Conflicting Morphologicali Symphonism
in Chnittke's Later Compositions

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I z a N i e m i r o w s k a

> *"A new round in the development of music unrelated with a schematic division into black-and-white, plus-and-minus points is going on. All of us currently involved in the spiritual-musical sphere find ourselves in a borderline situation residing either here or there."*

Like many other instrumental dramatic works written by composers of the sixties such as Sophia Gubaidulina, Edison Denisov, Valentin Silvestrov, Giya Kancheli, and Avet Terteryan, in particular, their compositions created at the end of the past century, Schnittke's later symphonies (from No. 6 to No. 9[i]; 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996-98) are also characterized not just by unexpected but, so to say, *paradoxical* dramaturgical interactions. Multilevel musical plot lines made all the more intricate by diverging meanings produce their figurative ambiguity, hardly noticeable transitions from one state into another, a sensation of the various interlacing ideas, a wealth of underlying messages, and the effect of shifting times and spaces, and streams of consciousness. There seems to arise an inexplicable or, at any rate, very strange phenomenon: *in the implicitly dramatic music* unthinkable without a dramatic conflict *the clashing parties are indiscernible*[ii]. And this is the key distinction of Schnittke's final symphonic macrocycle, which is organically inscribed in the general array of his symphonies actually conveying the composer's universal meta-conception. But in his later symphonies this conception seems to be encoded, somewhat camouflaged. Such interpretation of this particular genre ranks among Schnittke's artistic findings.

Though the research studies written on specific features of the composer's later style highlighted quite a lot of his intrinsic regularities[iii], the analysis of a symphonic conception, in particular, that of his Sixth Symphony, in our view, failed to attract the researchers' adequate attention. Thus, in the Russian-language literature Symphony No. 6 is evaluated only in Jun Chiba's monograph, where it occupies relatively small space (*1;* pp. 93-98). For the meantime the dramaturgical meaning of this source in the new type of symphony created by our contemporary represents a certain paradoxical phenomenon, one can say, even some sort of a riddle.

In order to come closer to solving this riddle, let us try to examine the dramaturgical layer of the Sixth Symphony, which in the same way as in the other compositions dating to the 1990s stands out "over" compositional stylistic characteristics.

This task is not easy since the main quality of conflicting dramaturgy in any instrumental drama, i.e., contrasting of figurative spheres, is so modified in this case as compared with classical models that it makes it quite difficult to catch. Moreover, the spheres themselves of "action" and "counteraction" are significantly transformed, existing mostly just at the conceptual level while tonally these spheres are quite diffused[iv].

However, the arising perception of figurative homogeneity is deceptive. The through-composed action, refined throughout nearly three centuries in the genre development of a dramatic symphony but extremely complicated owing to the strongest accent placed on morphological attributes of the unfolding tonal process[v], is nevertheless retained here.

"Driven away behind the door (by the morphological type of dramaturgy—*I.N.*), it swiftly comes back through the window"[vi].

Hence the Sixth Symphony (the same as the Seventh and Eighth) naturally combines the seemingly incompatible factors: a tense conflicting drama and the morphological type of symphonism. The very matter of the symphony strikes the listener by its rarefied musical texture interwoven from prime elements and, as Alexander Ivashkin writes, "appears to be ascetically dry and abstract." Even so, "this music cannot be perceived as a purely abstract and rational construct. The listener involuntarily senses symbolism of this music, even though frequently failing to recognize the nature of this symbolism…" (*2*; p. 6).

Indeed, it is hard to grasp the correlation between the dramaturgical spheres of the Sixth Symphony, and who exactly performs here the function of "dramatis personae" and their role. As a matter of fact, the semantically significant elements turn out to include the most diverse, at times quite small units (morphemes or lexemes)[vii]. Moreover, not based on a tone-row, these components include: a characteristic motive, a rhetoric figure, a monogram, a stylistic allusion, an isolated chord, and a rhythmic element. Sometimes it involves genre, timbre- or tone-colors, the manner of sound production, and a lot of other techniques. The behavior of these "characters" is rather peculiar because of their frequent semantic changes in the course of dramatic action. Likewise the parts of speech in grammar make up sentences expressing different meanings, the "characters" of the symphony freely pass from one figurative sphere into another, getting involved in semantic fields with differing and even opposite meanings. This is the type of ***conflicting morphological*** symphonism that clearly revealed itself in Schnittke's later compositions and proved to become his dramaturgical stylistic discovery.

How then under these conditions could the composer disclose the conflicting nature of the unfolding symphonic tragedy?

Composition and dramaturgy (at the syntactic level)

The originality of dramaturgy in Schnittke's sonata allegro and cycle is due to an unusual interlacing of diverse traditions, their innovatory interpretation and, primarily, the introduction of unexplored solutions.

The compositional structure of Symphony No. 6 is based on the most uncommonly treated wavelike principle of development. The confrontation of anabasis и catabasis[viii] as figures of the highest order is repeatedly reproduced in the growing waves of Allegro moderato (the first movement). The individual specific feature lies here in the movement of waves "across" the form sections while rhetoric figures change their character: anabasis is far from always to retain its intrinsic semantics of ascending towards Light, the same as catabasis which more rarely than anabasis but

also at times transforms the typical meaning of sinking into the abyss. Ascents and descents in this symphony reveal a tendency towards gloomy tone-colors. For example, the last ascent in Allegro moderato, a wave devoid of the final descent, sounds not lucid but as a point of the highest tragic tension.

Along with the progression of Allegro moderato the waves become gradually smaller whereas the degree of their tension is steadily growing[ix]. The most intense tragic culminations are drawn to the end: the recapitulation-coda in the initial Allegro, and to the finale of the cycle.

The uniqueness of this symphony's composition consists in the structural shortening of the first movement, with the musical material of its recapitulation and coda being transferred to the recapitulation and coda of the Finale[x]. The original "closing" of cyclic form (through the "breaking" of the initial allegro), the same as a reminiscence of the general culmination of the first movement in the Finale, the recurrence of the same "main characters" in the course of the cycle, as well as many other procedures are grounded in the individual specifics of Schnittke's poem composition principles. The predisposition to poem composition in him and his contemporaries is largely due to their deeply personal, intrinsically lyrical attitude to essential problems originating in the artistically engraved picture of the World (according to F. Liszt's aphoristic expression, poem composition is "a projection of the personality into the world." *5*; p. 312)[xi].

A lot in the content of Schnittke's symphony can be also explained by its dramaturgical similarity with Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony. Arising at the motival level at the outset of the first movement (the sections of catabasis in the main part), it manifests itself in the cycle as well, outlining in a highly original manner the dramatic road of Tchaikovsky's *Pathetic* Symphony from the threshold of death to the actual fact of its realization.

The cast of characters and their role in the unfolding drama (at the morphological-cum-syntactic level)

Before we pass over to analyzing the morphological level of dramaturgy, i.e., those morphemes and lexemes acting as "the main characters" of this instrumental drama, we should consider the semantic fields in which they find themselves.

Most sections in the symphony are imbued with motoric motions often revealed through scherzo-like development and associated with depicting the intensive expressive tragic states, as well as with the images of "vile infinity or dumb mechanical evil opposing the human person" (to quote Alexander Ivashkin. *2*; p. 5)[xii]. All of this stands out against lyricism with its tragic reflections arising from the philosophical comprehension of actual proceedings.

As compared with most symphonic conceptions of the 19th and 20th c.c., with Schnittke a balance of dramaturgical spheres is violated in favor of motoric intensification[xiii]. This underlies an essential conceptual distinction of our contemporary, caused by an artistic revelation of all the deep-going tragic implications on the threshold of the third millennium.

Another conspicuous distinction of this symphony setting it apart from other symphonic canvases is a very high degree of tonal diversity. The main part in the first movement alone (throughout its initial thirty bars) contains nearly ten significant structural elements. Further on, many of these elements are used as building material but some of them start to carry a certain semantic load, turning into "heroes" of the drama.

There are twelve such "heroes" in this symphony, namely: a twelve-tone cluster, anabasis/catabasis figures, inflections of the sequence *Dies Irae*, lamento motives, the BACH monogram, beats of the tam-tam, a solo theme of the kettledrums, as well as textural contrary motion of strands, timbres of the brass instruments, a chorale and chorale-like resolutions, and dramatic scherzo- and toccata-like progressions.

Let us first consider the "heroes" appearing in Act One of the symphony. The other participants will be assessed of necessity only when intercrossing with the "characters" of Allegro moderato.

The twelve-tone cluster. It is set apart since it makes a basis of the symphony's musical texture. Besides, it acts as an independent structural and semantic unit marking certain sections of the form (the beginning of exposition, development, and recapitulation, and the ending of coda), and gets associated in one's mind with the character of tragic

doom, crushing inevitability. Its specific sonority calls to mind one of the historically earliest rock symbols in twentieth-century music, namely "The Duke's Order" (from Prokofiev's *Romeo and Juliet*) [xiv].

The tragic imagery is deepened in the course of its progression by including the chromatic *glissando of the kettledrums*[xv] (the beginning of development, six bars after figure **26**), the timbre of bells and piano (five bars before figure **29**), and a melodic-harmonic outline of the interlinked augmented modes in the strings' final chord. Similar quasi-major terminations with the essentially ambivalent and psychologically intricate meaning are familiar from "victorious" culminations in Shostakovich's symphonies. To our mind, using here his great predecessor's manner of the Aesopian language, Schnittke has put the whole anguish, despair and bitterness into the concluding point of the first movement, disguising them behind the vague but intimidating resonance of a floating cluster (***p*** < ***ff***).

The motive of ***Dies Irae***. Acting as a symbol of death, it is directly linked with the *cluster*, *the brasses'* timbre, and partly with the genre of *chorale,* giving a precise indication to the rock nature of this symphony (figure **38**, IV trombone).

The timbre of ***tam-tam***. Developing the same idea and following the example of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony, Schnittke endowed with the absolute dramaturgical ear introduced the timbre known to fix down the moment of the decease in the final requiem of the *Pathetic* Symphony. Schnittke introduced tam-tam twice in the funeral *chorale* of Allegro moderato (bars 143, 161) and three times in the coda's musical texture of the Finale (bars 238, 246, 253). The latter triple intrusion of this death herald irrevocably interrupting the course of musical thinking is a momentous sign in the tragic conception, a kind of its memento mori.

Contrary motion of strands in the musical texture. Its dramaturgical function as a means of imprinting confrontations is well known. It can be traced back to dramatic symphonism emerging in the latter half of the 19th century and serving as a certain "brand" of Tchaikovsky's tragic canvases. Schnittke resorts to a similar technique in the same situations but complicates it by expressionistic stylistics, making its sonority to convey crying despair.[xvi].

Lyricism of the initial allegro offers rather weak and inconsistent resistance to the counteraction, appearing only once in a while, as if in dotted lines. It is often missing at all in the sections expressly designed for it: for example, the collateral part simply disappears from the strongly modified recapitulation. Nonetheless, though latently, it is still here, affecting the course of events.

The motives of **lamento**. Their close similarity with the theme of the introductory Adagio from Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony is striking. Appearing at the outset of Schnittke's symphony, these motives, the same as with the composer of the *Pathetic* Symphony, are marked by the "tragedy of the decease" (to quote *Nadezhda Nikolayeva* as regards the opening of the introduction. *10*; p. 214), directing the dramaturgical road of both Sixth Symphonies.

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть, lamento
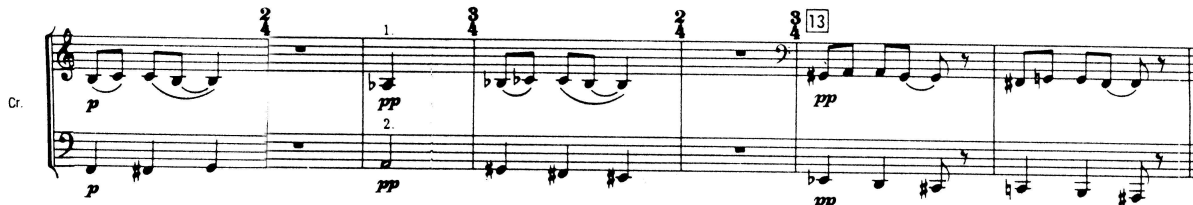
Чайковский. VI симфония, I часть, вступление
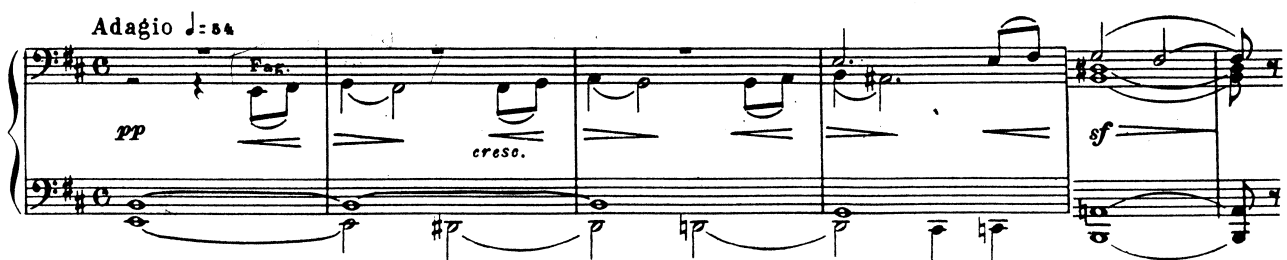
From the viewpoint of Schnittke's semantic conception, it is significant that the above motives are growing into **the chorale** *of trombones,* the key mournful lyrical image of the first movement (the second theme of the collateral part; figure **14**). This episode stands apart in the general atonal context by the predominance of minor keys: c-moll, h-moll, b-moll (see from the end of the first theme in the collateral part; from bar 5 after figure **11**). Associated in the character of sonority with numerous tragic chorales in the Austrian-German music (Brahms, Bruckner, Wagner, Mahler, Richard Strauss), Schnittke's *theme of the decease* in its dramaturgical meaning is directly resonant with the burial-service chorale following the fatal denouement in the finale of Tchaikovsky's Sixth Symphony. Their affinity is underlined by similar tone-colors as well: three trombones and tuba with Tchaikovsky and three trombones with Schnittke.

Чайковский. VI симфония, IV часть, хорал

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть, хорал

The further logical development of the chorale lies in its steady figurative toughening. It is achieved, in particular, through a merger with the theme of Dies Irae (in trombones; figure **38**) and with the diverging cluster contrary motion of strands (in French horns and trumpets; the general culmination of the first movement; six bars before figure **44**). In the course of its transformation the chorale genre turns into a genuine inside agent marking off the moments of "catastrophic frustrations" throughout the whole symphony. Such is the general culmination of Allegro moderato, akin to the episode "Crucifixion" from the master's Fourth Symphony: sixteen hard rhythmic beats of the entire orchestra **sff** (up to **fff**) with the drum's rolls might arouse a purely visual tragic image (driving nails in the body of Jesus Christ; 29 bars, beginning with figure **42**).

Шнитке. IV симфония, эпизод распятия;
партии челесты, чембало и фортепиано

Its "gentle" reminiscence in the recapitulation of the Finale can be perceived as an incessant and extra-temporal Crucifixion in the Eternity (four bars before figure **25**).

The **BACH** monogram. It unswervingly lives on in Schnittke's compositions in the same meanings as in the modern musical culture: as a variety of the Cross's rhetoric figure fixed firmly in the artistic historical consciousness, as a symbol of art's purity and as a hallmark signifying the philosophical comprehension of universal human problems.

But in Allegro moderato Schnittke levels out the meaning of this most essential symbol in the history of music, freely modifying the BACH motives and transferring them into general forms of movement. The composer implants them even in the sphere of evil imagery. For instance, in its exposition this motive (or to be more precise, its anagram with shifted pitches) gains a double, moreover, polar semantic coloring. It is interlaced with *dramatic scherzo-like progression* (the main part of the first movement, eight bars before figure **4**), appearing also as a component of the lyrical *lamento* (the first theme of the collateral part; two bars after figure **4**) and preceding the *motives of the decease* (four bars before figure **11**). The cited resolutions reveal also a significant contrasting of timbres: between the woodwinds, the strings and *the brasses* (French horns).

Following the substantial tragic culminations, this motive also performs the function of rejecting evil, similar to the theme of DSCH in Shostakovich's compositions. This is how you perceive the BACH anagram with its precise pitch, which is placed into a cluster of the brasses (the initial development: protesting octave unisons of the strings on *ff*; six bars after figure **27**), and into the musical texture of the general culmination in the recapitulation (the first bar after figure **44**).

Hence the original resolution of Allegro moderato stems from an intricate figurative interlacing of "characters" with their constant exchange of meanings. They are ingrained in the composition imbued with a contrast between lyricism and tragic (or aggressive) motorics repeatedly tinged with the *scherzo-like progression*. Motorics subdue lyricism; the latter's scope proves to be quite modest. Lyricism virtually sinks under the attack of gloomy aggression,

floating up only in the form of dispersed islets in the ocean of images representing excessive commotion and dramatic tension. Being "strangled" by the destructive forces, it becomes shaky and unreliable.

Another specific feature of the dramaturgical situation is due to an inseparable mixture of positive and negative forces, "good" and "evil", when one and the same phenomenon like two-faced Janus reveals its opposite sides. Respectively, each "hero" of the drama over and over again changes the pole of semantic attraction. As a result, absolutely all figurative-semantic orientations prove to be unstable. Of particular importance for the tragic conception is instability in the "positive" sphere denoting eternal life values of the humanity.

In this way the master depicted the new tragic life realities which, in a sense, intensified and stressed unsolvable contradictions of the universal human tragedy. Schnittke embodied them in his Sixth Symphony through a highly original, uncustomary dramaturgy, showing thereby his own perception of such genre as a modern tragic symphony.

According to all classical canonic rules, the following stage in dramaturgical expansion leading to culmination and denouement embraces greater space of the dramatic action, being marked by an intensive tendency towards the final outcome. A free dodecaphonic layer embedded in the context of atonality is increasingly revealing itself, along with the ongoing wavelike principle of development acting both inside the movements of the cycle and "across" the cyclic division. All of this complicates and at the same time reinforces the composition, unifying it into an integral whole.

Like with many of his predecessors, the next stage in the confrontation of polar forces in Schnittke's symphonic drama unfolds in the *middle movements of the cycle*. These sections present a sharp contrast: Scherzo is imbued with an aggressively dramatic toccata-like progression, while Adagio is permeated with lyricism.

Yet, it is not all that simple with the conflicting morphological symphonic method. The figurative dramaturgical spheres of "negative" and "positive" forces are still quite provisional, matching the fundamental instability and changeability of the emotional structure of this conception. Their "characters", i.e., tonal morphemes and lexemes, are as diverse, freely passing over into different semantic fields, as in Allegro moderato. Therefore, conflicting processes are still going on inside the movements, but along with the already known "heroes" there emerge the new ones dynamically moving towards the final outcome.

The dramatic **scherzo-like progression**. Upon passing through a twisting road of toughening in the initial Allegro, it grows into a powerful and clearly negative force, into the aggressive **toccata-like progression** of Presto (the second movement performing the function of a symphonic Scherzo). Here come into the foreground measures of rhythm (continual frantic pulsation of semiquavers in the fastest possible tempo), while pitch organization of the musical material is based on the new treatment of the initial *cluster* dominated by the gloomy toccata-like progression. This gloomy mechanical image of bleak perpetuum mobile calls on, e.g., the culmination sections of Agitato in Schnittke's Second String Quartet, Toccata from his First Concerto grosso or Vivo from his Fourth Violin Concerto, where utmost expressivity leads to a unique kind of Cadenza visuale[xvii].

The raging elements of evil are blocked by **lyricism** [xviii]. With the rapidity of a cinematographic technique Schnittke shifts attention from the ominous pushing toccata-like culmination onto the perfectly pure serene lyrical monologue (the ending of Scherzo; figure **26**). This new theme is reminiscent of Prokofiev's most exquisite incorporeal

lyrical, "gossamer-like gentle" (to quote the words of Boris V. Asafyev) delicate stalks of lyricism. Its almost intangible soft tissue is interwoven from the piccolo's transparent monophony in the highest register on **pp** and the strings' chords unassumingly supporting the melody in pastel shades by the tritone-second-, fifth-tritone- and fourth- chords.

Прокофьев. «Ромео и Джульетта»
ПРИКАЗ ГЕЦОГА

Lyricism acquires a confessionary connotation in Adagio where it is inseparably linked with the *BACH* motive. It is particularly symbolic that this motive gets interwoven with Schnittke's monogram (ADSCH)[xix]. The monologue of first violins in a high register accompanied by the *lamento* motives and the strings' transparent *chorale-like progression* underscores purity and elevation. Such sounding of the "name" belonging to the 18th-century genius can more vividly than any words express the attitude of this symphony's composer to his great predecessor and classical art as a whole.

BACH +
ADSCH

Шнитке. VI симфония, III часть

BACH

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть;
4 такта до цифры **11**

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть, разработка

BACH

BACH

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть;
8 тактов до цифры **4**

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть, реприза

BACH

poco più mosso

Шнитке. VI симфония, I часть;
2 такта после цифры **4**

BACH

The tragic tendency in the development of even this perfectly elevated image is obvious. In the recapitulation of Adagio the BACH motive, dominated by the mournful *chorale-like progression,* acquires a tonally harmonic, genre and timbre similarity with the leading melody of the "fatal question" from *The Nibelung's Ring* and partly with the initial theme of Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*, while sinking into the sphere of thick darkness (figure **14**).

The decisive role in the conception of Symphony No. 6 belongs to its _Finale_. Like in an authentic ancient or Shakespearian tragedy, it integrates in a single indivisible knot all the previously delineated dramaturgical lines along with adding the new ones. In this respect it is akin to the finales of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony, Tchaikovsky's Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Symphonies, and the concluding movements in the symphonies of Mahler and Shostakovich. This listing may be continued…

Hence, the initial theme of Allegro vivace in the course of merely twelve bars brings together many "heroes" of this instrumental drama: *the brasses' chorale* (with some features of a dramatic march)*, the diverging *contrary motion of strands, the cluster* context, and the figures of *anabasis* and *catabasis*. This image itself with its tense dissonance of chromatically expanding twelve-tone series arouses the association with the most expressive marches in the finales of Mahler's symphonies, while its dramaturgical function may be compared with that of Passacaglia in Brahms's Fourth Symphony.

Брамс. IV симфония, I часть, главная партия,
поступенный нисходящий ход

Брамс. IV симфония, IV часть

восходящий ход

A lot of other common features create an affinity between Brahms's conception and Schnittke, in particular, the characteristics of morphological symphonism, which was evolving historically step by step from the late 19th century and quite definitely revealed itself in the works of this German romanticist. With Brahms these features manifested themselves in the type of dramaturgy where separate elements from the various musical poetic layers came to act as "heroes" in an instrumental drama[xx]. Of course, Schnittke makes use of far more such elements, while their "behavior" is far more intricate owing to their repeated migration from one figurative sphere into another and their placement in the modern lexical-stylistic and conceptual-semantic context.

Like in Brahms's Passacaglia, the finale of Schnittke's Sixth Symphony shows the composer's radical reappraisal of his "heroes" three of which are not only identical to those of Brahms but also transformed in a similar way. Hence *the chorale-like progression* jointly with the dramatically forceful march-like attribute acts as negation of lyricism while the essentially lyrical *scale descending melodic progression* turns into its figurative opposite

(the ascending progression of the upper voice in the tough inflexible vein). All of this is intensified by the tragic *contrary motion of strands* in four trumpets and four trombones[xxi].

Шнитке. VI симфония, IV часть

The whole figurative and tonal world of this symphony is gradually drawn into the orbit of destructive negation: evil appears to be Universal. The most significant "participants" in this process are a melodious *solo of the kettledrums* (offering variations on the initial tones of the main part in the first movement; figure **1**), *a cluster* (two bars before figure **6,** and figure **12**), the polyphonic texture in the sections of *anabasis* (hemitonic fourth-tritone structures; figure **5**), *the BACH monogram* (figure **7**), and *the scherzo- and toccata-like motive* (six bars before figure **9**).

Similar to grand tragic culminations, the Finale of this symphony is marked by the appearance of new "heroes" and new lines of dramatic action. To this category belongs the rhythm of Beethoven's "theme of fate" directly delineating the meaning of current developments, which is repeated thrice by three trumpets (two bars after figure **17**).

The dramaturgical pattern is getting more and more complicated in the course of development, contributing to the symphony's utmost dramatic intensification. Thus, the involvement of parallel dramaturgy is expressly drawn off to the end of the Finale to exert the strongest psychological effect. At the moment of withdrawing from the culmination zone, there seem to live on their own two musical strands cardinally detached in their meaning. Each strand introduces the most transformed main "heroes" becoming opposite to their initial character. *The cluster* dispersed in pure sounds of the triad in C-dur enters into the sphere of lyricism, creating a sensation of heavenly rest, floating over the world of Eternity (***pp*** in violins non vibrato; figure **16**), while *the motive of the decease in French horns*, accentuated tonally and in rhythmic measures, imbibes the whole acuteness of tragic expressivity rendered in hopeless and protesting convulsions.

The last wavelike ascent of the coda in the Finale (from figure **31**) is broken by rapid submersion of the musical texture into the low register and the apparently gradual dying of the tonal matter. The concluding pause with fermata immerses it into subsequent silence… And only the remote echoing traces of the bells that stopped tolling is perceived as the voice of Infinity, from time immemorial watching the human tragedy. This brings to mind the words of the ancient preacher: "*One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever"* (The Book of Ecclesiastes: 1: 4).

In conclusion we would like to stress that in the composer's pluralistic style stable elements of the morpheme or lexeme type are always present to a greater or lesser extent. Therefore, the question on the semantic side of our contemporary's conceptions can be solved not so much by the fact of detecting these semantically significant units[xxii] as by analyzing the dramaturgical logic of their interaction, making it possible to adequately interpret the composer's

message. A similar research method allows us not only to verify the already recognized qualities of Schnittke's symphonic music, such as purposefulness and effectiveness of through development, but also to penetrate into the paradoxical nature of the composer's symphonic thinking. The degree of this paradoxicality was growing in the course of time and eventually, in the master's later works, it reached its culmination by creating a new type of symphonism defined by us as ***conflicting morphological***. Its key prerequisite is viewed in a flexible process of development wherein stable stylistic, genre, rhythmically tonal, timbre and textural elements live on their own, undergoing inward changes (transformation, exchange of meanings, interpenetration), but this seemingly entangled behavior of the "heroes" in an instrumental drama nevertheless frames a clear conception, namely: the tragedy of Man and the Universe in the philosophical comprehension of its innate ontological essence.

Here we have the composer's meta-conception formulated in a highly original manner, worrying him throughout his creative road and addressed to the essential human problems: Good and evil, sin, redemption and reconciliation, Life, death, and Immortality. Moreover, as it usually is with Schnittke, his composition has organically inscribed itself in the context of world culture.

Among the repeatedly mentioned semantically "telling" elements and dramaturgical models as exemplified by the music by Bach, Beethoven, Wagner, Mahler, the style of West-European romanticists, Tchaikovsky, Shostakovich et al., we would like to emphasize a relationship between the symphonic methods of Schnittke and Brahms, most noticeable in comparing the Sixth Symphony of our contemporary with the Fourth Symphony of Brahms. However, the semantic road of the last symphonic opus by the German romanticist—from elegy to tragedy—was profoundly reappraised by the composer living in the late 20th century who, in concordance with the range of problems arising in the current life and affecting the artist's world outlook, transformed it into the road from tragedy to catastrophe.

A striking scope of the artistic historical context gives grounds to speak about the actually summing-up significance of the Sixth Symphony, from which naturally ensued the subsequent links in Schnittke's final symphonic macrocycle. Moreover, it allows us to perceive this macrocycle as a certain final stage in the generalization of the centuries-old development of this genre at the turn of the 20th century. Its next round in the field of dramatic symphony (in particular, Penderecki's symphonic frescoes, gigantic and, as a rule, synthetic canvases akin to mystery plays) belongs already to the 21st century.

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11. *Kholopova, V., Restagno, E.* Sophia Gubaidulina. Moscow: 1996;

12. *Chigareva, E.* On Semantics of Schnittke's Tonalities / Report at the 7th International Conference Dedicated to Alfred Schnittke. November 22, 2006. Moscow, Schnittke State Institute of Music;

13. *Chigareva, E.* Alfred Schnittke's Seventh and Eighth Symphonies as a Macrocycle (*in the context of his works*) // Dedicated to Alfred Schnittke… For the composer's seventieth anniversary. Issue 4 / Edited and compiled by A.V. Bogdanova and E.B. Dolinskaya. Moscow: 2004;

14. *Schnittke, A.* The Static Form. A New Conception of Time // Alfred Schnittke. Articles on Music / Edited and compiled by A. Ivashkin, 2004.

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[i] Symphony No. 9 stands apart in this list since it was written by the seriously ill composer and restored from his hardly legible manuscript in two versions — by Gennady Rozhdestvensky and Alexander Raskatov. According to Irina F. Schnittke, Raskatov's version is closer to the composer's conception (From her address to the international conference dedicated to Schnittke's tenth death anniversary held at the Moscow Institute of Music named after the composer in November 2008).

[ii] *E. Chigareva*, for example, writes: "I think a conflicting polarity in pure form as a basis of the artistic conception disappears from Schnittke's music (his later works – *I. N.*)" (*13*; p. 147).

[iii] These include the principles of open form, the focus on textural interlinks, on the morphological type of symphonism (in contrast to the previously predominating syntactic type), motival work in the anagram pattern. Researchers have repeatedly pointed to concrete melodic reverberations in and between the composer's works, as well to the stable lexemes which had crystallized themselves in his compositions and which could be traced back to the historical past of musical culture. These ideas got development in the papers written by Galina Grigoryeva, Alexander Ivashkin, Svetlana Savenko, Evgeniya Chigareva, Valentina Kholopova, Jun Chiba, et al. Many aspects were also elucidated by the composer himself.

[iv] It is explained by the composer's specific later style that seems to dissolve in general forms of sounding. The "dying", leveling of the style is sometimes treated by researchers as a sign of a perennial problem facing an artist during the last period of life (it is particularly true of Schnittke, who was actually standing on the sharpest edge of death or life since the summer of 1985). See, e.g.,: *1*; p. 96.

[v] "Attention is focused on *details* when a tone, an interval, a chord, or motive as if discovered for the first time turn into musical happenings. Alexander Ivashkin defines this specific quality of Schnittke's thinking in the later period of his life as *morphological"* (*13*; p. 147). See also: *2*.

[vi] Schnittke's own words on periodicity in serialism (*14*; p. 73).

[vii] "Morpheme is the minimal meaningful part of a word" (*3*). In our understanding it is a small but *semantically significant element* defined by a certain single means of the musical language (melodic, rhythmic, harmonic, etc.) or by their combination. It is a unit of the musical texture performing the function of a sign as a certain "pointing finger". "Lexeme is a lexical unit of the vocabulary in a total of its word-changing forms and meanings" (*3*). In our understanding it is a relatively small *semantically significant area* involving synonymous but not identical motives and segments of phrases, which may be united by similar motives, harmonies, rhythms, timbres, etc., as well as, for example, by their genre or stylistic relations.

[viii] The role of these rhetoric figures is great in Schnittke's other compositions as well, e.g., in his Seventh and Eighth Symphonies, which is delineated by Evgeniya Chigareva (*13*; p. 151). Like with many symphonists of the late 19th and 20th c.c., the ascending moments in the course of Schnittke's Sixth Symphony are often marked by the polyphonic texture and polyphonic forms (free fugato, micro-canons and canonic sequences). Tonally, these are usually built up on Webern's hemitonic structures in second-tritone- and fourth-tritone chords.

 [ix] The direct relationship between large-scale time proportions of the musical texture and the aggravation of a conflict, cherishing undoubtedly the traditions of classical romantic symphonism, is organically inscribed into a panorama of a dramatic symphony characteristic of the late 20th century. In this respect Schnittke's Sixth Symphony is contiguous with the symphonic method of Sophia Gubaidulina, most of all with those of her works which are founded on Fibonacci numerical series, in particular, with the symphony "*Stimmen… Verstummen…*". See.: *9; 11*.

[x] Recapitulation of the first movement is actually replaced by an extensive second wave of development and the coda, by the introductory cluster.

[xi] *Liszt, F.* Selected Articles. Moscow: 1959, p. 312. In Russian symphonic music it was Tchaikovsky who tended to the poem form for the same reasons, and then in the first half of the 20th century he was followed by Myaskovsky who came to the poem form as a new approach to writing one-movement compositions. For the poem form in Russian symphonies dating to the second half of the 20th century, see: *4*.

[xii] In the first movement of the symphony a dramatic scherzo-like progression appears initially at the beginning of the main part (three bars after figure **3**) and reaches its culmination in the development (figure **36**).

[xiii] One of the most vivid and historically earliest examples of such violation but provided with romantic aesthetics is Chopin's Sonata b-moll, with its symphonic development leading to an outburst of motor rhythms in the vortex of the mournful Finale.

[xiv] The successive appearance of tones, marcato articulation, the dynamic profile of a wave, the brasses' timbre along with the strings' lingering "echo".

[xv] Hereinafter *the italics are added to the "cast of characters"* in this instrumental drama, which are included in the element under analysis.

[xvi] Contrary motions of strands, like the appearance of most "characters", were outlined in the main part of Allegro moderato (seven bars after figure **3**). They reach their tragic peak in the general culmination emphasized by the thickly filled three-octave expanding *cluster* texture passing over to *the brasses*. "Extreme" expressivity is accentuated by the deafening dynamics (*fff*) and piercing trills of the woodwinds (six bars before figure **44**).

[xvii] The further growth of toccata-like progression in Presto of the Sixth Symphony is marked by the whole-tone context, the timbre of four solo *trumpets*, the step double thickening progression of voice lines (figure **7**); the col legno procedure and quartet-note step double thickening progressions (figure **12**); the timbre of four *trombones* in the distorted pitch space (the predominance of tritones, minor seconds and major sevenths; figure **19**); a trill-like movement in tritones, chromatically diverging *contrary motions of the brasses* (the culmination at the end of the second movement; five bars after figure **24**).

[xviii] It should be added to the aforesaid that the motives of *lamento*, like most "heroes" of the first movement, in their exposition were interlaced with *the scherzo-like progression* (the main part; figure **1**). For the first time these motives are rendered in the lyrical vein only in the initial theme of the collateral part (figure **4**).

[xix] ADSCH is a unique variety of the composer's handwriting flourish. The customary type of the monogram (ASCH) came to include one more musical letter "D" taken from the composer's first name Alfre**d**. By the type of its outgrowth from the BACH motive, as well as in the tonal character of this music, the ADSCH motive appears here in the role of a monogram, as it was specified in the talk of the present author with Valentina Kholopova on April 7, 2008. It should be also noted that the full name of Schnittke was sometimes treated quite freely by his contemporaries. For example, Nikolai Korndorf subtitled his String Trio "In honour of Alfred Schnittke" (AGSCH) by inserting the initial letter "G" of the composer's patronymic in his variety of this monogram.

[xx] The three main "characters" include the scale ascending melodic progression, fanfare blowing and a chorale (or chorale-like) elaboration.

[xxi] For dramaturgy of Brahms's Fourth Symphony, see.: *6, 7, 8*.

[xxii] Therefore the analysis of the Symphony from the viewpoint of its "intertextural skeleton", for all the vividness of Jun Chiba's aphoristic expression (*1*; p. 93), has little to add to the understanding of the composition's artistic content.