

УДК 781.5

Genre Code of the Parable in the Instrumental Music of D. Shostakovich

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Received 28.03.2013, received in revised form 25.05.2013, accepted 18.07.2013

The paper shows the effect of genre features of the parable in instrumental works by Shostakovich. Parable poetics meets the desire of the composer to the philosophical understanding of life. Signs of the parable narrative are most clearly represented in the Preludes No. 4 and No. 22 Op.34, Preludes No. 4 and No. 9 Op.87, Quartets No. 11 and No. 15, the Symphony No. 9, which reveal the commonality of musical means. The fact that the principality of the parable shows itself in works created at different times and belonging to different genres, points to its regularity and organicity for the composer's artistic thinking. The narrative nature of the genre reveals in music through the synthesis of folk-song and speech intonations that characterize the narrator. Thanks to the framing sections acting as the introduction and conclusion, the narrator's chronotope is separated from the events' chronotope. Characteristics of the "actors» are the most conventional and concise, carried out by means of genre and stylistic models. The main event, peculiar to the genre of parable, is the discovery of the ultimate reality, the transcending experience. Analyzed Shostakovich's works in a conditional sound form reflect a moment of spiritual insight. Fundamental role is played here by the harmonic and textural means acquiring the function of a sign. In general, in the analyzed works there is a high concentration of musical symbols. They occur at different levels: composition, headings of parts, thematic inventions, texture, harmony and instrumentation. In light of the genre of the parable a common argument about intelligence of Shostakovich's music takes different meaning. This intelligence is not the result of rationalism. It is caused by sensitivity and honesty of the artist, who is devoted to comprehend the deepest mysteries of life and inspired by a timeless scale of values.

Keywords: Shostakovich, the poetics of the parable in the instrumental music, event in the music parable, Quartet No. 11, Quartet No. 15, Symphony No. 9, Preludes Op.34, Prelude E-dur Op. 87

The world of music of Shostakovich is extremely diverse. Even if we consider only the instrumental works of symphonic and chamber music genres, we will see the diversity of images, a wealth of genre and stylistic sources of musical themes, originality of dramatic and composition decisions (including those referring to traditional

schemes). The composer is not deprived of interest from the researchers; reference lists about his personality and works count for hundred titles. However, the very art space of his works remains largely undiscovered; it conceals deep layers of meaning. The brightness of an individual manner, recognizability of units of musical language and

techniques don't help, but often, on the contrary, hinder their comprehension, capturing the attention by the external intenseness of events.

For a long time, critics and researchers were attracted by symphonies of Shostakovich to a greater extent (compared with chamber works), as symphonic music is a large-scale conceptual genre. In this connection, one has become accustomed to hearing the thesis of the reflection of modern collisions in Shostakovich's music. During the composer's life many reviewers by saying that he depicted time in his works meant under this primarily historical time: 1905, 1917, 1941, 1945 years.

The pronounced ethical orientation of Shostakovich has been interpreted biased and narrowly. Russian musicologists wrote mainly about his exposing evil coming from the outside and generated by capitalism (which entailed fascism and militarism). Or Shostakovich was presented as displaying vices, inherited from the previous era – bureaucracy, petty bourgeoisie, etc. Art of Shostakovich was seen as an achievement of socialist culture only, and the description of the aesthetic views of the author of the Leningrad Symphony emphasized the key role of worldview of the musician and humanist, who was well aware of the social tasks of his creative works.

Of course, in the Soviet era there were also deeply empathetic musicians, who understood that problems that worried the artist were of a different kind and that Shostakovich did not just “know how to listen to his time”, but also sought to interpret it, attributing all what was happening not to public morality and the socialist system of values¹.

Focus on research of hidden meanings of Shostakovich's music, probably for the first time was stated in the article by M. Aranovskii “The Fifteenth Symphony of Shostakovich and some questions of musical semantics”, published in 1977, then this research was continued in other

works of the scientist. Since the post-Soviet period, many authors, among them were the most significant the following – L. Hakobyan, N. Beketova, V. Valkova, A. Klimovitsky, S. Nadler, in their works have been revealing new facets and meaningful plans of Shostakovich's works. The fact that the assessment of the master's work has reached a new level since the 90s of the last century is found in the publications in honor of his ninetieth anniversary and in the collections of papers and conference proceedings (in Moscow, Saint-Petersburg, Astrakhan), the appearance of the monograph by L. Hakopyan² and other large-scale researches³.

However, there still remain topical tasks of studying imagery of music by Shostakovich, laws of the organization of the art world of both individual works and macrocycles (symphonies, quartets), and possibly the universal principles of creative thinking of the maitre, the principles, which are manifested in the works of various genres, belonging to different creative periods.

Artistic thinking is understood here as the form and process of “the essential comprehension of the world”, which finds its expression in the creation of artistic images and their operating [Kanashchenkova, 2010: 144-145]. Therefore, considering the specificity of artistic thought of an author, one needs address, first of all, the imagery and features of dramatic aspects of the composer's works. Aim of this paper is to show the effect of implemented in a generalized sense genre features of the parable in instrumental works by Shostakovich, as well as the regularity and organicity of this phenomenon in the music of the present composer, we need to define more precisely what is typical for the literary parable.

It is known that the parable is defined as “a didactic-allegorical genre, close to fable in its basic features” [Averintsev, 1971: 20]. In comparison with the fable, which sets a clear unambiguous moral conclusion, a form of the

parable is characterized by greater freedom, “openness”. In addition, the parable does not have clear boundaries of genre, in its role under certain conditions we can see the tale, the saying, as the parable “admits the absence of a developed plot movement and may be reduced to a simple comparison, retaining, however, special symbolic fullness” [Ibid].

As for a substantive part, the parable is specified by inclination to “deep ‘wisdom’ of a religious or moralistic order” [Ibid.] Perhaps that is why the poetics of the parable excludes descriptive character: nature or things are referred to only when there is a strong need – the action takes place, in the apt words of Averintsev, as if without scenery, “in the shunts” [Ibid.]

It can be assumed that the specific content determines such an important feature of the parable’s narrative, as its over-temporariness. In the parable there are no distinctive signs of a particular historical time. It is the story of what happens or can happen to anyone and at all times. Therefore, the characters in the parable do not have external features and, moreover, they do not have the character as a “closed combination of soul properties” [Averintsev, 1971: 21].

The parable in its modifications has become a universal phenomenon of world folklore and literary creativity. Parables are prevalent among Buddhists and Sufis, they are included in the narratives of the Old and New Testament. An appeal of authors to the parable poetics has been extremely characteristic of the literary process in the 19-20th centuries: in particular, its features manifest themselves in the works of F. Kafka, J.P. Sartre, A. Camus, G. Marcel. E. Zamyatin, A. Dudintsev, A. Bitov, A. and B. Strugatsky, Ch. Aitmatov.

Researchers E. Bal’burov and M. Bologova note that at the present time “revival” of the parable is explained not so much by a tendency towards didacticism and allegory, but rather by

the critical state of the modern consciousness. The deficit of integrity, understanding, and aggression of chaos in the contemporary cultural space give rise to an acute existential need for integration and harmonization of the human experience. “On this basis there is the growth of neomythologism and metaphoricalness <...> of artistic consciousness. One of the most effective expressions of metaphor producing, as if it begins to see a gene of world wholeness was an appeal to the parable ...”²⁴ [Bal’burov, Bologova, 2011: 44].

Theorists of literature watching various transformations of parables speak of a constant core of the genre, which has such properties, as didacticism, metaphoricalness and semantic density of a word, laconic story-visual means with a high concentration of content. These qualities, covered by the concept of the parable, have become one of the universal genre strategies in contemporary fiction [Bal’burov, Bologova, 2011: 45].

However, the characteristic features of the parable genre are evident not only in literature, but also in painting, cinema, even in animation⁵, which corresponds to the desire of some authors to have the philosophical comprehension of life, the ethical origins of human existence, to penetrate deep into things – from their visible appearance to their essence.

The parable in the music of Shostakovich is a very special and unique event. Now, when his work, until recently experienced as the “actual present”, has made a certain transition and become the legacy of history [Aranovskii, 1997: 2], it becomes more obvious that the basis of the moral scale of the genius artist contained some spiritual hierarchy, indicating top and bottom, light and darkness, truth and falsehood. Moral dimension, which allows seeing the essence of phenomena and which opens the way to a truly deep understanding of this essence, in the artistic reflection determines a generic realization of the parable genre features in Shostakovich’s music.

Among those we must specify in the content plan, in particular, the attraction to the “deeper wisdom” [Averintsev, 1971: 20], in terms of expression – allegory, symbolic language and concise form. These factors led to creating the artistic features of space-time and the system of specific methods of a number of works by Shostakovich.

Interestingly, these works do not just expose some similar techniques, but use a range of such. In some opuses this complex of features was presented with the greatest extent possible for the art of music, so consistently and clearly as in Prelude No.22 Op. 34, Quartet No. 11), in others this trend is seen not so fully and graphically (e.g. in Prelude No. 1 and 4 Op. 34. in Preludes No. 4 and 9 Op. 87, in Quartet No.15, in Symphony No.9). However, the fact that the principality of the parable somehow manifests itself in works created at different times and belonging to different genres, points to its regularity and organicity for the composer’s artistic thinking.

Although the music is the lyrical art in its nature, the creators of different ages have found certain ways to display the laws of drama and epic in purely instrumental opuses [Nazaikinskii, 1985]. In addition, it was possible by using specific musical means to identify typological features of a number of literary genres: a ballad, a novelette, a fairy tale. They are united by a common generic feature – detection of a storytelling person, and also music crystallizes intonational and compositional techniques of capturing the image of an author, a storyteller, a poet and a fairy tale writer.

Some literary genres allow lyrical digression, author’s comments, personal tone of speech. The parable, relating in its nature to the field of narrative genres, has emerged as a stable genre form of admonishing speech [Bal’burov, Bologova, 2011: 44], therefore, in the parable the tone of the narrative is extremely objectified and smoothed. However, we undoubtedly sense the

presence of the narrator, as he/she is outside the story, in a different time and space, all of that gets the music incarnation in the aforementioned works of Shostakovich. In Symphony No. 9, Prelude No.4 Op. 34, Preludes No. 4 and No. 9 Op. 87 this incarnation is carried out by means of intonation. In Quartets No. 11 and No. 15, Prelude No. 22 Op. 34 the narrator’s image is recreated on both intonational and compositional levels.

Thus, in Quartet No. 11 by Shostakovich first and last parts are titled “Introduction” and “Conclusion”, standing out from the rest of the parts, the names of which point to a particular genre (Scherzo, Recitative, Etude, Humoresque, Elegy). This fact is explained by the functional position of the parts and the task of necessary introduction to the art space and conclusion from it.

At the same time the theme of solo violin, which opens Introduction, is associated with a quiet, leisurely steady, melodic speech, uttered as if in thought, detached from the momentary moods, then this theme immerses the listener in an atmosphere of serious, wise and sad storytelling (Example 1).

The second theme, exhibited by cello (Fig. 2) in the low register, sounds somewhat muffled and as undercurrents. By rhythm and intonational appearance it is similar to the epic bylina tones⁶, this feature reveals the narrative mode to even greater extent and opens a time perspective, contributing to the effect of opening time (Example 2).

In the middle section of the form (5-6 bars, Fig. 2) in the theme played by the second violin the composer enters his monogram – the motif DEsCH. Its salient part is added up by the exclusion of the part of the first violin, change in the tempo, slowing due to the introduction of a larger duration. Then the monogram appears twice, symbolically capturing the author’s identity

Example 1. Quartet No. 11. Part 1. Introduction

Andantino $\text{♩} = 104$ Квартет № 11, ч. I. Вступление

Example 2. Quartet No. 11. Part 1. Introduction

Andantino *ten.* $\text{♩} = 104$ Квартет № 11, ч. I. Вступление

Example 3. Prelude No.22 Op.34

Adagio ($\text{♩} = 76$) Прелюдия соч. 34.

in the art world of his work and his involvement in intelligent contemplation⁷.

It is noteworthy that in Prelude No.22 Op. 34 the framing sections have a similar solution: the first structure contains a peculiar sign of stopped time – continuing for the entire bar a basic triad in melodic primo position, and melody conventionally re-creating the voice of the narrator, giving a slow speech. And this stopped time is present in modeling the intonational structure of colon through the syntactic opening constructions in the 8th bar (Example 3). All these

strategies reveal the communicative function of the introductory section, in the sense of opening “intonation

In Quartet No.15, the first part is entitled “Elegy”, which sets up the listener on the lyrical content and points more to the ideological and thematic focus, rather than communicative one. In this case, thanks to the intonational form of the first theme, its presentation of solo violin in the first octave at a slow pace and quiet dynamics reenact the image of a concentrated serious story (Example 4).

Example 4. Quartet No.15 Part 1. Elegy



Introductory function of this part in the cycle is shown not only by its initial position, but also by the image-bearing opposition to the subsequent parts, the thematic contrast of the first theme and other parts. This introductory part repeats in the final one – “Epilogue”, creating the effect of the frame. Thus, the image of the man leading the narrative is displayed outside of the actual episodes of the story.

In Symphony No. 9 the features of the genre of the parable are the most generalized and not observed in each of the five parts. In the second part the atmosphere of concentrated storytelling is recreated through slow tempo and chamber nature of sound. The sad-wistful clarinet melody in the spirit of Russian plangent song, which includes expressive voice intonation, is interrupted by pauses, first comes solo, and then it is supported by a mean cello accompaniment (with octave doublings of contrabasses). The bass line is based on just three sounds – tones of the tonic quart-sixth chord h-moll. Over 51 cycles this harmony remains unchanged, which could be interpreted as a sign of the special organization of time for the narrator – it appears as if stopped, and thus separated from the plot time.

However, this interpretation does not exhaust the enigma of the artistic image of the main theme in this section. The dual, lyric and epic, nature of the genre of the song is used in this case by the composer so that the variant development of the melody, consistent with the form of the song, finds a certain direction of development at the same time. It conditionally refracts some plot: gradations of intonation tensions are an indicator

of the intensity of the lyrical experience, caused by the attitude to the events so far unknown to the listener.

Completion of the part with the code section, based on the main theme, along with a gradual slowing of tempo, melting of the musical texture and sonority, is associated with an afterword written by the narrator, who is above the narrative again.

In the piano Preludes e-moll Op. 34, e-moll Op. 87, E-dur Op. 87 the image of the narrator is even more uncertain. His presence in the said miniature Op. 34 is felt due to the objective and laid-back nature of folk-song intonations in monophonic theme-melody. The latter entrants with *p* in the low octave, that links it with a solo tune and, at the same time, with the unhurried opening intonation⁸ (Example 5).

And the conclusion of Prelude, in which after the active development and vibrant climax the original level of sonority returns, the movement of melodic tones gradually slows down, can be interpreted as a postscript from the standpoint of narrative genres. A tonic pedal point in bass, which continues six bars, marks this switch into the post-narrative time.

The atmosphere of the narrative in the Fourth Prelude from the cycle “24 Preludes and Fugues” for piano is recreated by folk-song vividness of the initial structure, slow motion of bass, measured ostinato rhythm of medium tone, and voice expression of brief initial motifs in melody. The narrator’s chronotope is not clearly demarcated from the events’ chronotope. The 9-bar finishing of the prelude contains signs of the post-narrative time (in

Example 5. PRELUDE No.4 Op.34



music these are means to indicate a stop in motion: the fragmentation of the melodic line in the repetition of motifs and their rhythmic enlargement, lasting for several bars basic tone in bass). All of these imply the presence of the narrator.

In Prelude No.9 of the same cycle intonational and compositional features of the narrator's presence are even more smoothed. But the laid-back epic tone of the austere song melody and eventfulness, recreated by musical means, are signs of that the composer bases organization of art world of his work on the patterns of narrative genre.

The narrative in the parable is different in its utmost conciseness and brevity. A fact, being told, is schematized; the details are displayed conditionally, like an emblem. D. Likhachev defines this feature as density of the artistic time [Likhachev, 1979: 249]. Apparently, it somewhat determines the small size of the whole. Characteristically, Quartet No. 11 and Symphony No. 9, which are demonstrational in terms of implementation of the laws of creating the parable, stand out for their miniature form in this genre.

A specific feature of the organization of the artistic world of the parable is the fact that the characters appear to us "not as objects of artistic observation, but as subjects of ethical choice" [Averintsev, 1971: 21].

Because their actions manifest indigenous laws of being, they are, in the words of Dmitry Likhachev, exalted above the particular historical situation. They even remain without

proper names: they are – *someone, some people* [Likhachev, 1979: 104]. In the literary genres the artistic abstraction is made possible by reference to the linguistic and stylistic models.

In Shostakovich's music there can be found a lot of themes, "characters", immediately attracting attention because of some bright, eye-catching detail. In the analyzed works characters' features are either flattened forthright in the exposure, or they are neglected in the course of development. It is natural for the parable, because the protagonist is not self-worth in it; the character symbolizes a certain power or idea, which is necessary for clarity.

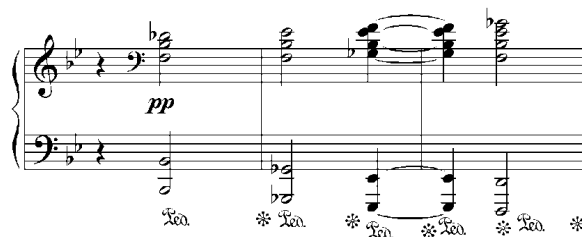
In Prelude No.22 Op. 34 there are two very conditionally displayed protagonists. The first is characterized by the stylistic model of Russian elegiac romance in the style of Glinka; however, this model is clearly represented for only a moment. It is clear that the use of allusions is needed not to directly recreate the mood of sublime sorrow, but rather to indicate the "bearer" of this mood. We have before us Someone, who is in a suit of the last century and who is speaking Russian, most likely, and at the same time, who does not have any specific personal traits and own character. Perhaps this Someone is a symbol of a cultural epoch, uniquely beautiful, but doomed to die (Example 6).

The sinister Fig. of the second, mysterious character is as if shrouded in a black cloak. He suddenly appears before our eyes, as if from the darkness. He has some flesh, which is a sound of brief chord progression, melodically and rhythmically neglected, frightening by its

Example 6



Example 7



alienation. This is the incarnation of indifferent and “blind” fatal force (Example 7).

The logic of the developing main images of the Prelude is contained in the intonation; the tragic outcome of their clash is a foregone conclusion, even though it remains “behind the scenes”.

There is a seemingly illogical situation: a minimum number of events and lack of their development create a feeling of special significance and depth of what is happening. However, such a paradoxical state is related to the specificity of the plot development in the parable. In contrast to the multi-eventfulness of a fairy tale or ballad the plot of a parable is short, simple and straightforward. Events are only necessary in order to reveal the character’s belonging to a particular pole and to point to the effect of this or that arche. In case of the parable the listeners indirectly face two major forces – good and evil, which is naturally consistent with the ethical orientation of the genre. Good as the highest manifestation of love and wisdom is true, eternal, not fussy, not crafty, and apparently passive. Evil is in the distortion

of the truth, it is false and therefore hidden under a mask. The parable’s plot function is to identify the energy that fuels a particular image.

It can be assumed that this factor is at the heart of a typical plot for the works of Shostakovich: uncovering spiritual essence of themes-“masks” by showing their “back” side, which defines the logic of musical material development – from the exposure of a genre or stylistic model in its “pure” form to its deformity⁹.

Such is the way of development of the main themes-“characters” in the 1st, 3rd and 5th parts of Symphony No.9. It is often perceived externally as a phenomenon of stylistic game¹⁰, creating a festive, carnival atmosphere, but in fact it has a deep spiritual meaning, since the main goal of the covered events is a manifestation of the “morality vector” in the actions of the characters.

As it was already mentioned, the “plot” in Prelude No.22 Op. 34 is implied only by the trends set in the development of the material. The relationship of images of this play is visually disclosed at maximum extent, when we consider their position in the sound space as a symbolic

projection of the living space. The dispersing romance theme is removed into the extreme high register, and as if beyond the sounding, a musical texture as if thins and melts under the influence of an evil energy. This energy is emitted by the second theme, and by steady advancing takes centre place and then continues to grow, consuming everything in its path.

In the 2nd part of Symphony No.9 the same sad story is generally “narrated”, though at greater length and with its own nuances. And throughout the whole symphony the relationship of image spheres is similar, but the lyrics, embodying ethically valuable and enduring things, confronts banal mask of carefree, fun, beneath which evil hides. Evil occasionally reveals its unspiritual and aggressive nature and thrives with terrific speed in the extraordinary scale, not leaving a place in this world for Truth.

Suite comparison of miniatures of different genres in Quartet No.11 contributes to that the orientation in a succession of events is not felt at first glance. However, separate parts of this work are not semantically closed, but are seen as a kind of coordinates on the storyline. The intonational filling of the parts goes beyond limits, specified by headings, gives them a new sense and tells a meaning of a symbol. “Dialogue” of the original, genre prototype, the memory of which lies above all in the title, and the proposed by the composer intonational solutions captures the implied situation, the alignment of forces.

Performing parts *attacca*, their intonational commonness (organized by the principle of monothematicism) and, most importantly, the presence of short and salient themes, sounding repeatedly throughout the quartet and therefore acquiring the value of the leading characters, binds individual situations into a single chain of events.

Of course, it is impossible to express in verbal form the plot of Shostakovich’s music

parables, and the very problem setting would be unjustified. However, having the basis of rigorous analysis of the process of intonational and image development of the works selected for the study, we can say that the main thing is that the parable realization of the event, which is specific for the genre of the parable, is the discovery of another – higher reality, going beyond the earthly time-space, the transcending experience. If the literary parable shows the listener a variety of life situations, and the highest ethical sense is not put into words, the analyzed preludes by Shostakovich in a conditional sound form display a point of spiritual insight, for which the parable is actually told.

Prelude e-moll Op. 34 is based on the type of Fugue. In principle, the important feature here is the preservation of the modal form of pitch organization over 26.5 bars¹¹ and the return to it in the final 6.5 bars.¹² The continuous development of the theme is marked by the gradual accumulation of tension, which is reflected in the increasing expression of melodic intonations with the step-by-step expansion of the texture, increasing tessitura, increased frequency of rhythmic pulsations and growing volume level. Reaching the highest tone of the prelude in 27th bar – *c*⁴ is marked by *ff* dynamics, change of texture (melodic voice are gathered in the triad for the first time), a bright paint in *nIV*, which for the first time goes beyond the limits of the diatonic sound scale, and the subsequent quarter rests. This “gap” in the polyphonic texture and sound “field” can be likened symbolically to the break in space-time continuum (Example 8).

In Prelude e-moll Op. 87 an episode, which can be interpreted as the time moment of going to another dimension, is more prolonged (bars 30-35). In its creation the composer resorted to the same methods: increasing step-by-step motif, covering the sound scale of natural e-moll, resulting in the displacement into a higher register,

Example 8. Prelude No.4 Op.34

Op. 34. Прелюдия № 4

cut-off for one bar of a rhythmic pulsation by eighth rhythmic values and choral sounding of HIV triad. By bringing to the fore of a consonant harmonic vertical, Shostakovich uses other means that serve as the most important signs of the Supreme Reality. In the context of the whole a particular attention is drawn to the unusual brilliance of “chain” of chords of major inclination HIV - HII6 – III6 – HII6/4 – III , the alternation of which is not subject to functional tonal logic. This can be attributed to the phenomenon of intonational mystagogue harmony¹³, displaying the mysterious glow of the heavenly world. A “bridging” of quadruple meter through intro-bar syncopation symbolically embodies the idea of timelessness.

In Prelude E-dur Op. 87 from the very beginning there is a sublime contemplative atmosphere. Its thematic material has a pronounced Russian folk-song nature and is based on a comparison of the two melodic constructions, which are contrasting and, at the same time, complementing each other. With strict selection of expressive means and limit restrictions in textural features, the location of the voices and sound volume, covered by them, acquire a symbolic meaning. The sound of the extreme registers – contraoctave and fourth octave – opens such facets of an image as incomprehensible, infinite depth, rootedness, and on the other hand, the same infinite height, the

celestial “ajingle” purity. Recreated by sounds the endless, boundless space, unlimited vast and distance are a metaphor for Russian land (Example 9).

The form is organized on the principle of free variant deployment. Structures-stanzas are separated by deep caesuras for the whole bar, which reveal aerial perspective and allow listening to the melting “over the horizon” melodic tone. The end of the third structure is noteworthy that there is no bass voice in the 33rd bar (F in contraoctave). The ternary meter is introduced instead of quadruple, which defines a sharp change of phonic characteristics and type of movement. In this case, against the background of stretched for almost 5 bars clear tonic triad in *pp* there sounds a smooth, widely voiced melodic phrase, which ends on the rising motif of the sounds in quart sixth chord, reaching the highest pitch throughout the whole miniature – *g'* (Example 10).

On the basis of the complex of musical expression means the generalized interpretations of the fragment as a way of spiritual levitation and – more specific – as an image of the ideal disembodied spirit that knows no gravity are equally justified. But in any case, it marks the widening boundaries of earthly existence and beholding of the highest Sense.

Still, much of the works of the genius is mystery, it is perceived not only ambiguously,

Example 9. Op.87. Prelude and Fugue No.9. Prelude

Op. 87. Прелюдия и fuga № 9. Прелюдия.

Moderato non troppo ♩ = 112

Example 10. Op.87. Prelude and Fugue No.9. Prelude

Op. 87. Прелюдия и fuga № 9. Прелюдия.

Moderato non troppo ♩ = 112

but sometimes even in opposite ways, which is conditioned by vagueness, blurred allusions, incoherence in the development of the musical material, its unusual plastic that determines the ease of unexpected transitions to the opposite quality. But this is also consistent with the characteristics of the parable genre – while maintaining its substantive core it can change

semantic accents, indefinitely extending the meaning of the whole. The parable requires from the listener the self-transfer in the viewed situation, the active comprehension of its meaning, which, indeed, makes it more like a puzzle.

It is noteworthy that in the analyzed works by Shostakovich a plot embodied in sounds often does not seem to have any beginning or

end, protasis or anagnorisis. Such reticence, like a coded meaning, points to the fact that the human mind, bounding everything with the laws of matter, cannot fully realize and truly explain what is happening, because this is conditioned by the spiritual – the sphere of the mysterious and inscrutable things.

In the parable, everything is considered under the sign of eternity. Shostakovich's works, where the features of the parable are particularly bright, somehow manifest the idea of another, superior – neither personal, nor historical – dimension. We feel the breath of all-consuming Eternity, from the height of which many of the phenomena and events acquire a different meaning. And now they are perceived calmer and wiser, as their variability and transient value become obvious.

View from the height enables unprecedented coverage: something that is seen at the bottom as a long dramatic action that absorbs mental strength of a lyrical character, leaving almost no residue, from the perspective of eternity it is seen as just a brief moment. (Perhaps this is another reason for miniature form of Quartet No.11 and Symphony No.9.) A special role in the creation of a colossal perspective belongs to generalizing final sections, collecting thematicism of many parts.

In Quartet No.11 the title of the last miniatures is driven by its function, so it bears the name of "Conclusion". But this name polemizes with the content of the part, which is not "locked with a key", does not end with the prime tone, and does not make any definite boundary between the audio world and the world of silence, but on the contrary, it opens infinity of the latter and some other music, perceived not by hearing, but by soul. In Conclusion sound both two themes of Scherzo and both two themes of Introduction.¹⁴ To understand the supra-temporal nature of the "events" important thing here is direction of structural and intonational changes in repetition of the musical material, from the relatively large

constructs to their replacement with the separate, more concise motifs, "rolling up" later in a single tone that lasts in even or throbbing way, that in turn, is a projection of an infinite line. Such is the expression of the idea of alienation -ascension.

The supra-temporal nature of the narrative in Quartet No.11 is felt thanks also to the presence of intonational sphere, which symbolizes Eternity as something objective, existing always and everywhere, and unknowable to man. Throughout Quartet in addition to the main "action" the background is clearly felt. It is a mysterious omnipresent hyperreality, not limited by the scope of this part and the whole work, germinating in its every sound, permeating through its entire texture. This energetic current is reflected in one lasting tone, either aligned or vibrating, sounding real or implied, as if at some point becoming inaccessible to human perception, and then again making out clearly discernible voice. Lines, stretching into the infinite space, are exposed at the junction of parts, when the playing time of one genre miniature is conditionally expired, and the playing time of the other has not yet come. Only in these moments the breath of Eternity becomes audible, because it is not subject to time, it is located somewhere over. (This is why the mere fact of performing parts without interruption acquires a symbolic meaning).

The compositional aspect of the analysis also leads to the realization of the supra-temporal sense of what is happening. In principle, both quartet and symphony are versions of the sonata-symphony cycle, whose composition was initially caused by the idea of linear unidirectional time. Features of Shostakovich's organization in the form of the whole reveal a fundamentally different perception of time.

The five parts of Symphony No.9 are structured like in a large concentric form – according to the tonal plan of *Es-h-G-B-Es*, with a designated centre and symmetrically framing

sections. In this case, the 2nd and 4th parts are logically related to each other as belonging to consciousness of a lyrical character, and the 1st and 5th parts confront them as festive glittering world of militant vulgarity, seeking to destroy the image of the true Beauty in the human soul and denying the highest calling of a man.

In Quartet No.11 there is a whole system of frames. First, in general, the time-space of the narrative is framed by the time-space of the author-narrator. Secondly, based on the genre associations, consciousness marks out pairs of plays, that form two small “circles” – Humoresque and Scherzo (as genres in which the play logic dominates) as opposed to Recitative and Elegy (as forms of expression from “the first person”). Third, as a result of thematic commonness and structure-time position there appears an “arch” between two of the most concise of all parts in the work – Recitative and Humoresque – which circle Sketch, situated in the middle of the cycle.

Despite the semantic opposition of titles, these parts are united by a dominant position in them of the central character of the story – Death. Its presence and its look, chilling the soul, determine the state of ultimate stiffness, stupor, and numbness of the Lyrical character. It seems that it is for this reason that the music reproduction of natural, “live” human speech in Recitative becomes impossible – there is not a single speech intonation here! And the image of Humoresque can be as well interpreted as a smile of Death, which stopped waiting in the wings and came into its own, and counts now the last moments of earthly life allotted to a man.

The composition of Quartet No.15 includes six parts, also having genre titles. The composition is based on a similar principle: in “Epilogue” the material of the previous parts is synthesized and creates a kind of arch with Introduction. In all parts of the cycle not only slow tempo is

maintained, but also there is a dominance of a single tonality, which contributes to the effect of timelessness.

It can be concluded that all the works, which are prime examples of embodiment of the parable genre laws, somehow realize the idea of cycling, the endless repetition. The increased importance of framing and the principle of mirror symmetry in creation of the form, as well as in terms of tone, are connected with the fact that they are presented as a composite projection of circular motion. So through the image of the circle Eternity reveals itself once again.

Fullness of characters in Shostakovich’s described works is amazing. They occur at different levels: composition, titles of the parts, thematicism, texture and instrumentation. Almost every element of the musical texture, causing the listeners’ more or less specific stylistic or genre associations, movement or visual presentations, is after all “transparent”, opening new sense perspectives. This is due to some sort of special power, energy of author’s thoughts – things and phenomena of the world as if do not withstand a scrutiny of the brilliant artist and so reveal their essence. The high concentration in the musical text of all sorts of characters determines the complexity of the perception of many works by Shostakovich, since the parable – literary and musical – with the possible degree of expressive utterance is always intelligent, so for understanding it there needs effort and stress.¹⁵

Perhaps, in the light of this genre the common thesis of the intelligence of Shostakovich’s music gets some new sense. This intelligence is a consequence of neither rationalism, nor the position of a third party, an indifferent observer; it is conditioned by the extraordinary sensitivity and honesty of the artist. The composers are called to comprehend the deepest secrets of life and they may discover a lie, a global falsehood, which lies in some sort of terrestrial arrangement

of human life. The basic need in restoring the supra-temporal scale of the values caused this appeal to the laws of the parable, the satellite of the fundamental cultural texts.

- ¹ Among them there were such scientists as: V. Bobrovski, A. Dolzhansky, L. Mazel, G. Orlov, M. Sabinina.
- ² “Dmitri Shostakovich: the Experience of the Phenomenology of Creativity” – Saint-Petersburg, 2004)
- ³ In particular, the thesis “Monologue and Dialogue Speech in the Structure of Musical Thinking of Shostakovich” by S. Voloshko (1995), the thesis “The Artist and Time. Questions of Semantics in the Music Poetics of Shostakovich” by N. Lazareva (1999), the thesis “Instrumental Concerts by D.D. Shostakovich in the Context of the Evolution of the Genre” by M. Zvorych (2011), S. Nadler’s monograph “The Polyphonic World of Dmitri Shostakovich” in 4 books. Rostov-on-Don, 2009-2010.
- ⁴ However, in Russian literature of the 20th century the parable allegory advocated as the means of Aesopian language.
- ⁵ Among the striking examples of non-literary works, including elements of the parable poetics, there are such works of Marc Chagall as “Flying Wagon” and “Above the Town”, films “Wish Tree” and “Repentance” by T. Abuladze, cartoon of G. Bardin “Adagio”.
- ⁶ Motif, opening cello theme, in its melodic and rhythmic pattern is close to the initial turnover of bylina “Solovey Budi-mirovich”, also narrower motifs, based on the repetition of a single tone, are reminiscent of melodious recitation of northern antiquities, in particular, “On Volga and Mikula”.
- ⁷ Scope of this paper does not allow describing this issue in more detail, however, the analysis shows that the introduction of the author’s image is a characteristic feature of musical parables by Shostakovich.
- ⁸ It is characteristic in this respect time signature of the play - 5/4.
- ⁹ The possibility of this lies in the intonation of the music of Shostakovich, featuring specific multi-layered state [Nazaikinskii, 1988: 165]. It captures the primary biological response (proto-intonational level), social class of the character (level of the reflected intonation), incorporates several historical and stylistic levels, reflects the sound environment in which the composer lives, expresses the author’s position (super-intonational level).
- ¹⁰ This “anti-historical” convergence of language models of different stylistic eras and cultural layers is very important, because it creates the effect of the adjustment of outstanding and ordinary, random and non-random things, which is necessary for the expression of ideas about the transient nature of everything.
- ¹¹ The theme sounds similarly in Aeolian e, Phrygian h, Lydian c, Mixolydian g.
- ¹² The miniature has a total of 34 bars.
- ¹³ The notion was introduced by V.V. Medushevskii [Medushevskii, 1993: 42]
- ¹⁴ And, in Fig. 46 they are presented as if in a compressed form, simultaneously by the first violin and viola, which again represents the ultimate brevity of fleeting events imprinted in it in relation to Eternity.
- ¹⁵ E.A. Tsareva, following A.N. Whitehead, emphasizes this idea in her paper, “a symbol as a sense formation requires certain activity in the perception by the subject” [Tsareva, 2010: 49].

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Жанровый код притчи в инструментальной музыке Д. Шостаковича

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В статье показано действие жанровых особенностей притчи в инструментальных сочинениях Д. Шостаковича. Притчевая поэтика отвечает стремлению композитора к философскому осмыслению жизни. Признаки притчевого повествования наиболее ярко представлены в прелюдиях № 4 и 22 ор. 34, прелюдиях №4 и №9 ор. 87, квартетах № 11 и 15, симфонии № 9, где обнаруживает себя общность музыкальных средств. Тот факт, что притчевое начало являет себя в произведениях, созданных в различное время и принадлежащих разным жанрам, указывает на его закономерность и органичность для художественного мышления композитора. Повествовательная природа жанра раскрывается в музыке через синтез народно-песенных и речевых интонаций, характеризующих рассказчика. Благодаря обрамляющим разделам, выполняющим функции вступления и заключения, хронотоп повествователя отделяется от событийного хронотопа. Характеристики «действующих лиц» предельно условны и лаконичны, осуществляются посредством жанровых и стиливых моделей. Главное, специфическое для жанра притчи событие – обнаружение высшей реальности, переживание опыта трансцендирования. В рассмотренных сочинениях Д. Шостаковича в условной звуковой форме отображается момент духовного прозрения. Основополагающую роль при этом играют гармонические и фактурные средства, приобретающие знаковую функцию. В целом в анализируемых произведениях наблюдается высокая концентрация музыкальных символов. Они возникают на разных уровнях: композиции, заголовков частей, тематизма, фактуры, гармонии, инструментовки. В свете жанра притчи иной смысл приобретает распространенный тезис об интеллектуальности музыки Шостаковича. Эта интеллектуальность не есть следствие рационализма. Она обусловлена чуткостью и честностью художника, призванного к постижению глубочайших тайн бытия, ориентированного на вневременную шкалу ценностей.

Ключевые слова: Шостакович, поэтика притчи в инструментальной музыке, событие в музыкальной притче, квартет № 11, квартет № 15, симфония № 9, прелюдии ор. 34, прелюдия E-dur ор. 87.
