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Об одной из магистралей творческих исканий. К 90-летию со дня рождения Альфреда Шнитке

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Аннотация. Исходный тезис статьи состоит в утверждении того, что художественной магистралью творческих исканий композитора Альфреда Шнитке являлась техника полистилистики. В последующем рассмотрении этого феномена определяющими избираются понятия «эффект», как средства выразительности, предназначенные для создания какого-либо сильного впечатления, а также само создаваемое впечатление, и «аффект», как пассионарное воодушевление, испытываемое композитором в ходе использования полистилистики, и те параллели, которые возникают в ходе её использования. После обоснования категории «полистилистика» дальнейшее изложение нацелено на определение роли Шнитке в её обосновании и его лидирующей роли в разработке данной техники с раскрытием исторических горизонтов цитирования и аллюзийной символики (музыкальные стили Барокко, венские классики, культура XIX века, наиболее влиятельные предшественники Шнитке в искусстве XX века). Следующий затем обзор самых показательных образцов полистилистической практики Шнитке проводится под углом зрения выявления смысловых аспектов претворения возможностей данной техники, что подводит к выводу о стремлении композитора установить связь времён и реализовать присущее художественному мышлению второй половины XX века обострённое чувство исторической памяти.

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About one of the main lines of creative search. On the 90th anniversary of the birth of Alfred Schnittke

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Abstract. The paper initially asserts that the artistic backbone of the composer Alfred Schnittke's creative pursuits was the technique of polystylistics. In the subsequent examination of this phenomenon, the defining concepts chosen are "effect," understood as expressive means intended to create a strong impression, as well as the impression itself, and "affect," which refers to the passionate inspiration experienced by the composer in the course of utilizing polystylistics, along with the parallels that arise during its use. Having established the category of "polystylistics," the further exposition aims to determine Schnittke's role in its justification and his leading position in the development of this technique, unveiling the historical horizons of citation and allusive symbolism (musical styles of the Baroque, Viennese classics, 19th-century culture, and the most influential predecessors of Schnittke in the art of the 20th century). The following review of the most significant examples of Schnittke's polystylistic practice is conducted from the perspective of revealing the meaningful aspects of the realization of this technique's potential, leading to the conclusion that the composer sought to establish a connection between eras and to embody the heightened sense of historical memory inherent in the artistic thought of the second half of the 20th century.

Введение

Let us immediately agree that the artistic backbone of the creative research of the composer Alfred Schnittke (1934-1998) was the technique of polystylistics. And, speaking about it, it is necessary to agree on the meaning of two similar words from the title of the proposed article.

Effect (from Lat. *action, impact, influence*) in this case, we will understand as means of expression intended to create a strong impression, as well as the impression itself, that is, the result of the influence of the system of polystylistic forms used by Alfred Schnittke.

Affect (from Lat. *passion, emotional excitement*) will denote, on the one hand, the passionate enthusiasm that the composer often experienced when going out to use polystylistics, and on the other hand, the parallels that

involuntarily arise during its use, since this was mainly due to quotations from the music of the Baroque era, which was just developing the so-called theory of affects, that is, the ability to evoke certain emotional states using various means of artistic expression.

Now we will try to outline the necessary strokes of the creative history of this phenomenon and reach certain generalizations. These points were previously comprehended in the author's book "Alfred Schnittke. Contexts and Concepts" (Демченко, 2009). Due to the abundance of quoted statements in this essay, for the convenience of presentation, they are given in the specified edition.

As is known, the concept of polystylistics, which implies the use of styles belonging to different eras in one work, was introduced into the lexicon of musical art by Alfred Schnittke, who programmatically justified the corresponding aesthetics and technology in his report at the International Music Congress of 1971.

And it was this composer who happened to become the most significant representative of this trend in the art of the second half of the 20th century – the most significant both in terms of the intensity of the use of diverse resources of polystylistics, and in terms of its content.

The real artistic practice of recent times almost invariably requires the author, turning to various genres, to possess the ability to switch to almost any stylistic dimension. This is especially necessary for a musician working in the field of cinema.

And it is noteworthy that Schnittke, who became the author of music for six dozen films, received the initial impetus from the cinema for the formation of a polystylistic trend that was growing latent in his work.

When creating the sound design for the animated film "Glass Harmonica" (directed by Andrey Hrzhanovsky) in 1968, he came across an incredibly colorful conglomerate of all kinds of artistic material that struck his imagination.

"In this film, a huge number of characters from the world of fine art come to life: from Leonardo to modern artists such as Ernst, Magritte, Prorokov and many others. And when I saw all this material not yet filmed – here Pinturicchio, here Arcimboldo, here Salvador Dali – all this made a very strange impression next to it and seemed incongruous.

I did not imagine how it was possible to create something whole out of all this. However, the director succeeded. And this led me to the idea that, probably, in music, such a kaleidoscopic combination of different-style elements is possible and can give a very strong effect."

And is it by chance that in the same year 1968 **Violin Sonata No. 2** appears – a work in which the composer for the first time quite consciously built an artistic concept based on the confrontation of styles.

Indeed, much is based here on the comparison of the "ultra-temporal" sound technique with the sharply contrasting neoclassical style (fragments of the chorale texture, episodes of pathetic sound, the "golden move," a reduced introductory dominant chord).

But it should be noted immediately that later Schnittke moved along this path in his music independently of external influences, expanding the range of semantic facets of this creative method in every possible way. It is worth giving confirmation that it was a consciously made choice.

"In 1968, I decided that it was possible to compare styles in shocking contrast – the first time I did it was in Violin Sonata No. 2. And I felt some kind of liberation. And at the same time, I began to think about Symphony No. 1, which I had been studying for four years, where these stylistic comparisons were carried out, perhaps, to the maximum extent."

Schnittke was an amazing, inimitable stylist. He possessed a virtuoso skill of reproducing any layers of musical culture – from the Middle Ages (mainly in the forms of Catholic Gregorian singing or the Orthodox Znamenny chant) to the recent past. But only occasionally he was occupied with the task of stylization as such.

One of the first and most famous examples of this kind is the **"Suite in the Old Style"** (1971). Compiled on the basis of individual episodes of music for the films " Adventures of a Dentist" and "Sport, Sport, Sport", it refers to a difficult-to-distinguish set of models of Italian, French and German instrumental music of the first half of the 18th century, mainly in the rococo version, which corresponds to certain "gallant" details.

The spirit of pastorality dominates here, which is defined from the first play and with the corresponding designation "Pastoral". The most noticeable are Bach's echoes in the Italian Concerto and the Brandenburg Concertos (in No. 2 "Ballet" and in No. 4 "Fugue"; by the way, the typically Baroque theme from No. 2 then passed into the second movement of Symphony No. 1). There is a distant hint of Mozart (lyrical melancholy No. 3 "Minuet") and, it would seem, this is the upper limit of the historical origins of Schnittke's suite.

However, in fact, in its developing sections, layers of later time are felt, coming from the Romantics and even Tchaikovsky (in the techniques of sequential movement). Moreover, for humorous reasons, the elegant serenade of the last play (No. 5 "Pantomime") is "mixed" with barely noticeable elements of a Russian chastushka, the "rattling" of a small second and the interruption of the sound at the end is not on the tonic.

That is, even here, in the "purest" stylization, we are dealing with the freedom of creative production generally characteristic of Alfred Schnittke.

The main ground of the polystylistic retrospective was formed for Schnittke's work by three grandiose historical layers: the Middle Ages, the Baroque and the musical classics of the Enlightenment.

Appealing to the medieval heritage in the widest possible way, he most of all singled out the Gregorian chorale and the Znamenny chant in it, which equally corresponded to the artistic value of the named monuments and the aspirations of the composer himself.

This sacred array, as the foundation of the musical and spiritual treasury of mankind, was joined "from below" by the ancient layer of the synagogue monody, and "from above" by the circle of Protestant chants.

And what is very characteristic of Schnittke is that being a "citizen of the world" and a man of ecumenical views, he once tried to integrate all these four traditions into a certain artistic whole, which happened in **Symphony No. 4** (1983), where, according to the author's plan, *"the Lutheran chorale, the banner chant, the anniversaries of Catholic church life and some imaginary Jewish liturgical music are stylized."*

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As for most other musicians of the 20th century, the "promised land" for the composer was the Baroque in its fully developed forms, that is, since the late 17th century. Needless to say, the genre model of *Concerto grosso* meant a great deal to Schnittke, revived by him using the models of Corelli and Handel.

The first of the six opuses of this genre is especially indicative, which begins with the designation of parts: *Preludio (Andante), Toccata (Allegro), Recitativo (Lento), Cadenza, Rondo (Agitato), Postludio (Andante).*

The sensitive ear of this musician could not disregard the exquisitely aristocratic madrigal culture, the heyday of which falls on the borderline of the Late Renaissance and the Early Baroque.

This artistic layer is most clearly represented in three compositions: the vocal and instrumental cycle **"Three Madrigals"**, written on the poems of F. Tanzera (1980), **Madrigal in memory of O. Kagan** for solo violin or cello (1991) and the opera **"Gesualdo"** (1995), dedicated to an outstanding representative of the Italian madrigal culture.

We can also name other genre prototypes dating back to the Baroque era – for example, a **Trio-sonata** (1987) or the parts "Pastoral" and "Ballet" from the **"Suite in the Old Style"**.

We can talk about the important role that the harpsichord acquired in his work – Schnittke used timbre colors and articulatory features of this instrument very widely and variously, including in a solo capacity (**"Three Fragments"**, 1990).

We can also mention a number of compositional names of that time, which to one degree or another aroused Schnittke's creative imagination – here, first of all, Vivaldi should be noted.

But most of all, and mainly, Johann Sebastian Bach personified this era for him.

According to the memoirs of Mark Lubotsky, who was a friend of the composer, the first performer of all three of his violin sonatas and the first two violin concertos, Schnittke said: *"I think that Bach is the center. All music for 2000 years before Bach is the way to Bach, to the center. And after it, there is nothing without it for 250 years. Everything in Bach is the center. Even his name is **BACH**: the divergence of lines in the contradiction of **B-H** in this semitone pole ratio that creates energy. Possession of everything and the center of everything."*

Mozart turned out to be the key figure for Schnittke among the Viennese classics – to some extent, perhaps, because in 1946, when his father's family temporarily settled in Vienna after the remote Russian hinterland, the future composer, impressed by Mozart's music, for the first time felt his vocation.

Allusions to the style of the classic of Austrian music appeared in Schnittke's works many times, so it is possible to speak with good reason about his Mozartianism. It stretched from the purest stylization ("Congratulatory Rondo" for violin and piano, 1974) to a completely congenial co-creation (Part 2 of Symphony No. 3).

At the same time, such qualities as harmony, subtlety, grace, elegance and often signs of playfulness were preserved as an indispensable mode, in which a note of aesthetic sophistication was introduced from time to time.

From the point of view of the Mozartianism characteristic of Alfred Schnittke, the composition under the title **"Moz-Art"** (1975) is noteworthy – a play on words invented by him, made with the name of the classic with an emphasis on his belonging to art and on the fact that he has become a symbol, the personification of musical art – *Art*.

"The experience of reconstructing one of Mozart's works" – this is how Schnittke described his opus with maximum modesty. The fact is that at some point, a violin part was found from some Mozart's score (obviously made for the performance of the comedy of masks), and on the basis of several melodies contained in this part, the composer created an instrumental fantasy. At first it was written for two violins, then other versions appeared, including with the participation of the harpsichord.

This was done in the genre of a "musical joke," which again is in agreement with the preferences of the Viennese classic (one of the most famous Mozart's pieces of this kind is the "Village Musicians' Sextet").

In fairness, we note that the name of Mozart in Schnittke's mind invisibly coexisted in close creative kinship with Haydn, as clearly and tellingly demonstrated by the name of the chamber-instrumental composition *"Moz-Art à la Haydn"* written two years later (for two violins and a chamber orchestra), in which the style of Viennese classicism is reconstructed as something extra-individual.

Less often, Schnittke felt the need to turn to the styles of the 19th century. But even here it is necessary to single out Wagner as one of his "spiritual fathers," to whom Schnittke repeatedly erected severe and solemn monuments in his writings.

Although often a completely organic Wagner-Bruckner synthesis is noted. Direct evidence of this is Symphony No. 2 with its subtitle "San Florian" as a sign of its origin as a result of the composer's visit to the monastery of the same name, where Bruckner lived, worked and was buried.

Nevertheless, even in relation to the 19th century, we can indicate a fairly representative range of complementary stylistic "overtones," for example, emanations from Schubert, Mendelssohn and even more from Mahler.

Sometimes, even occasionally, Schnittke collected a rather abundant "harvest" from the legacy of a particular Romantic. For example, in the expanded piece **"A Paganini"** for solo violin (1982), we find whole clusters of selected fragments from the caprices of the legendary virtuoso, which make up a highly technical collage – concert piece.

From the perspective of the listener's perception (meaning the ease of detecting and identifying the polystylistic effect), it is more difficult to deal with the interpretation of reminiscences dating back to individual compositional styles of the 20th century.

The composer marked his immediate predecessors with a **"Dedication to Igor Stravinsky, Sergei Prokofiev and Dmitry Shostakovich"** (1979), introducing one quote from each of them into this six-part piano piece: a Chinese march from Stravinsky's opera "The Nightingale", a Humorous Scherzo for four bassoons by Prokofiev, a Polka from Shostakovich's ballet "The Golden Age" – the selected material predetermined a somewhat eccentric inclination of this musical "curtsy" to the highly respected masters.

Among the named luminaries of the world art of the 20th century, Schnittke additionally singled out Stravinsky and Shostakovich, having done this by creating small musical memorials in the year of their death: **"The Canon in Memory of Igor Stravinsky"** (1971) and the **"Prelude in Memory of D. Shostakovich"** (1975).

And this is understandable, since he inherited from each of them, in our opinion, the most characteristic:

• from Stravinsky – a penchant for unrestrained experimentation, artistry and the playful element, as well as the principle of virtuoso recreation of all kinds of stylistic models brought to the limit;

• from Shostakovich – the attraction to deep meditativeness, to the artistic analysis of acute life problems, to the development of the line of conceptual symphonism, and much more (for example, the opera "Life with an Idiot" reveals obvious similarities with the satirical grotesque of the opera "The Nose").

<p style="text-align:center">* * *</p>

As one could see, the range of polystylistic space of Alfred Schnittke's music turned out to be truly boundless. Equally impressive was the skill with which he operated with this extremely diverse material. Moreover, it should be admitted that creating collages was an extremely exciting activity for him and he sometimes experienced an insatiable passion for such a combination.

In this regard, his **Symphony No. 1**, one of the samples of "total collage," became a real "Everest". Its fabric is woven from countless various extracts.

Only from the memory of Schnittke himself, far from covering the entire list of quotations, we find the following here.

"In part 1 – the transition to the finale from Beethoven's Symphony No. 5 and the beginning of the finale; in the finale – the funeral march (its author is unknown to me), then Chopin's march and Grieg's "Death of Oz", Strauss's waltz "Tales of the Viennese Forest", Tchaikovsky's concerto and the rhythm of "Letkajenkka", then 14 Gregorian melodies "Sanctus", the central episode with "Dies irae" and at the end of Haydn's "Farewell Symphony". All the other collages are my theater music (marches, polkas, dances, etc.)."

Another example of a "total collage" and a real "Everest" was **Symphony No. 3** (1981). It was created for the opening of the new Gewandhaus concert hall in Leipzig for the famous symphony orchestra of the same name, which dates back to 1743 and which at various times was led by the no less famous Felix Mendelssohn, Arthur Nikisch, Wilhelm Furtwängler, Bruno Walter, Franz Konwitschny, Kurt Masur.

The order initiated by such a famous, truly "historical" performing group prompted Alfred Schnittke to an equally "historical" artistic idea. The composer described it more than modestly – just as a desire to *"give Symphony No. 3 the signs of German (Austro-German) music."* However, in fact, he erected a grand monument to this culture in sounds.

If the listener has special knowledge, then in the course of perception of this work, they can reconstruct the evolution of Austro-German music at least from Bach and Handel to Hindemith and Kagel.

The reservation *"at least"* is necessary, if only because, for example, the author interpreted Part 3 as *"a summary of musical history from the organum to the present,"* and we will keep in mind that the organum is one of the types of European polyphony of the Late Middle Ages.

Carrying out a kind of review of Austro-German music (this symphony is sometimes called the "anthology of German music"), Schnittke introduces a number of relevant quotations. And again, a reservation is required, because, as the author himself claims, *"there are stylizations and there are pseudo-citations, although there is not a single exact quote."*

For example, in the same Part 3, there are themes of Bach's *d-moll* Chaconne, Mozart's *d-moll* Piano Concerto, the saraband from Beethoven's "Egmont" overture and a reminder of the funeral march from Wagner's "Sunset of the Gods". In addition, this part, as a whole, is built on the dramatic model of Honegger's symphonic poem "Pacific 231".

However, two other principles play an even greater role in the construction of Symphony No. 3.

The first of them consists in the implementation of the typical means and especially of various styles of Austro-German music, and this begins with the fact that the first part had its prototype in the Introduction to Wagner's "The Rhine Gold" (undulating sounds gradually rising up from the deafness of the extremely low register).

The second principle is that 33 themes are woven into the sound fabric of the work, which are the names of representatives of this musical culture encoded in the sounds.

And if the finale opens and closes with the BACH monogram, then this seems to emphasize the fact that our ideas about the great composer are inextricably linked with Leipzig, where the Gewandhaus Orchestra has led its history since Bach's time.

Having considered the general scheme of the thematic framework of the architectonics of Symphony No. 3, we have to make one more reservation: such is its design "in form," as for the "content," the final result went far beyond the "musical-historical fantasy."

A peculiar echo of Symphony No. 3, as a "historical re-construction," was ***Concerto grosso No. 3*** (1985), in which each of the five movements is dedicated to the anniversary of an outstanding musician. The first three of them

are addressed to composers of the same age who were born in the same year 1685: Johann Sebastian Bach, George Frideric Handel and Domenico Scarlatti.

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Symphonies No. 1 and No. 3, which are superficially similar in the abundance of collage material (the two "Everests"), are completely different in their artistic idea and drama, and, moreover, allow us to say that Schnittke's polystylistics could be "mononational" (Symphony No. 3) and "polynational" (Symphony No. 1). Here are additional illustrations on this subject.

"Stille Nacht" ("Silent Night", 1978) is a treatment of a German song, performed for violin and piano in the style range of Austrian classics from Mozart to Mahler.

In the **"Dedication to Paganini"** for solo violin (1982), in addition to the music of Paganini himself, fragments from the works of Corelli, Bach (this is the Baroque era) and Berg (this is the 20th century) appear.

We find an even greater variation in **Quartet No. 3** – a kind of "carnival of musical quotations" (S. Volkov): Orlando Lasso, Beethoven, Wagner, Shostakovich. That is, there is a combination of material that is diverse not only by nationality, but also by time.

Pursuing various artistic goals, Schnittke generally interpreted the original prototypes very freely, forming the most unexpected mix structures and sometimes creating paradoxical hybrids. These include, for example, the baroque thematism from Part 5 of *Concerto grosso No. 1* and the classical-romantic "serenade" of part 2 of the Viola Concert, to which the "enzyme" coming from gypsy music is unexpectedly mixed.

Thus, Alfred Schnittke's work with styles was characterized by exceptional freedom. He actively developed the principles of Igor Stravinsky's neoclassicism, including in the part that Sergei Prokofiev once ironically defined with the phrase *"bachisms with falsehoods,"* and Schnittke's saturation of quoted or stylized thematism with dissonance can be brought to a full 12-tone vertical.

But this is only a special case of various methods of transforming a particular historical prototype, including its radical transformation and deformation, when it turns into something unrecognizable or into its complete opposite.

The main purpose of such preparations is seen as follows: usually Schnittke actively modernized the original model, thus introducing it into the context of modernity and thereby organizing a lively dialogue of epochs, and this dialogue served primarily the tasks of the most prominent embodiment of the vital problems of the 20th century.

The said dialogicality is clearly noticeable even in cases when the work, according to its external outlines, is just a stylization, sustained in a more or less uniform key. Take, for example, the above-mentioned **Three Madrigals** (1980).

Here Schnittke appears in a rather familiar role of a "citizen of the planet," this time interpreting one of the most precious acquisitions of Western European civilization, i.e., the madrigal style.

As one would expect, this style is presented in the appropriate qualities: not just subtlety, elegance, but also the aristocratic refinement of expression, whimsical curves of refined lyrical emotion and, of course, individual-subjective mood.

However, the composer is by no means satisfied with what has been achieved and multiplies ("squares") madrigality. This begins with "multilingualism," since the texts of Franz Tanser are used, written in different dialects – French (No. 1 "On a Star"), German (No. 2 "Distance") and English (No. 3 "Memory").

They tell about the love story in approximately the same words, but in different shades already according to the "phonetics" itself. The interaction of these shades conveys those facets of the mysterious, innermost-hidden, which cannot be expressed by the cliches of everyday consciousness.

A feeling of loss and deep sadness *("Two people met on a star, but... time passed, and they returned to Earth")* required a thinly transparent, insubstantially fragile instrumental palette and a special manner of vocal writing, including "exorbitant" means of expression (for example, the voice should intone in the range from contralto lows to coloratura highs).

As a result of such an interpretation of the principles of madrigality, there is an obvious "transposition" into the plane of a complicated modern system of intimate feelings.

Schnittke's polystylistics grew up on the basis of the sharpened contrast that is so characteristic of his work. Hence the sharpness of stylistic comparisons, which, in turn, strengthen the general confrontation of images to the limit.

The mentioned **Violin Sonata No. 1**, where the composer used the *BACH* motif for the first time, also contains a grain of future stylistic conflicts: the sublime beauty of neoclassical sounds and the chaconne in its intonationally complicated, serial interpretation is opposed by the huge matter of dance genres (the exaggerated dancing of the "Grand Lady" and the ironic paraphrase of the Latin American smash hit "La Cucaracha").

Five years later, in **Violin Sonata No. 2**, polystylistics already openly acts as the most effective means of exacerbating internal conflict: the confrontation in the consciousness and mental organization of an individual of two principles – demonstratively rigid, self-willed, "quarrelsome" (atonality, chromaticism, "prickly" dissonance, rhythmic anarchy) and sublime, positively ideal, self-absorbed (neoclassical tonal thematism with the *BACH* quote, clarity of harmonic cadences, metric poise).

This is one of the many functions that polystylistics has found in Schnittke's work. And for him, more than for any other modern author, it was characteristic of *"many styles"* and their continuous interaction.

This stylistic pluralism ultimately served the goals of creating a multidimensional picture of the world in its past, present and future. The composer himself saw polystylistics as a highly *"convincing musical means for the philosophical justification of the "connection of times"."* Consequently, the "affects" served in the most intensive way to achieve various kinds of "effects" in their range from a simple musical joke to the heights of problematic conceptualism.

The comprehensive scale of stylistic modes developed by the composer made it possible to clearly establish this *"connection of times"* and fully realize the acute sense of historical memory inherent in the artistic thinking of the second half of the 20th century. Perhaps this was the main creative achievement of Alfred Schnittke.

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