broad enough to encompass such diverse poetics as Shostakovich's late introspectiveness, Schnittke's riotous polystylism, Gubaidulina's pantheistic evolutionism, Chaikovskii's sentimental moderatedness, Pärt's (re)discovery of early music, Sil'vestrov's Scriabinesque cosmogony, Tishchenko's unapologetic epigonism, as well as Giia Kancheli's orientalism, Rodion Shchedrin's eclecticism, Nikolai Karetnikov's faithfulness to dodecaphony, Georgi Sviridov's neo-primitivism, and many other individual styles that have not been discussed in this book. Among the composers profiled here, only Galina Ustvol'skaia's oeuvre is neither all-inclusive nor historically reflexive, which is probably why Hakobian pegged her as an 'unclassifiable outsider.'

I would argue that Alfred Schnittke emerged as the most prominent Soviet composer of his generation because his works perfectly embodied all three major trends of late Soviet music discussed in this book. The only composer comparable to him in this respect is Arvo Pärt, whose 1964 polystylistic 'manifesto' *Collage sur B-A-C-H* actually predates Schnittke's early essays in polystylism by several years, and whose 1968 *Credo* can be regarded as a work that launched the trend of *spiritualism* in the domain of music.

Although Pärt's works were immensely influential on Schnittke and the rest of the Moscow composers,⁹² and possibly served as a source of inspiration for Schnittke's first polystylistic (and later, religious) efforts, there are several reasons why Pärt was not promoted into a central figure of Soviet music. First of all, Pärt lived and worked in the 'provincial' Baltic republic of Estonia, which meant that he was geographically separated from the main cultural centres. A good deal of

⁹² As reported by Peter Schmelz, Valentina Kholopova testified that 'in the early 1960s all the composers knew about Pärt and had seen his scores, even if most of them remained unperformed. His name was so well known among the composers in Moscow, in fact, that Schnittke was shocked to learn that Kholopova was unfamiliar with Pärt.' Schmelz, *Such Freedom, If Only Musical*, 245, footnote 64.

his pioneering polystylistic and religious works remained unperformed for many years, or were banned immediately after the premiere (as was the case with *Credo*), and his scores were only distributed via 'unofficial' channels. Furthermore, Pärt was neither an outspoken advocate of novel artistic causes nor an influential professor; he went into a self-imposed creative exile after completing *Credo*, and he only wrote one work between 1968 and 1976 (Symphony No. 3). When Pärt finally reemerged from exile, he distanced himself from polystylism and meta-pluralism, thus reinforcing his outsider status, and just a few years later he left the Soviet Union for good. Thus, the place that could have been his was taken by Alfred Schnittke, a prolific composer and an influential writer on music, who emerged as a central figure among the Muscovites and who took over the role of Shostakovich's successor. Schnittke's works struck a chord with the cultural, moral, spiritual and political needs and concerns of the society, and inspired a host of other Soviet composers to enter into a *polemic* with the Soviet cultural context, to engage in a *dialogue* with traditions old and new that had previously been off-limits, to reassess their own historical positions both in the local Soviet and the broader European contexts, and to try and secure their own places in the *museum* of 'great composers.'

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The book *FROM POLYSTYLISM TO META-PLURALISM: ESSAYS ON LATE SOVIET SYMPHONIC MUSIC* presents a continuation of Ivana Medić's interests which began more than a decade ago, during her doctoral studies at the University of Manchester. The author considers the paradoxes of the second, post-World War II wave of avant-garde music, which emerged and developed in drastically changed circumstances in comparison to the 'first' avant-garde from the beginning of the twentieth century. The focus is on two paradoxical moments: the relation between the local and the international, and the dialectics of what was possible and impossible, prohibited and permissible, desired and achieved, in the late Soviet cultural context. The author shows how composers vacillated between official demands and personal interests and how, in an effort to master Western European avant-garde tendencies, they unplannedly created their own musical expression, and successfully 'exported' it back to the West.

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