

ALEXANDER TCHEREPNIN'S SYMPHONY NO.1: VALIDATING THE WORK WITHIN
THE CANON OF SYMPHONIC COMPOSITION

by

JOSHUA LEE BEDFORD

(Under the Direction of David Haas)

ABSTRACT

Alexander Tcherepnin's First Symphony was his first major work for orchestra. In this thesis I will reassess the work by discussing three compositional challenges that he faced by writing a symphony in the 1920s. First, Tcherepnin's incorporation of new compositional trends of the 1920s will be examined to contextualize his symphony. Secondly, the general challenges confronting modern symphonists will be summarized, based on the views of prominent critics and scholars. Finally, Tcherepnin's unique compositional method will be assessed, based on its capability to produce the qualities traditionally associated with the symphonic genre. The examination of each of these challenges will provide a means for assessing Tcherepnin's achievement and understanding its relationship to symphonic traditions.

INDEX WORDS: Alexander Tcherepnin, symphony, compositional methods, interpoint,
nine-note scale, symphonic criteria, 1920s

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JOSHUA LEE BEDFORD

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JOSHUA LEE BEDFORD

Major Professor:	David Haas
Committee:	Stephen Valdez
	Rebecca Simpson-Litke

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
May 2013

DEDICATION

For my mother and grandmother, Marceé Bedford and Rhonda Oldham

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

“...It is the Symphony (?) in E of Mr. Tcherepnin that I speak of—I would have not believed that it belonged to any key...let us thank the composer for having so sharply castigated cacophonous music through his intentional and outrageous caricature.”

-Rene Brancour¹

The above epigraph epitomizes the harsh critical reaction to Alexander Tcherepnin's *Symphony No. 1 in E Major*, after its premier in Paris on 29 October 1927. The critic Paul Le Flem heard echoes of Stravinsky's still controversial *Le Sacre du Printemps* when he wrote, “The Vivace astonished the music lovers in good faith... Thinking that they were suddenly suggested to convert to a forgotten religion, that of pure rhythm...”² The critics were not the only ones to ridicule the symphony. Already at the premier, audience members had shouted “Go back to Moscow!” and “Barbarian!” at the symphony's composer.³ Unlike Stravinsky's *Le Sacre*, Tcherepnin's symphony did not receive the chance to establish itself in the repertoire after its premier. Even though the score was published a month after the premier, the symphony only received a few subsequent performances, but interest in the piece increased during the 1960s and 1970s.⁴

¹ René Brancour, “Concerts-Colonne,” *Le ménestrel*, November 4, 1927: “C'est la Symphonie (?) en mi—je n'aurais pas cru qu'elle appartint à une tonalité quelconque—de M. Tcherepnine...Remercions-le, pour conclure, d'avoir si vertement fustigé, par cette intentionnelle et outrancière caricature, la musique cacophonique...”

² Le Flem, Paul, review from a newspaper clipping in Louisine Weekes' Diary, “Le Vivace surprie mélomanes de bonne foi...Songez qu'on leur proposait brusquement de se convertir à une religion oubliée, celle du rythme pur...,” October 30, 1927.

³ Willi Reich, *Alexander Tcherepnin* (Bonn: M.P. Belaieff, 1970), 33.

⁴ Benjamin Folkman, *Alexander Tcherepnin: A Compendium* (New York: The Tcherepnin Society, Inc., 2008), 270. The increased interest in the piece led to its first recording by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Lan Shui. The recording was published in 1999 by BIS records.

The harsh criticism and audience's brash reaction to the work are understandable because it was both eclectic and unconventional. The first movement presents a texture of dissonant counterpoint and a form based on rapidly changing thematic material. The second movement, a fast-tempo scherzo, is written only for percussion. The slow third movement, scored for a chamber-like ensemble, features extended duet passages throughout. Even the relatively conventional finale presents dissonances not based on common-practice harmony.

Prior to writing his First Symphony, Tcherpnin had composed numerous short piano pieces and chamber works, but only a few large works: a three-movement chamber orchestra work, a single-movement large orchestral work, one opera, and one ballet. His opera, *Ol-Ol*, was the longest of all his works written before the symphony, reaching 58 minutes. However, none of these compositions provided him with much experience at composing a large-scale symphonic work.

Lack of experience was not his only challenge. Just a few years prior to his First Symphony, Tcherpnin had created his own compositional technique. This included a new scale comprised of nine pitch classes systematically organized by two similarly constructed hexachords. His technique also included a more historic approach to polyphonic counterpoint which he termed "interpoint." These two creations allowed Tcherpnin to compose outside the parameters of traditional scales and traditional counterpoint.

This thesis reassesses Tcherpnin's First Symphony in order to understand this work's relationship to symphonic traditions. I have examined three compositional challenges that Tcherpnin faced by composing a symphony in the 1920s. First, I examined Tcherpnin's incorporation of new compositional trends of the 1920s in order to contextualize the work. Secondly, I summarized the general challenges that confronted modern symphonists as described

by prominent critics and scholars. Finally, I examined Tcherepnin's unique compositional method and assessed its capabilities to produce the qualities generally associated with the symphonic genre.

Biography

Alexander Nikolayevich Tcherepnin (1899-1977) was born into a family of preeminent musicians and artists. His father, Nikolay Nikolayevich Tcherepnin, was a noted conductor and composer and was professor of both fields at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. His uncle, Alexander Benois, was one of the founders of the *Mir Iskusstva* art magazine and movement in Russia. His father's and uncle's cultural status afforded the young Tcherepnin opportunities to meet and interact with leading Russian composers, conductors, pedagogues, artists, choreographers, and performers. He recalls such interactions and in his autobiography when he writes, "I was an only child, and as a result I was admitted to all musical gatherings and rehearsals (where the guests included: Rimsky-Korsakov, Liadov, Cui, Glazunov, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Diaghilev, Benois, Fokine, Pavlova, and Chaliapin)."⁵ While Nikolay Tcherepnin provided Alexander with a unique set of acquaintances during his youth, it was actually Alexander's mother, Marie Tcherepnin, who taught him notation and began to teach him piano at the age of five.

Of the many Russian cultural icons with whom young Tcherepnin was privileged to associate, he grew fond of one in particular—Sergey Prokofiev. Tcherepnin's father was Prokofiev's conducting instructor, but Prokofiev frequented the Tcherepnin residence for compositional insight and instruction from Nikolay. Alexander later recalled that he "was full of

⁵ Alexander Tcherepnin, "A Short Autobiography (1964)," *Tempo*, no. 130 (September 1979), 12.

interest and did not miss any of these sessions.”⁶ The young Tcherepnin made the decision to model himself after his idol, and his fondness for Prokofiev continued throughout his life.

After composing without guidance or training throughout his youth, Tcherepnin decided to apply to the Petrograd Conservatory at the age of nineteen after he graduated from the gymnasium. By this time, he had already amassed a “portfolio of operas, ballets, orchestral works, choral works, five piano concertos, twelve piano sonatas, and additional chamber and vocal compositions.”⁷ Once accepted, he began studying piano with Leokadyia Kashperova and counterpoint with Nikolay Sokolov.⁸

Unfortunately, Tcherepnin’s time at the conservatory was short-lived. Not long after the Bolsheviks seized control of Petrograd in 1917, he and his family fled the city and headed for the independent Georgian republic in 1918. His father had been invited to become head of the Tiflis Conservatory and Alexander was subsequently enrolled there to continue his instruction. The Tcherepnins resided in Georgia for nearly three years, and it was here that Tcherepnin began to “crystallize his musical language,”⁹ thus creating the compositional technique that he would use in his First Symphony.

The revolution finally reached the sovereign republic of Georgia, and the family fled again, halting Tcherepnin’s conservatory training for a second time. This time, however, the family chose to emigrate further: to Paris, which had become a major Western European hub for Russian exiles. The Tcherepnin family arrived in Paris in 1921 and Alexander was immediately enrolled in the Paris Conservatoire to finish his education. There, Tcherepnin studied piano with

⁶ Benjamin Folkman, *A Compendium*, 201.

⁷ Ludmila Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin: The Saga of a Russian Émigré Composer*, Ed. by Sue-Ellen Hershman Tcherepnin and Trans. by Anna Winestein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 12.

⁸ Kashperova was Stravinsky’s former piano instructor and Sokolov later taught counterpoint to Dimitry Shostakovich.

⁹ Alexander Tcherepnin, “Autobiography (1964),” 12.

Isidore Philipp and composition with Paul Vidal. Isidore Philipp helped launch Tcherepnin's composition career when he assisted Tcherepnin in getting some of his early pieces published, and he also helped facilitate Tcherepnin's career as composer-performer in Europe.

It was during his various performances throughout Europe that Tcherepnin met a wealthy American socialite, Louisine Weekes. They were married in 1926 and Tcherepnin subsequently moved to New York, living in either his apartment or her house in a suburb of Islip, New York. It was there in Islip where Tcherepnin's First Symphony was composed. Tcherepnin kept a detailed record of progress made on the symphony through correspondence with his father who still resided in Paris.

Prior to Tcherepnin's move to Paris—while in Tbilisi, Georgia—he was isolated from both Russia and Western Europe. This made it more difficult for Tcherepnin to stay abreast with both European and Russian compositional trends. Tcherepnin consistently refers to this time in his autobiography when he was again—just as he was in his youth—left to his own devices to discover new compositional methods. Tcherepnin spent much of his time reflecting on his music and it was also during this time that he created his nine-note scale and his form of counterpoint, interpoint.

Once Tcherepnin arrived in Paris, he was able to compare his compositional method with that of the other current composers, and he discovered that his method was not all that different from the current trends.¹⁰ However, his particularly individual approach to composition, especially when used to compose a symphony, is not necessarily relatable to most composers' processes because the majority of 1920s symphonic composers were not using symmetrical or exotic scales as the main generators of thematic material. It can then be suggested that

¹⁰Ibid., 15.

Tcherepnin's method would either isolate him further from the current compositional trends or it would allow him to contribute to the rapidly advancing trends of the 1920s. It was also during this time that he began to associate with a group of Eastern European composers who were called the *École de Paris*.

This new so-called "school" of composers included the Czech Bohuslav Martinů, the Romanian Marcel Mihalovici, the Hungarian Tibor Harsányi, the Pole Alexander Tansman, and the Swiss Conrad Beck. Tcherepnin recalls this *École de Paris* association as a, "group of friends who thought similarly, but did not adhere to any specific aesthetic."¹¹ The group was given their label "*École de Paris*" by publisher Michel Dillard to distinguish them from the group *Les Six* allowing for little confusion between the two Paris compositional factions.¹² The *École de Paris* frequently gathered at the Café du Dôme where they would converse about music, play music, and comment on each other's scores.¹³ Along with their interchange and dispersal of musical philosophy, they were also keen to exhaust all their options to find publishers for one another.¹⁴ Participating in both musical and social life in Paris, this group of composers was able to establish themselves as reputable members of Parisian cultural life.

Significant Musical Influences on Tcherepnin's Early Style

Tcherepnin's exposure to the differing trends of twentieth-century music occurred in approximately two phases, a Russian-Georgian phase and a Parisian one. The former took place primarily in St. Petersburg, where he accompanied his father to plays, art exhibitions, and

¹¹ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 51-52. It is also interesting to note that this entire interview, which can be found in *Sovetskaya muzyka*, 8 (1967) consists of Tcherepnin's attempt to define his convergence with Parisian culture as a powerful continuative of his Russian heritage.

¹² Brian Large, *Martinů* (New York: Holmes and Meier Publishers, 1975), 39.

¹³ Miloš Šafránek, *Bohuslav Martinů: His Life and Works*, trans. by Roberta Finalyson Samsourová (London: Allan Wingate, 1962), 112.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

concerts.¹⁵ Alexander also joined his father on a trip to Paris for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, which Tcherepnin's father conducted. However, Tcherepnin's exposure to new music in St. Petersburg came from concert series which "responded to the [St. Petersburg's] burning need for the 'new.'"¹⁶ Most notable of these were the Ziloti concerts, the Koussevitzky concerts, and Vyacheslav Kartygin's, "Evenings of Modern Music."¹⁷ These concerts exposed Tcherepnin to the more progressive works by a swath of composers, including Debussy, Ravel, Reger, and Schoenberg; as well as premieres of new works by Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, and Kuzman.

As I mentioned earlier, Tcherepnin admired Prokofiev's compositions more than any other composer from the twentieth century. So, it is no surprise that Prokofiev would be considered as an influence to Tcherepnin. Prokofiev's music contains a youthful and enticing style of tireless rhythm, incredible dissonance, and dense polyphony. That surely must contribute to Benjamin Folkman's claim that Tcherepnin's First Symphony was a reaction to Prokofiev's highly dissonant and stylistically *mécanique* Second Symphony.¹⁸

Another evident influence was Stravinsky, whose use of folk songs would have a profound effect on Tcherepnin's music after the First Symphony. Tcherepnin considered Stravinsky's use of folk song to be a unifying element throughout all of Stravinsky's compositions.¹⁹ Although folk songs are not incorporated into the First Symphony, Korabelnikova attempts to draw a connection between Tcherepnin's major-minor system and

¹⁵ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 3.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 256.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 204.

Stravinsky's use of major-minor thirds in *Les Noces*.²⁰ In doing so, she considers Tcherepnin's method similar to the musical characteristics that were indicative of Stravinsky's folk-like style even though Tcherepnin did not use those characteristics for that purpose.

Tcherepnin's Russian influences were not only those that emerged in the new modernist era. His father, who taught conducting and composition, surely introduced Tcherepnin to many of the great symphonists of the Russian tradition. Glazunov's eight completed symphonies and Borodin's two completed symphonies were representative of transparent Russian orchestration. This orchestration contained a balance between both bass and treble registers and, while the orchestra was smaller than that of Strauss and Mahler, it could produce considerable volume and power.

The most significant of Tcherepnin's Parisian influences was Futurism. Futurist thought hinged on the exploration of the sounds of the machine age, initiating a movement to search for new sound resources.²¹ One would certainly think of Stravinsky's piano and percussion ensemble from *Les Noces* as a potential representative of Futurism, and there were others. Related explorations of new sound sources can be found in the use of speech and percussion in Milhaud's *Les choëphores* (1915); the innovative piano techniques of Henry Cowell's compositions (*Aeolian Harp* (1923) and *The Banshee* (1925) for example); also, Prokofiev's depiction of the new Soviet Union socialist working class in his ballet, *Pas d'acier* (1927), and Shostakovich's *The Nose* (1927), which included an interlude for percussion only.

He also had opportunities to discover the Impressionistic works of Debussy and Ravel in Paris during his father's conducting tours, as well as in St. Petersburg at the Ziloti, Koussevitzky,

²⁰ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 36.

²¹ Glen Watkins, *Soundings: Music in the Twentieth Century*, (New York: Schirmer Books, 1988), 243.

and Kartygin concerts. Tcherepnin was never a champion of Debussy. Instead, he considered his music unclear, overcomplicated, and, in his words, “sketchy and formless.”²² For Ravel’s music, however, he felt more of an affinity. Although Ravel’s style is rooted in diatonicism and functional tonality, his works contained extended harmonies of 9ths and 11ths, many ostinato lines, and many pedal points. Ravel at one point even entertained the idea that a major/minor triad would be possible, but he also believed that it needed to be treated carefully so as not to disrupt a listener’s sense of tonality.²³

Another trend of potential relevance was Neoclassicism. By 1905, Ravel had already experimented with Neoclassical elements in his *Sonatine*, with its delicate first movement in sonatina form and second-movement minuet.²⁴ Prokofiev’s interest in eighteenth-century music was already evident in his *Ten Pieces for Piano* (1906-13) which included a Gavotte, Rigaudon, Prelude, and Allemande; in the *Classical Symphony* inspired by Haydn;²⁵ and in his Toccata in D Minor (1912). Stravinsky also became involved with the Neoclassicist movement, beginning as early as 1920, resulting in pieces such as *Pulcinella* and the wind octet. Furthermore, Paul Hindemith’s *Kammermusik* is a representative of the German Neoclassical school to which Tcherepnin was exposed.

Even though Tcherepnin does not expressly use any classical dance or reproduce a stylistic technique of a Classical composer (Haydn, Mozart, or Beethoven) in his First Symphony, one may find a sense of comparable profundity in his symphony. Folkman remarks, “The First Symphony is a work of extraordinary intellectual density. As the composer himself

²² Folkman, *A Compendium*, 205.

²³ Barbara L. Kelly, “Ravel, Maurice,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. by Stanley Sadie, (London: Macmillan Publishers, Ltd., 2001), 20:872.

²⁴ Glenn Watkins, *Soundings*, 104.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 413.

observed, it achieves fullness and richness of sound, not through any felicities of orchestration, but through its complex polyphony.”²⁶

Brief Chronology of the Composition of Symphony No. 1

Tcherepnin began composing his First Symphony in April 1927 during his second trip to his wife’s estate in Islip, New York. The entire symphony was sketched in a little over two months and was orchestrated a month after. After the symphony was completed, he sent it to Jacques Durand for publishing, Durand, however, asked to hear the piece before he made a decision.²⁷ Subsequently, Tcherepnin asked Gabriele Pierné to read through the piece with his Colonne Concerts Orchestra. Pierné insisted on a special rehearsal so as not to conflict with the orchestra’s regular rehearsal schedule. Tcherepnin was able to arrange for a rehearsal to take place on 7 October 1927, but had to be rescheduled for a week later due to a complication with the publisher.

Pierné conducted the premiere of the concert on 29 October at Le Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris. The orchestra had only rehearsed the piece twice when Pierné determined that it was worthy for public performance. Tcherepnin’s symphony was programmed between Wagner’s *Meistersinger* Overture and Rimsky-Korsakov’s *Scheherezade*.

Tcherepnin’s First Symphony begins with a first movement in a form that can be related to sonata form. The two main themes in this movement contain an incredible amount of rhythmic ferocity accompanied by polyphonic lines. The polyphony escalates throughout the entire movement until it is brought to a sudden halt. After this interruption in the flow, the movement comes to a close with a clipped B to E unison cadence in the strings, thus reinforcing the work’s

²⁶ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 257.

²⁷ Benjamin Folkman, *A Compendium* 257. The majority of this paragraph and the following paragraph refer to this source.

designated key of E. As mentioned above, the second movement is written only for non-pitched percussion instruments: castanets, triangle, snare drum, side drum, crash cymbals, suspended cymbals, bass drum, and tam-tam. The full string section is also employed in a percussive manner: the wood of the bows are struck on the bodies of the instruments. Tcherenpnin claimed that the rhythms of this movement were derived from the rhythmic elements in the first movement.

Tcherenpnin explores unusually stark timbres in his third movement. It contains three separate duets which express extreme timbral variety: (1) horn and trumpet (an unprecedented way to start a movement), (2) clarinet and timpani, and (3) violin solo in a high register and contrabass in its lower register. Within each duo, Tcherenpnin also employs his complex contrapuntal technique called interpoint, which is a type of polyphonic practice that Tcherenpnin created that is not concerned with “notes against notes” but “notes between notes.”²⁸ The movement ends with all three different duets and their forms of interpoint combined. The finale is a rondo which links back to the first movement with its motivic and rhythmic ferocity. The movement contains obscure harmonies similar to the first and culminates with a final cadence on an E major/minor triad, again reiterating Tcherenpnin’s designation of the symphony’s key of E—as indicated in the title of the work, *Symphony No. 1 in E*, Op. 42.

I would like now to briefly discuss Tcherenpnin’s compositional technique, which consists of the nine-note scale and interpoint.²⁹ The nine-note scale is created by first deriving a hexachord from a starting note (E for this particular symphony) via an ascending intervallic pattern that alternates three semitones and one semitone until the octave is traversed. Another

²⁸ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherenpnin*, 95.

²⁹ I have provided a more elaborate description of both the nine-note scale and interpoint in the third chapter.

hexachord is then derived, starting an octave higher than the previous one, by descending with the same alteration of intervals. The two hexachords are combined, omitting duplicate notes, so that there are nine notes in total, and the resulting scale has a repeated intervallic pattern of <semitone, whole-tone, semitone>.³⁰

Interpoint is slightly more complicated since it can apply to three aspects of a musical score: the vertical, the horizontal, and the metrical. Vertical interpoint occurs when at least two instruments articulate different time-points in a manner similar to hocket; horizontal interpoint involves a temporal displacement of rhythmic figures; and metrical interpoint occurs when one instrument plays in the actual written meter of a passage while a second instrument implies a different meter within the written meter.

Literature Review

There are three published biographies of Alexander Tcherepnin and one compendium of miscellaneous research. Willi Reich wrote the first biography basing it primarily on Tcherepnin's own writing, and covers Tcherepnin's life up to 1969. Unfortunately, there are only a couple of pages devoted to Tcherepnin's First Symphony. The next biography to come out was Enrique Alberto Arias's bio-bibliography of 1989. Arias, a pupil of Tcherepnin, provides a brief biography comparable to Reich's, but the bibliographical portion provides a thorough catalog of compositions, recordings, interviews, and writings about Tcherepnin in English, French, Chinese, and Russian, as well as publications by Tcherepnin.

Ludmila Korabelnikova's Russian-language biography, published in 2000, is entitled *Dolgoe strastvie* [*A long journey*]. Anna Winestein's English translation appeared in 2008 under

³⁰ Olivier Messiaen also has a nine-note scale in his "Modes of Limited Transposition" (Mode 3). However, the way in which Messiaen generates his nine-note scale is completely different from the method I have described above.

the title *Alexander Tcherepnin: The Saga of a Russian Émigré Composer*.³¹ Korabelnikova consulted a considerable amount of the composer's correspondence with friends and family to produce a detailed portrait of Alexander Tcherepnin and his music. Her commentary on the composition of the First Symphony draws heavily on the correspondence between Alexander and his father.

The publication that contains a biographical component is Benjamin Folkman's compendium. In it, Folkman provides a complete translation of Willi Reich's biography, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, along with numerous writings by Tcherepnin, which consist of his personal accounts, his thoughts on music, his thoughts on composition, as well as his thoughts on the composers throughout his time period, including Prokofiev, Stravinsky, Skryabin, and Debussy to name a few. Included in these is Tcherepnin's theoretical treatise of his compositional style titled "The Basic Elements of My Musical Language." Tcherepnin's short autobiographical essay was posthumously published in *Tempo* (1979). Along with these items, Folkman provides in-depth analyses and commentaries on specific works, including the First Symphony.

The rest of the Tcherepnin literature is confined to short magazine or journal articles, most of which briefly describe events closer to the end of Tcherepnin's life. Some articles focus on his music, but rarely has any American literature concerned itself with Tcherepnin's symphonic works. One of the only scholars to attempt to discuss Tcherepnin's symphonic works is Enrique Alberto Arias. His article, "The Symphonies of Alexander Tcherepnin," provides a useful introduction to a few of the musical nuances that Tcherepnin specifically uses in the

³¹ Sue-Ellen Hershman-Tcherepnin was the wife of the late Ivan Tcherepnin, Alexander Tcherepnin's son, and a composer himself.

symphonies, but there is no historical contextualization of the symphonies or questioning of their symphonic validity.

Tcherepnin scholarship can also be found in brief sections of surveys of Russian music. Larry Sitsky's *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1920-1929* contains only modest coverage of Tcherepnin. Sitsky concludes that "[Tcherepnin's] style barely qualifies him to be avant-garde."³² With that contention aside, Sitsky still applauds Tcherepnin for the numerous unique touches that he found throughout Tcherepnin's compositions, some of which he considered to be significant experiments. Nicolas Slonimsky's article on Tcherepnin, entitled "Septuagenarian," was published in 1969. In it, Slonimsky attempts to provide a better understanding of the composer's life by retrieving the composer's own retrospective musings over "biographical and musico-epistemological aspects of his pursuits."³³

Other scholars have found various aspects of Tcherepnin's music worthy of discussion. Detlef Gojowy's *Neue Sowjetische Musik der 20er Jahre* contains a few short discussions of Tcherepnin's nine-note scale. Peter Deane Roberts' book *Modernism in Russian Piano Music: Scriabin, Prokofiev, and Their Russian Contemporaries* contains discussions of modernist trends which can be found in Tcherepnin's early piano works. Taruskin, in the fifth volume of his six-volume, mega-history of Western music, mentions Tcherepnin when discussing the unpitched percussion movement from his First Symphony and accredits him with outstripping Shostakovich in the race to unconventional approaches using percussion.³⁴

Furthermore, there are only a few brief mentions of the composer prior to 1960. Leonid Sabaneyev, a notable Russian musicologist provides a much earlier account of Tcherepnin in his

³² Larry Sitsky, *Music of the Repressed Russian Avant-Garde, 1920-1929* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1994), 273.

³³ Nicholas Slonimsky, "Alexander Tcherepnin Septuagenarian," *Tempo*, no. 87, (Winter 1969), 19.

³⁴ Richard Taruskin, *Music of the Early Twentieth-Century*, Vol. 5 of the *Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 784.

1927 book, *Modern Russian Composers*.³⁵ Sabaneyev includes Tcherepnin in the Russian-Parisian School and credits Tcherepnin with the ability to remove himself from any Russian nationalist tendencies in a way that his predecessors Prokofiev and Stravinsky had not.³⁶

However, Sabaneyev also portrays Tcherepnin as a miniaturist composer and creator of musical trifles whose works were merely “tonal play-pleasing” pieces that lacked any “ontological underpinnings.”³⁷

Methodology and Chapter Organization

My intent for this study was to contextualize Tcherepnin’s First Symphony so as to justify my claim for it as a true modern symphony from the 1920s. To do this, I first needed to study his background, his influences, and his compositional output prior to the symphony. The most useful sources for this were Folkman’s compendium and the biography by Korabelnikova. Following this research, I then turned my attention to the question of what exactly made a symphony a symphony, especially in the twentieth century. To help answer that question, I consulted writings by Paul Bekker, Boris Asafyev, Robert Simpson, and Christopher Ballantine, who all differ in their definition of a symphony, and moreover, in their opinions as to which works deserve to be accepted as twentieth-century symphonies. In relation to these writings, I studied selected symphonies by Igor Stravinsky, Sergey Prokofiev, Dmitry Shostakovich, Carl Nielsen, Jean Sibelius, Arnold Schoenberg, and Charles Ives. I gave particular attention to Prokofiev’s symphonies, since Tcherepnin named him as an important influence.

³⁵ It should be noted that Sabaneyev’s book was published in 1927 and probably did not have any consideration of Tcherepnin’s First Symphony. However, his comments do align with the critical reviews of Tcherepnin’s First Symphony.

³⁶ Leonid Sabaneyev, *Modern Russian Composers*, trans. by Judah A. Joffe (New York: International Publishers, 1927), 236.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 236-38

The final step was to apply the criteria provided by Bekker, Asafyev, Simpson, and Ballantine to Tchernepnin's First Symphony. The goal of this was to determine if the work was indeed a symphony, and if the work should be included in the modern symphonic canon. This was accomplished by analyzing the forms and thematic content of the symphony's four movements in relation to the guidelines set by the aforementioned authors.

In the next chapter, I surveyed the most significant contributions to the understanding of the twentieth-century symphony. Drawing upon the writings of the authors mentioned above, I developed a set of criteria with which to assess Tchernepnin's symphony. In the third chapter, "Symphonic Unity, Dualism, and Conflict in Tchernepnin's First Symphony," I applied these criteria to each movement of Tchernepnin's First Symphony. An introductory section of that chapter explains further Tchernepnin's compositional system based on nine-note scales and his conception of interpoint as an alternative to other musical textures.

CHAPTER 2

ASPECTS OF EARLY TWENTIETH-CENTURY SYMPHONIC COMPOSITION AND CRITICISM

When Tcherepnin set out to compose his First Symphony in April 1927, he was rather apprehensive about labeling the work a symphony. As Ludmila Korabelnikova points out, Tcherepnin first used the genre label only in late May 1927.¹ Prior to this designation, however, he was planning a composition of a symphonic scope. His letter to his parents from 26 April 1927 alludes to such a work when he writes, “So I’ll work quietly and with concentration, so that the form will be *symphonic* and spacious...” [my italics].² Tcherepnin’s decision to compose in a “symphonic form” implies his desire to compose a larger-scale orchestral work than his previous orchestral work, *Magna Mater*, which he considered to be “over condensed and stiff.”³ Moreover, he considered all of his previous orchestral works to be, “meager chamber pieces assigned to large orchestra.”⁴

Tcherepnin’s writings about his own evolutionary path to the symphony correspond with the typical pre-Revolutionary students of the Leningrad Conservatory. The pedagogical approach to composition at the conservatory was structured after Rimsky-Korsakov’s pedagogy which included six “courses” or years. After the first year of harmony, the students were graduated to counterpoint and then later moved on to smaller forms. It was only after perfecting the smaller

¹ Ludmila Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin: The Saga of a Russian Émigré Composer*, Ed. by Sue-Ellen Hershman Tcherepnin and Trans. by Anna Winestein (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 79.

² Ibid.

³ Benjamin Folkman, *Alexander Tcherepnin: A Compendium* (New York: The Tcherepnin Society, Inc., 2008), 256.

⁴ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 79.

forms that students were moved on to larger forms such as the symphony.⁵ Tcherepnin, for instance, began with solo piano works (including his Bagatelles); then small chamber works (such as his sonata for violin and piano), three sonatas for cello and piano, a trio for violin, piano, and cello, two string quartets. Tcherepnin then explored short orchestral works culminating in his Symphony no. 1 in E, Op. 42. Prokofiev, also a graduate from the conservatory, had begun by composing small piano works, graduating to chamber works with a sonata for violin, and later culminating in his Sinfonietta in A major, a piano concerto, and a symphony in three movements. Later on, in the 1920s, Shostakovich would also follow a similar compositional path leading to his First Symphony. Even though Rimsky-Korsakov died ten years prior to Tcherepnin's admission into the conservatory, his successors, Alexander Glazunov and Maximilian Steinberg, maintained Rimsky's method. However, this rigid system of composing in smaller traditional genres before graduating to larger genres would eventually be contested by critics such as Boris Asafyev.

Even though Tcherepnin was forced to continue his education elsewhere, finally ending up at the Paris Conservatoire, it is likely he found a similar structure in place. After all, Alfred Bruneau reached out to Rimsky-Korsakov in 1902 to inquire about the pedagogical method used at the St. Petersburg Conservatory.⁶ There is no definitive evidence that Tcherepnin's experience in Paris was directly related to that of a student at the St. Petersburg Conservatory. However, it is evident that both Tcherepnin's compositional approach and style correspond with his contemporaries from the conservatory.

⁵ Richard Taruskin, *Stravinsky and the Russian Traditions: A Biography of the Works Through Mavra* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 1:172, from Semyon Levovich Ginzburg, ed., *N.A. Rimsky-Korsakov I muzikal'noye obrazovaniye*, (Leningrad: Muzgiz, 1959), 247-8.

⁶ Ibid., 172.

Precarious Existence of the Post-War Symphony (1917-1927)

The decision to compose a symphony was inevitably daunting for any post-World War I composer and for a number of reasons. In the years prior to World War I and throughout the decade after, most composers were not establishing their careers based on their symphonic output. In fact, some composers, along with critics, were proclaiming the symphony as a deceased genre.⁷ Rather than relying on proclamations, one can find evidence for a decline by surveying the lists of orchestral works by some of the most notable modernist composers such as Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky, and Prokofiev. A brief look at these composers' orchestral works will also provide a general assessment of alternative trends to symphonic composition in this time period.

Claude Debussy's orchestral career primarily involved programmatic compositions, evoking a specific scene, mood, or atmosphere. Almost all of his works exhibit the use of exotic scales (whole-tone, octatonic, pentatonic), and his orchestral works in particular feature new uses of timbre in order to express the work's desired image. Yet Debussy never attempted to use symbolist or any other programmatic inspiration for a symphonic composition.⁸ Like Debussy, Maurice Ravel used exotic scales, among other things, to assimilate the sounds of other cultures' music into his works. However, unlike Debussy, Ravel made greater use of the orchestra, but never attempted a symphony. One such work that expresses both Ravel's use of the orchestra coupled with his treatment of exoticism is his *Rapsodie espagnole*.

⁷ David Fanning makes references to this in his book, *Nielsen: Symphony No. 5*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 7, when he cites George Bernard Shaw announcing in 1888, "The symphony as a form is 'stone dead.'" and Danish composer Knudåge Riisager's article, "The Symphony is Dead: Long Live Music," ["Symfonien er død—musikken leve,"] *Dansk musiktidsskrift*, 15, no. 2 (February 1940), 21-23.

⁸ Debussy did in fact attempt to compose a symphony towards the end of his life however, it was never orchestrated and was published posthumously for piano in four hands.

Contrary to Debussy and Ravel, Igor Stravinsky attempted symphonic compositions. His Symphony No. 1 in E Flat, Op. 1 (1905-7), was completed as part of his private studies with Rimsky-Korsakov. With the symphony's composition guided by Rimsky-Korsakov, it predictably contains many references to Glazunov's and Taneyev's conservative symphonic approaches. Thereafter, Stravinsky moved away from the four-movement symphonic genre to other orchestral genres and chamber genres. He did return to symphonic composition in 1920 when he composed *Symphonies d'instruments á vent*, but this work, unlike his First Symphony, is incredibly far-removed from the eighteenth- or nineteenth-century Russian symphonic tradition.

Like Stravinsky, Prokofiev had composed a symphony while studying at the conservatory, but also shifted away from four-movement symphonies in favor of other orchestral genres (e.g., ballets, suites, and operas). He returned to symphonic composition in 1925 with his Second Symphony, but this, like Stravinsky's *Symphonies of Wind Instruments*, was a radical departure from the early Russian symphonic tradition. Likewise, Dmitry Shostakovich maintained a similar process of extreme departure from the conventions of the early Russian symphony with his *Symphonic Dedication to October* (1928)—now referred to as his Second Symphony. In other words, after each composer accomplished a symphony using the early Russian symphonic traditions, their next attempt at a symphony exchanged those traditions for more modern approaches.

Outside of Russia, there were other highly regarded modernist composers in both Europe and the United States who were writing symphonies during both the pre-war and post-war era. Charles Ives wrote a total of five symphonies during the early 1900s and into the 1920s. Jean Sibelius and Carl Nielsen completed seven symphonies each from the 1890s to the mid-1920s.

However, Sibelius and Nielsen were reaching the end of their symphonic careers by the 1920s, and Ives had already established his well before this time period.

Nearly all of the symphonies listed above share one common aspect; in one way or another, they differ from our general conception of a symphony. Thanks to so many individual changes, symphonic composition on the whole underwent considerable change during the pre- and post-war eras. In order to appreciate the magnitude of these changes, it may be useful to offer a standard definition of the symphony. The *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music* defines the symphony as follows:

A large orchestral composition (usually in four movements but often in 1, 3, 5, or occasionally 2), a sonata for orchestra, the first movement and others being in sonata form. It is reserved by composers for their most weighty and profound orchestral thoughts...The movements of the Classical and Romantic symphony were usually an opening [sonata-] allegro, followed by a slow movement, then a minuet or scherzo, finally another [sonata-] allegro or rondo...[A symphony] implies an attitude of mind and a certain mental approach by the composer.⁹

This definition shows a clear conception of what formal structures we might think an eighteenth- or nineteenth-century composer would employ in a symphony. To this list of traits we can add several other general symphonic conventions upheld by eighteenth- and nineteenth-century composers. An obvious yet critical trait is that symphonies composed before 1900 were all tonal. As implied above, they were also composed in reference to eighteenth-century forms. Composers of both centuries were expected to be masters of thematic and motivic development, especially in first movements. In the nineteenth century, composers became increasingly interested in achieving organic unity by means such as increased use of cyclic material, programmatic content, and developmental technique. Not least was the quality of

⁹ *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music*, 5th ed., s.v. "Symphony."

monumentality, a trait closely associated with Beethoven, but also maintained in the symphonies of Bruckner, Mahler, and others.

These conventions were transformed and in some cases, discarded in the twentieth century as composers introduced further innovations. In lieu of the “monumental” orchestration of late-Romantic symphonies, Charles Ives’s Third Symphony (1904) uses only a single woodwind, two horns, a trombone, strings, and bells.¹⁰ Schoenberg’s Chamber Symphony No.1, op. 9 (1906) was composed for an ensemble of fifteen soloists. Other changes affected the length and form of movements. In his First Chamber Symphony, Schoenberg condensed a typical four-movement symphonic structure into a single movement. Other structural innovations can be found in the post-war compositions of Nielsen and Sibelius who altered the structures of sonata form, and in the symphonies of Prokofiev and Shostakovich who use linear polyphony—primarily in Prokofiev’s Second and Third and Shostakovich’s Second—to eliminate the functional quality of common-practice tonality and harmony.

Another topic to discuss briefly is modifying the designation of “symphony” for certain works. Stravinsky’s *Symphonies d’instruments à vent* (1920) provides a relevant example. Instead of the common singular form of the word for the title, Stravinsky chose the term “Symphonies” to describe the work. Stephen Walsh notes that the use of the plural form of symphony indicates that Stravinsky was attempting to “disarm the inevitable criticism that the work was not a symphony at all.”¹¹ In doing so, Stravinsky also attempted to remove the work from the symphonic canon.

¹⁰ Neil Butterworth, *The American Symphony* (Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Limited, 1998), 39.

¹¹ Stephen Walsh, “France and Germany after 1918,” in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. Stanley Sadie, (London: Macmillan, 2001), 24:841-42.

Even when significant innovations were present, modern symphonists still preserved a sufficient number of inherited conventions in their symphonies. Although these preservations maintain those particular symphonies' inherent symphonic qualities, they do not help to describe the innovations as alternative symphonic qualities. In the subsequent paragraphs, I will explain these alternatives that modern symphonists employ to establish a general set of criteria by which twentieth-century symphonies can be understood. The criteria that I propose are derived from the criteria that are found in the writings about the symphony by Paul Bekker, Boris Asafyev, Robert Simpson, and Christopher Ballantine.

Commentary on the Symphony from Bekker, Asafyev, Simpson, and Ballantine

In his monograph *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler* (1918), Paul Bekker, a twentieth-century music critic, provides a new explanation for what makes music symphonic. Bekker describes the symphony as a means of communication between the symphonist and his audience.¹² Along with this thought, Bekker also views the symphony as a “societally formative force (*gesellschaftbedende Kraft*).”¹³ Bekker also notes that the societal formation differs for certain genres. For example, a chamber work only communicates with and creates a unified collective experience for a small audience. Alternatively, symphonies create a unified collective experience for a mass audience. Bekker does not suggest that the symphony be described only by its use of inherent forms or particular musical elements—i.e., tonality, harmony, forms, etc.

¹² Paul Bekker, *Die Sinfonie von Beethoven bis Mahler* (Berlin: Schuster und Loefler, 1918), 14-15: “Wir hatten erkannt, das die Bestimmung der sinfonischen Gattung sie zum instrumentalen Mittler zwischen dem Musiker und einem großen Hörerkreise macht. Die Sinfonie ist also den Grundbedingungen ihres Wesens nach Gegenstand eines weitreichenden Allgemeininteresses, die Aufführung einer Sinfonie gleichbedeutend mit einer Volksversammlung, in der ein durch die Musik zum Ausdruck gelangendes Gemeingefühl lebendig und tätig wird.”

¹³ Christopher Hailey, “Bekker, Paul,” in *The Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, 2nd ed., ed. by Stanley Sadie (London: Macmillan, 2001), 3:153.

Instead, what is most essential is that a symphony be performed and that a large audience shares the experience as a collective.

Boris Asafyev's writings on the symphony established a different criterion to describe a symphonic work based on the element of organicism. To explain the organic quality of the symphony, Asafyev coined the term "symphonism" [simfonizm] in *Melos* (1917), his two-volume set of musical essays.¹⁴ This concept hinges on the paradox that "not all symphonies are symphonic."¹⁵ David Haas claims that this paradox contains three underlying assertions: "First, that symphonic music is based on a struggle or conflict between musical ideas; second, that not all symphonies possess this quality; and third (by implication), that this quality of symphonism is as vital to a symphony as any other trait (e.g., a first movement in sonata form or scoring for strings, winds, and percussion)."¹⁶

In addition to the element of organicism, Asafyev's concept of symphonism relies on the element of conflict. For Asafyev, conflict emerges within a symphonic work from the juxtaposition and interaction of opposing elements, and this emerging conflict also requires a resolution.¹⁷ It is the resolution of this conflict that creates a synthesis of the work and further emphasizes Asafyev's criterion of organicism. With all the elements of symphonism in mind, Asafyev's symphonic criteria therefore contain an element of organicism that is contingent upon the element of conflict seeking resolution.

The concept of organicism is also evident in Robert Simpson's two-volume book *The Symphony* (1966-67). However, he differs from Asafyev by insisting that a symphony must show

¹⁴ David Haas, "Boris Asaf'yev and Russian Symphonic Thought," *The Musical Quarterly* 76, no. 3 (1992): 412.

¹⁵ David Haas, *Leningrad's Modernists: Studies in Composition and Musical Thought, 1917-1932* (New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 1998), 78.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 77.

evidence of five elements, and that these compositional guidelines need “to be mastered” by any composer interested in creating a “true” symphony.¹⁸ This implies that if at any moment a composer deviates from this list that the symphony in question would not have earned such a designation. Simpson also claims that his criteria are applicable to any symphony from the time of Haydn through the twentieth century. Simpson’s five elements of a “true” symphony are listed as follows:

(1) The fusion of diverse elements into an organic whole. (2) The continuous control of pace. (3) The reserves of strength necessary to achieve and are such as to express size. (4) Includes a dynamic treatment of tonality to maintain the symphony’s initial positive revolt to tonal passivity. (5) Never allow a prime element of the music (rhythm, melody, harmony, or tonality) to seem to die.¹⁹

Even though Simpson presents five different elements, the overarching point emphasized in his list is the first element. The remaining elements are an explication of what can be fused together to create a true symphony.

Simpson’s foundational criterion of unification contains a few subsequent parts. The composer can unify the work by creating “wide range of movement and character, shape and color, [and] even mood and atmosphere.”²⁰ Within these subsequent levels of criteria, Simpson also emphasizes the role of tonality as a reinforcement to each one. Simpson values the architectonic structure of tonality and also sees it as a primary feature of all symphonic works. The essential role of tonality is implied in Simpson’s assertion that tonality assisted in the creation of the symphony.²¹

¹⁸ Robert Simpson, ed., *The Symphony*, (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1966), 1:13.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 13-14.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 13.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Simpson's view of tonality as a governing force of symphonic music creates a view of the symphony that is extremely narrow in scope. While this view somewhat corresponds to and perhaps confirms our general notions about the symphony, it does not further our understanding of symphonic works from the early twentieth century. Moreover, in Simpson's preface to the second volume of his book (i.e., the volume dealing with modern symphonic compositions), he asserts that most twentieth-century symphonies fail to meet the criteria of a "true symphony." For example, when Simpson writes about including twentieth-century symphonists in his survey he states: "A composer has been included if his prime intention, whether fully realized or not, is or has been to compose true symphonies."²²

Even though Simpson includes twentieth-century symphonists, it is clear that he does not believe that all of their works are truly symphonic. He underscores this point further when he explains why certain composers were omitted from his survey. Stravinsky and Schoenberg were primarily excluded because neither composer staked his reputation on symphonic output. In the case of Stravinsky, Simpson believes tonality to be a mere time-keeper, relegated to the role of a subservient element of music giving the work a more balletic or episodic feel than a fluid and organic one in that composer's symphonic works.²³ On the other hand, Simpson finds the instrumentation for Schoenberg's chamber symphonies unable to effectively achieve expression of size. Instead, it merely suggests their chamber-musical origins.²⁴

However, Simpson's five factors for achieving symphonic unity are nearly useless once applied to twentieth-century symphonic works, and moreover, his reliance on tonality excludes many twentieth-century symphonies. However, if the principle criterion of unification is

²² Ibid., vol. 2, 13.

²³ Ibid., 9.

²⁴ Ibid., 13.

detached from the remaining steps, then it can be upheld as a relevant premise that can help define twentieth-century symphonies. Furthermore, Simpson's concept of unification, once detached, corresponds with Asafyev's criterion of organic unity. The inevitable difference, however, is that the concept is not contingent upon the elements of conflict and resolve. That particular concept is emphasized in Christopher Ballantine's book *Twentieth-Century Symphonies*.

The criterion suggested by Christopher Ballantine is based not on the concept of organic unity but on the concept of dualism. He considers this to be an "essential symphonic characteristic" that contributes to "genuine symphonic thought."²⁵ Initially emerging from an opposition of keys in eighteenth-century symphonies and expanded upon throughout the nineteenth century, dualism in twentieth-century symphonies can be defined by new approaches to symphonic form and structure. In the attempt to critically assess twentieth-century symphonies, Ballantine notes that these new dualistic approaches demand a fresh perspective—one that can sufficiently include all of the changes made by twentieth-century symphonists.²⁶

Contrary to Simpson, Ballantine does not dictate what supplementary criteria must be followed to enhance his concept. Instead, he suggests that the work itself creates its own criteria by which it must be judged.²⁷ He also perceives these work-specific criteria as innovations to rather than deviations from the traditional symphonic model. Therefore, Ballantine attempts to validate twentieth-century symphonies by accepting a wider range of techniques as suitable for achieving dualism.

²⁵ Cristopher Ballantine, *Twentieth-Century Symphony*, (London: Dobson Books Ltd., 1983), 13.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ Ibid., 14.

Ballantine organizes his book into three main parts: a retrospective history of symphonies, twentieth-century structural innovations, and definitions of symphonic conflict. Of these, the latter two parts are of most value to the present study. Ballantine arranges the twentieth-century structural innovations into two distinct categories: “conservative” and “radical”. The conservative innovations can be explained as slight variations to historically orthodox symphonic compositional practices. On the other hand, radical innovations are those that can potentially obscure or even obliterate common symphonic forms.²⁸ Regardless of the category of the innovations, they must still contain essential characteristics of dualism and thus, contribute to dualism on a larger scale.

As for the creation of conflict, Ballantine attempts to identify twentieth-century techniques as modern alternatives to previously employed techniques of harmonic and thematic contrast.²⁹ For instance in a sonata form first movement, if one removes the basic opposition between thematic material, and instead installs a complementary motive between them, rather than having two opposing themes, the relationship between those elements becomes monistic rather than dualistic. However, Ballantine suggests that an inherent dualistic principle can emerge from this monism. He labels this dualism as an “immanent” quality, which lies beneath the monistic surface of the music.³⁰ This could be something as simple as a rhythmic passage which could upset the current theme’s flow, thus creating a dualism or conflict.

²⁸ Ibid., 15.

²⁹ Ibid., 145.

³⁰ Ibid., 151. To help explain this concept of “immanent dualism,” Ballantine discusses Beethoven’s *Eroica* Symphony, Sibelius’s Second Symphony, and Prokofiev’s Sixth Symphony, just to name a few. Ballantine observes complementary motivic elements between the two principle themes in these symphony’s sonata movements. However, a contradictory element, such as a rhythmic passage or a single note, may also be a part of this complementary motive, and this element is what could create the dualistic, or conflicting, quality that is inherent in sonata-form movements.

Besides this new concept of conflict, Ballantine examines symphonic conflict further, and focuses less on structure and tonality and more on counterpoint and timbre. Conflict within the counterpoint involves a polyphony defined by two or more individual melodic lines that evolve linearly and intersect and separate at moments that create tension or conflict.³¹ Conflict of timbre could occur in many ways. For example, the orchestra could be divided into two or more different groups (either in the score or on the stage). These groups could then play separately or together, and to heighten the conflict between the groups, each group could play at different tempos, in different meters, or with different rhythms.³²

Ballantine includes specific examples of each set of innovations outlined above. His conservative innovations consist of the division/combination of the symphony's structural components, the problematic recapitulations in twentieth-century sonata structures, and the abolition of sonata-form boundaries between development and exposition/recapitulation. Each innovation helps to offset the diminished role of tonality in modern symphonies. To compensate for this, the work must "maintain some affinity of style, idiom, or character" throughout.³³ For example, a composer may decide to spread the general style of the scherzo amongst multiple movements, thus dividing one scherzo movement into multiple movements. An example of a combination of movements can be found when a composer decides to combine two or more formal structures (for example, sonata and variation forms).³⁴

³¹ Ibid., 173-74.

³² Ibid., 132-35, 180-85.

³³ Ibid., 84.

³⁴ Ibid., 86. The use of variation forms allows for a continuity of style, idiom, and/or character, throughout the combination of these formal structures.

Innovations to sonata form primarily involve the attempt to rid the form of its inherent redundancy caused by recapitulation.³⁵ Since twentieth-century symphonists no longer created dualism by way of opposing keys, the recapitulation practically became unnecessary. Those composers who wished to uphold the elements of the orthodox form either truncated or altered the recapitulation.³⁶ To help better explain Ballantine's discussion of sonata-form innovations, I will briefly describe James Hepokoski's "sonata-deformations" principle before returning to Ballantine's discussion of other symphonic innovations.

Hepokoski refers to certain deviations from the nineteenth-century practice of sonata form as "'deformations' of the *Formenlehre* (standard-textbook) structures."³⁷ In his study of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony, he provides five "deformations" of sonata form that began to appear in late-nineteenth and early twentieth-century symphonic works. He lists them as follows: (1) The breakthrough deformation, (2) The introduction-coda frame, (3) Episodes within the developmental space, (4) Various strophic/sonata hybrids, and (5) Multimovement forms in a single movement.³⁸ He describes the first deformation listed, which deals specifically with recapitulation, as follows: "Here an unforeseen inbreaking of a seemingly new (although normally motivically related) event in or at the close of the 'developmental space' radically redefines the character and course of the movement and typically renders a normative, largely symmetrical recapitulation invalid."³⁹ Although Hepokoski uses this principle to explain the recapitulation of Sibelius's Fifth Symphony, this deformation is not unique to this composer and

³⁵ Ibid., 91-96.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 5.

³⁸ Ibid., 6-7.

³⁹ Ibid., 6.

symphony. As we will see in the next chapter, this particular type of recapitulation can be found in the first movement of Tchaikovsky's First Symphony.

Ballantine's remaining conservative innovations primarily involve the role of the scherzo movement in the symphony, which receives this attention because he believes that twentieth-century symphonists bestowed profound importance upon the movement. In this movement is the "crucial and decisive stage in the dramatic unraveling of the symphony's central concern."⁴⁰ In addition to this, Ballantine offers some unique perspectives on the more radical innovations to the symphony. For example, Ballantine describes Schoenberg's compression of a typical four-movement symphony into one movement in his First Chamber Symphony as a radical departure from the traditional set of symphonic movements. Other radical innovations are evident when a composer abandons the traditional symphonic forms and uses other forms in their place.⁴¹

Further radical innovations incorporate the unification of the symphony's outer-movements and the opposition between musical elements other than keys and themes. Ballantine suggests that in order for the large-scale symphonic form to be coherent, the symphony's outer movements must contain similar radicalized forms.⁴² For example, if a composer chooses to start the symphony with a non-traditional form in the first movement, then the composer should end the symphony with a similar radical choice in form. The unorthodox opposition between

⁴⁰ Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, 102-3. Ballantine's symphonic examples of these dramatically significant movements are Mahler's epic scherzo from his Fifth Symphony and Edward Elgar's scherzo third movement in his Second Symphony. Mahler's "Scherzo" is the longest movement of the symphony, is formally complex, and is in the center of the entire symphony. The placement of the scherzo gives it the role of "shouldering a substantial portion of the emotional and intellectual weight." On the other hand, Elgar's scherzo movement is the shortest movement of the symphony. However, Ballantine describes the importance of this symphony because Elgar brings back material from the first movement's development, thereby enhancing the conflict from a previous movement.

⁴¹ Ibid., 123-4. Ballantine also notes that even though some composers abandon traditional forms, they still maintain the similar function and character of the traditional symphonic movements. For instance, a particular symphony may contain a fast-tempo first movement that "broaches the business of the symphony, a slow second movement, a scherzo-type third movement, and a finale which brings resolution."

⁴² Ibid., 130.

elements such as timbre or counterpoint also occurs in twentieth-century symphonies.

Ballantine's primary example of this type of conflict is the opposition between timbres, which has been explained above (p. 28).⁴³

Throughout Ballantine's extensive survey of twentieth-century symphonies, he establishes one clear criterion: the creation of musical conflict from one or another type of dualism. This implies that twentieth-century symphonists created many different forms of dualism, and furthermore, it allows for many symphonic works to be included in his survey. The criterion established by Ballantine in its many different forms presents a framework for discussing the symphony, and it complements the criteria proposed by Asafyev.

While none of the criteria above are sufficient on their own, when combined, they can be beneficial to the task of explaining the symphonic qualities of Tchernin's First Symphony. Both Simpson and Ballantine provide criteria that are similar to the two main concepts of Asafyev's symphonism. If we detach Simpson's concept of organic unity from the other elements [e.g., tonality], then it can be combined with Asafyev's concept of organicism and also be more applicable to a wider range of symphonic compositions. Ballantine's concept of dualism is easily combined with Asafyev's idea of musical conflict because Ballantine does not limit the techniques or manners by which dualism and conflict are achieved in twentieth-century symphonies. This process of combination creates a more heterogeneous or multilateral approach to identifying symphonic qualities. Bringing all of the relevant criteria together, I propose the following guidelines for assessing the twentieth-century symphony: A symphony must be organically unified and contain some element of musical conflict in some type of dualism. Furthermore, dualism can occur between any elements of music: e.g. themes, tonality, structure,

⁴³ Ibid., 132-35, 180-85.

timbre, texture, etc. In the next chapter, I have applied this approach to Tchérenin's First Symphony to demonstrate why it deserves the genre designation of symphony.

CHAPTER 3

SYMPHONIC UNITY, DUALISM, AND CONFLICT IN TCHEREPNIN'S FIRST SYMPHONY

The creation of new compositional methods was not entirely unusual for twentieth-century composers. Schoenberg's unveiling of his twelve-tone method in 1924 was only one of several. Alexander Tcherepnin's own system lay at the foundation of several of his notable compositions of the 1920s. Unlike Schoenberg, however, Tcherepnin did not expect that his system would guide other people to compose, nor did he express a desire to distribute his method to other composers. In fact, Tcherepnin did not describe the system in prose until 1962, when he published the treatise "Basic Elements of My Musical Language."¹ Regardless of the system, it is reasonable to ask: will this method work in a symphony?

In the case of Tcherepnin, it has already been noted that he used his compositional method in his First Symphony. However, we have yet to investigate whether the method was sufficient for the task at hand. When he first invented it, Tcherepnin was not concerned about whether or not the method would fit into a symphony. Tcherepnin was already using it in smaller scale compositions dating back to 1922. He would continue to use his method until 1932. The following descriptions of his method are drawn from Benjamin Folkman's compendium.²

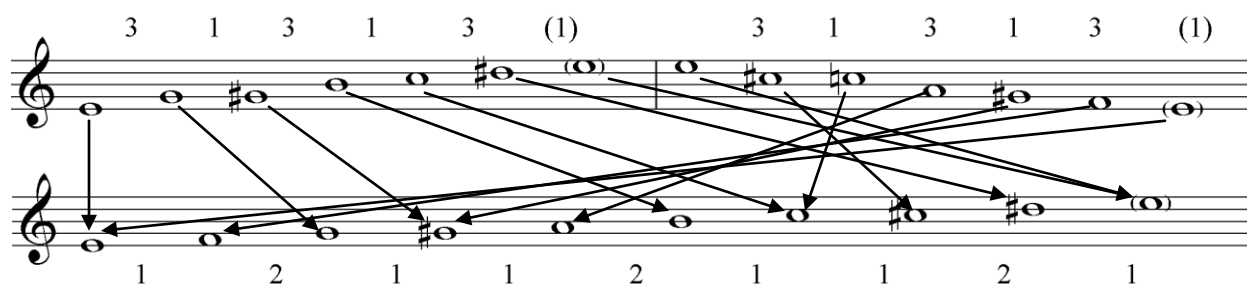
Tcherepnin identified two components at the basis of his musical language of the 1920s: a nine-note scale and a contrapuntal method that he called "interpoint". Tcherepnin used the nine-note scale instead of diatonic scales to create the melodic, thematic, and harmonic content

¹ Benjamin Folkman, *Alexander Tcherepnin: A Compendium* (New York: The Tcherepnin Society, Inc., 2008), 124-145.

² Ibid.

of the First Symphony, and interpoint was used in place of common-practice contrapuntal methods. Tcherepnin used his nine-note scale in 1922 in his Four Preludes, Op. 24. He continued to use it in virtually every piece that followed until 1932. Interpoint was first used in 1926 in his piano piece *Message*, Op. 39.

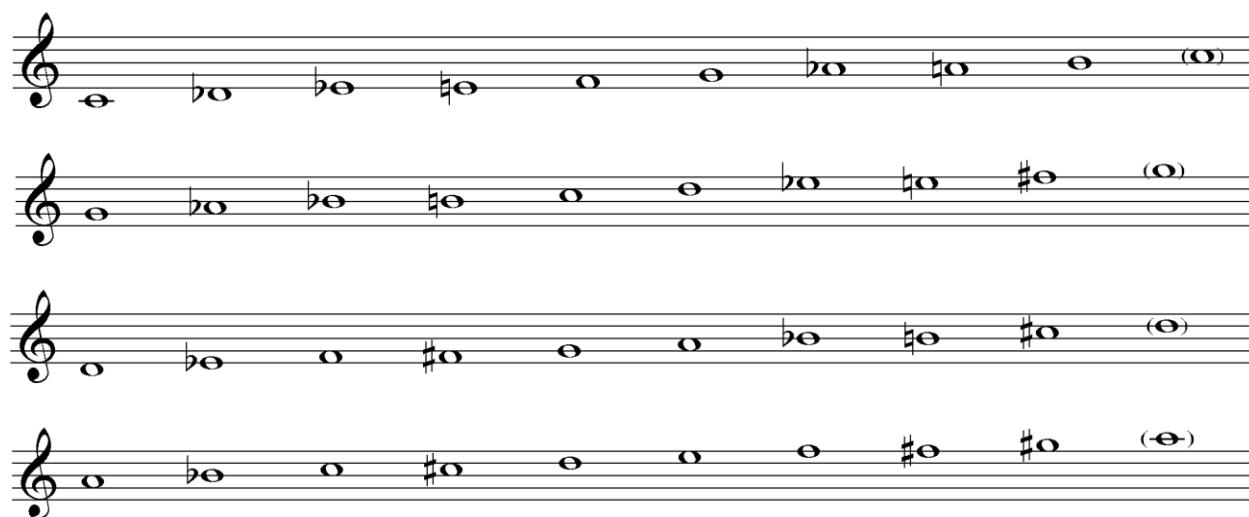
As discussed in chapter one, the nine-note scale is derived from two major-minor hexachords that are created using ascending and descending intervallic patterns of three semitones and one semitone.³ The hexachords are combined, removing duplicate notes, and leaving us with a nine-note scale that has a repeated intervallic pattern of <semitone, whole tone, semitone>, as shown in Example 1. To further the discussion of Tcherepnin's nine-note scale, I will be taking my descriptions directly from his treatise. However, he does not describe the process in much detail and therefore, I will expand upon his descriptions in order to explain how he creates the nine-note scale, how the scale is symmetrical, and how a focal or starting pitch can be established despite these symmetrical properties.



Ex. 1: Two Hexachords. Both hexachords combine to make the nine-note scale. The repeated intervallic patterns are also included.

³ I will be using the E nine-note scale throughout my discussion because Tcherepnin designates his First Symphony as being in E. Tcherepnin's treatise explains everything starting from C.

Tcherepnin's nine-note scale has many transpositional and rotational possibilities. There are only four "fundamental" nine-note scales with unique pitch-class content and (as discussed by Tcherepnin and shown in Example 2) each uses one of the following pitch classes as a starting point: C, G, D, or A.



Ex. 2: Four Fundamental Nine-Note Scales.

While Tcherepnin generates the nine-note scale using hexachords, he notes it contains three major-minor tetrachords. As shown in Example 3, these tetrachords each span four semitones and articulate the points in the scale (E, G sharp, and C) where the intervallic pattern <semitone, whole tone, semitone> repeats.⁴ Thus the scale could be rewritten from any one of these "points of departure" (Tcherepnin's term) and the overall pitch-class content and scalar pattern would remain unchanged.

⁴ It is my understanding that labeling these tetrachords as major-minor is based on the interval between each pitch within the tetrachord. For example, the tetrachord <E, F, G, G sharp> contains two intervals of a minor second and one interval of a major second. For example, the pitch classes, (E-F, G-G sharp) are both minor second intervals and the pitch classes (F-G) represent a major second interval.

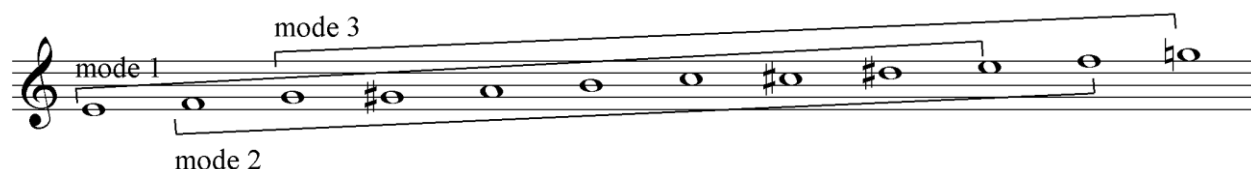


Ex. 3: Three Intervallically Equivalent Tetrachords in an E nine-note scale. Each tetrachord's starting pitch class represents the "point of departure" for another nine-note scale with identical pitch-class content and intervallic structure.

In his treatise, Tcherepnin also refers to these points as potential "tonics" for the scale; however, because these pitch classes are intervallically equivalent within the transpositionally and inversionally symmetrical scale, musical factors *other* than pitch must be used if one of these pitch classes is to emerge as more important than the other two (and thus, function as a "tonic" or focal pitch class). In a specific musical context, factors that may be used to create such emphasis include frequent repetition, placement at important formal boundaries (beginnings and endings of motives, phrases, themes, and sections), and various types of accent (including agogic, metric, contour, and dynamic accents), just to name a few.

We have now discussed the ways in which this scale may be *transposed* to produce forms that exhibit either different pitch-class content (as in Example 2) or the same pitch-class content but different (yet intervallically equivalent) points of departure (as in Example 3); however, we must also consider the different *rotational* possibilities of the scale as well. Example 4 shows how if we begin the scale on the *second* pitch class of the major-minor tetrachords from Example 3 (rather than the *first* pitch class), the scalar pattern rotates to become <whole tone, semitone, semitone>, producing Tcherepnin's Mode 2; similarly, if we begin the scale on the *third* pitch

class of these tetrachords, the scalar pattern now becomes <semitone, semitone, whole tone>, producing his Mode 3.



Ex 4: Three Unique Rotations or Modes of the E Nine-Note Scale.

In short, we have four fundamental nine-note scales, each with three possible starting points, which gives us a total of twelve scales with the same intervallic pattern. In addition, there are three possible modes (or rotations of the intervallic pattern) for each of these twelve scales; thus, the total number of possible nine-note scales in Tcherepnin's system is thirty-six.

The second main aspect of Tcherepnin's musical language is a type of polyphonic texture that he called "interpoint". Contrasting with traditional counterpoint, Tcherepnin's method involves "notes between notes" rather than "notes against notes."⁵ A further explication comes from one of Tcherepnin's former DePaul University students, Enrique Alberto Arias:

Interpoint is a linear procedure resulting from the rhythmic and polyphonic displacements between and among the given voices of a texture. This is similar to the hocket technique of 13th- and 14th-century motets, where one line is split between the two voices, each part pausing to let the other proceed. Furthermore, the technique has much in common with motivic-contrapuntal textures of late Beethoven quartets.⁶

Arias's description of displacement highlights the crux of Tcherepnin's "intrapuntal" method.

⁵ Ludmila Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin: The Saga of a Russian Émigré Composer*, edited by Sue-Ellen Hershman Tcherepnin and translated by Anna Winestein, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008), 95.

⁶ Enrique Alberto Arias, "The Symphonies of Alexander Tcherepnin," *Tempo*, no. 158 (September 1986), 23.

As aforementioned, Tcherepnin uses three types of interpoint: vertical, horizontal, and metrical. Vertical interpoint is what Tcherepnin calls “truly note between note[s];”⁷ it maintains a melodic line between at least two instruments. For example, if one instrument rests during its melodic line, a second instrument will sound during that particular rest providing no empty space of sound in the music. This type of interpoint is the clearest example of Arias’s connection of interpoint with hoquet. Horizontal interpoint occurs when a rhythmic pattern is displaced by any durational value.⁸ For instance, one instrument’s rhythm might start on the downbeat of a measure, whereas the next rhythmic line might begin an eighth-note after the first instrument’s rhythmic line. Furthermore, a third instrument’s rhythmic pattern might begin an eighth-note later than the second instrument’s rhythmic line, thus displacing it from the first instrument’s rhythmic line by a quarter-note. Finally, metrical interpoint occurs when an instrument’s pattern of accents and grouping of events elicit a different time signature from the actual written time signature.⁹ For example, one instrumental line might play a rhythm or melody that fits within the written time signature, while another instrumental line plays a melody or rhythm grouped, usually by slurs or ties, in such a way as to imply a different time signature than the written.

Tcherepnin’s compositional method clearly set him apart from his contemporaries even though he assumed that the current Western-European musical trends and thoughts were not that dissimilar.¹⁰ This possibly could explain its extensive use in his First Symphony. However, in light of the critical reaction to the work, this seems a miscalculation on Tcherepnin’s part: neither

⁷ Korabelnikova, *Tcherepnin*, 95.

⁸ Harald Krebs refers to this as metrical displacement dissonance. See: Harald Krebs, *Fantasy Pieces: Metrical Dissonance in the Music of Robert Schumann* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

⁹ Harald Krebs refers to this as a metrical grouping dissonance.

¹⁰ Alexander Tcherepnin, “A Short Autobiography (1964),” 14-15.

the critics, nor the original audience were able to hear the connection. Consequently, the symphony is long overdue for a reassessment.

Before examining each movement, it is helpful to provide a commentary on the broad and basic elements of the composition. Tcherpnin's First Symphony consists of four movements, a common structure attributed to nearly all symphonies since its conception in the eighteenth century. The symphony is also in the key of E. This designation of a specific key alludes to the composer's belief that his method in fact contained some elements of tonality. Tcherpnin scored the work for the following instruments:

2 Flutes (2nd flute will also play piccolo), 2 Oboes, 2 Clarinets in A, 2 Bassoons, 4 Horns in F, 2 Trumpets, 2 Tenor Trombones, 1 Bass Trombone, 1 Tuba, Timpani, Military Drum with tone and Military Drum without tone, Tambourine, Castanets, Cymbal and Tam-Tam, Cymbal and Bass Drum, Quintet of Strings (1st and 2nd Violins, Viola, Cello, and Contrabass).

Benjamin Folkman expresses some concern about this choice of instrumentation, stating, "Tcherpnin chose an ensemble of astonishingly modest size—the standard classical double-wind orchestra with the important addition of a few percussion instruments. Percussion apart, the instrumental [sic] was of veritably *skoptsi*-like asceticism, as if Tcherpnin were consciously renouncing seventy-five years of modern orchestral mores, comforts and conveniences."¹¹ Furthermore, Folkman asserts that Tcherpnin's instrumentation differs considerably from the instrumental choices of twentieth-century composers such as Richard Strauss, Igor Stravinsky, Paul Dukas, and Maurice Ravel. The comparison here relies on their choice to use

¹¹ Benjamin Folkman, *A Compendium*, 255. The remaining sentences in this paragraph are also taken from this source.

unconventional orchestral instruments such as basset horns, saxophones, alto flutes, and Wagner tubas, just to name a few. Folkman also expresses astonishment at Tcherepnin's neglect of more common contemporary instruments such as the E-flat clarinet, English horn, bass clarinet, and contrabassoon. Virtually all twentieth-century symphonists used at least one of these if they did not give prominence to any uncommon group of instruments. The instrumentation of Shostakovich's Second Symphony, for example, is nearly identical to Tcherepnin's symphony except that Tcherepnin asked for extra percussion while Shostakovich's included mixed choir.

Folkman correctly cites the discrepancy between Tcherepnin's instrumentation as compared to that of the large orchestras employed by his contemporaries, but the list he provides does not contain symphonists. Aside from two symphonies composed in the 1880s, Strauss primarily composed symphonic tone poems and operas. Stravinsky, as we already know, composed his First Symphony in 1907, and his *Symphonies d'instruments à vent* in 1920, whereas Ravel did not attempt a symphony at all. Dukas only composed one symphony in the mid-1890s and started a second symphony in 1912. Therefore, this begs the question that if Tcherepnin is to be considered a symphonist, should he not be compared with other twentieth-century symphonists? Perhaps, Tcherepnin should be compared instead with Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen, Sergey Prokofiev, and Dmitry Shostakovich. If this comparison is made, one will find that Tcherepnin's choice of instrumentation is not as shocking or as austere as Folkman indicates.¹²

¹² While Folkman's differences of instrumentation were based on the composers who did not rest their laurels on symphonic composition, however, when comparing their choices in instrumentation for their symphonies there are more similarities than differences with Tcherepnin's symphony. Strauss's two symphonies have a nearly identical instrumentation to Tcherepnin's only excluding most of the percussion. Dukas's *Symphony in C* utilized a similar instrumentation as did Stravinsky's *Symphony No. 1 in E-flat, Op. 2*. Furthermore, modernist symphonists such as Jean Sibelius, Carl Nielsen, and Dmitry Shostakovich all used somewhat similar instrumentations. These works'

Alexander Tcherepnin composed his First Symphony in an exceptionally quick time-frame which lasted from 20 April 1927 to 18 July 1927—just under three months! Throughout this swift compositional process, Tcherepnin wrote extensive letters to his parents filled with self-examination of the composition. Some of those letters are reproduced in Ludmila Korabelnikova's biography of Alexander Tcherepnin.¹³ Benjamin Folkman analyzed the entire symphony in his compendium, and provided other excerpts of the composer's thoughts on the work.¹⁴ I will now examine Tcherepnin's First Symphony, primarily using these two sources to help assess aspects of the work that fit within the criteria determined in the second chapter.

Movement I: Maestoso-Allegro Risoluto

Tcherepnin sketched out his first movement in a little over three weeks, from approximately 20 April to 13 May. The symphony opens with a slow Maestoso introduction, which begins with two successive eighth notes sounding the interval of a tritone. Although this opening interval is both peculiar and uncommon for the beginning of a piece, the rest of the introduction's content confirms the tonal center designated in the title, E (i.e., a nine-note scale with E as a starting pitch class).¹⁵ Only three measures long, it quickly leads into the first theme at m. 4, based on B nine-note, played by first violins and accompanied only by strings. This theme is described by Tcherepnin as a "*perpetuum mobile* type; long and non-stop [in]

instrumentations were all relatively modest, to use Folkman's term, in comparison to such works by Mahler, Prokofiev, or Ives. Nevertheless, it was during the post-war era that composers condensed the symphony's size.

Tcherepnin's choice of a "modest" orchestra emulates both coherence of tradition and coherence of the particular time-period. Even though Tcherepnin does not compose his symphony for a Mahler-, Prokofiev-, or Ives-like large orchestra, it does not mean that Tcherepnin was "renouncing" the innovations of instrumentation from the past seventy-five years. He was merely following the current trends of post-war symphonies. In other words, Tcherepnin's instrumentation is not nearly as shocking or as austere as Folkman has indicated.

¹³ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 78-92.

¹⁴ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 255-270.

¹⁵ E nine-note refers to Tcherepnin's use of the E nine-note scale (or enneatonic scale).

movement.”¹⁶ The transitional period between the first and second theme is built upon shorter motivic elements of the first theme.

The second theme is introduced by the clarinets in m. 52, and is in E nine-note. This theme is actually a derivative of the introductory theme found in the first three measures [See Ex. 5]. Towards the end of this theme motivic fragments from the first theme are sounded by the upper brass and later in the woodwinds. This section appears to be similar to the closing theme that leads to the development. The short development, lasting only twenty-five measures, uses both first and second theme material throughout. The first theme’s material is sounded throughout in the woodwinds, creating “intrapuntal” passages while the accompanying strings use augmented forms of the second theme material. Towards the climax of the development, brass instruments join the strings playing the augmented second theme material.

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for the Horn in F (Introduction), written in 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a common time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note A4, and continues with various intervals and rests. The bottom staff is for the Clarinet in A Solo (Theme 2), written in 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and continues with various intervals and rests.

Ex. 5: Symphony No. 1 in E, Op. 42, Opening Introduction. Measures 1-4; and Theme 2 from mm. 52-54.

As is customary in sonata form, Tchernin follows the development with a recapitulation. However his recapitulation is strikingly unorthodox. Tchernin does present the first and second themes, in their entirety, but both are retrograded and transposed to B-Flat nine-

¹⁶ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 258.

note, creating a tritonal relation with the symphony's opening key. Even though the themes are in retrograde, Tchernin does attempt to provide audible cues in the first theme, using a punctuating triplet figuration to define the end of phrases [See Ex. 6a and Ex. 6b]. Just as in the exposition, the end of the second theme contains fragments of first-theme material (still in retrograde), which lead to what seems like an extended closing theme. At the climax of this closing theme, Tchernin reintroduces the opening tritone and repeats the slow introductory theme as a coda. This gives way to more fragmented use of the exposition's first theme, which seamlessly ascends from strings to woodwinds. Finally, the flute takes over and attempts to close the movement with a flourishing triplet figure that ends on C-sharp, but it sounds instead as if the flautist chokes in the middle of the notes. The orchestra then rests for two measures, followed by the true conclusion: a leap from dominant to tonic (B-E) played unison in the strings, thereby suggesting a traditional tonal cadential gesture.¹⁷

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for Violin I, labeled '(Theme 1)', and is written in 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes, ending with a triplet of eighth notes. The bottom staff is for Flutes, labeled '(Retrograde T1)', and is written in 3/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody is a retrograde of the first theme, featuring eighth and quarter notes, and concludes with a triplet of eighth notes. Both staves have a common time signature of 3/4.

Ex. 6a: Theme 1 and its Retrograde. Both are shown in their respective instruments; T1 mm. 4-7 and Retrograde T1 mm. 135-140.

¹⁷ Benjamin Folkman, in his compendium, describes the two closing unison notes of the cadence as follows, "These, of course, were justified by Tchernin's original designation of the piece as a 'Symphony in E,' but today this hint at a tonal cadence seems dated... This cadence, one should hasten to add, is not blatantly ineffective but it is not the best imaginable end to this wonderful movement, and one feels Tchernin would not have used it had he realized, in 1927, just how far he had come in emancipation from the superstitious context of traditional tonality," (263). In a first hearing of the work, the listener might assume that the ending is trivial and as Folkman also puts it, "miscalculated." However, after much thought, I believe that this is the perfect ending, considering the amazing amount of backlash that Tchernin experienced from the critics and the audience. He was still trying to relate his compositional method to some sense of tonality, but as I have alluded to above in the description of his method, the symmetry of the scale prevents the emergence of a single "tonic" without the use of accents, repetition, etc.

The image displays two staves of musical notation in 2/4 time. The top staff is labeled 'Clarinet in A Solo (Theme 2)' and the bottom staff is labeled 'Flute Solo (Retrograde T2)'. Both staves show a sequence of notes and rests, with the bottom staff being a retrograde of the top staff. The notes are written in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). The top staff begins with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note F#4, a quarter note E4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note C4, a quarter note B3, a quarter note A3, and a quarter note G3. The bottom staff begins with a quarter note G3, followed by a quarter note A3, a quarter note B3, a quarter note C4, a quarter note D4, a quarter note E4, a quarter note F#4, and a quarter note G4. The notation includes various accidentals and ties, and the staves are enclosed in brackets.

Ex. 6b: Theme 2 and its Retrograde. Both are shown in their respective instruments; T2 mm. 52-54 and the retrograde T2 mm. 195-197.

The description above presents a cursory explanation of the first movement's sonata-form. Even though the piece has a slow introduction, two themes with contrasting tonal centers and contrasting thematic content, a closing theme or codetta-like section, a developmental area, a recapitulation—albeit in retrograde—with an extended closing theme area, leading to a coda, one still might not consider the movement to be in sonata form. In fact, Tcherepnin did not believe that he had composed the first movement in this form, noting, “Although based on two themes, the first movement was not in sonata form.”¹⁸ Instead, Tcherepnin considered his opening introduction to be the first theme and the following “perpetuum mobile” theme to be the second. Even though Tcherepnin believed this, my description of the movement's form and the corresponding analysis chart, as well as Benjamin Folkman's analysis, indicates otherwise [See Table 1]. Furthermore, when listening to the movement, one is clearly able to discern between the themes of the exposition and between the exposition and development. The recapitulation, however, creates the greatest problem for the listener, thus making it more difficult to explain the form of this movement. As explained by Ballantine, the recapitulation had become too redundant

¹⁸ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 258.

for many a twentieth-century composer and too dependent on the conventions of tonal harmony, which led many to make considerable changes to the recapitulation.¹⁹

As we recall from chapter two, James Hepokoski introduced the term “deformations” to account for such changes. His “breakthrough deformation” specifically applies to the changes to the recapitulation. He describes this deformation as an “inbreaking of seemingly new material (although normally motivically related)...[that] seeks to avoid a potentially redundant recapitulation.”²⁰ This newly presented material also provides a new and possibly redefined character to the work.

Accordingly, the “breakthrough deformation” helps to explain Tchernepnin’s recapitulation in two ways. First, the presentation of the exposition themes in retrograde form redefines those particular themes’ character. To the listener, this creates unrecognizable themes that appear to be new in the work (even though Tchernepnin used a triplet figuration in the retrograde first theme as an audible cue). Although the ability to recognize the themes is complicated by Tchernepnin’s employment of their retrograde, the themes are still directly related to the exposition themes. Ultimately, it can be confirmed, through Hepokoski’s “breakthrough deformation,” that the use of retrograde exposition themes in the recapitulation does not create a non-sonata-form movement.

However, the difference in tonal centers between the overall movement (E) and the retrograde recapitulation’s themes (B-Flat) still needs explanation. When describing the “breakthrough deformation” in Sibelius’s Fifth Symphony, Hepokoski notes the distant relationship of the keys (tonal centers) between the entire movement (E-Flat Major) and its

¹⁹ Christopher Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, (London: Dobson Books Ltd., 1983), 91-96.

²⁰ James Hepokoski, *Sibelius: Symphony No. 5*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 6.

recapitulation (B-major). He explains further that this key relationship allows for previous unstable harmonies and cadences to reemerge throughout the recapitulation.²¹ Likewise, Tcherepnin's tonal-center relationship between the movement and its recapitulation involves distantly related tonal centers; in this case, there is a tritonal relationship between the tonal center of E and B-Flat. Furthermore, this tritone relationship also refers back to previous material. In the introduction's opening measure, Tcherepnin provides the interval of a tritone (pitch classes B-F) in the first two eighth notes [refer back to Ex. 5]. This return of the opening interval, now expressed through tonal centers, composes out on a larger scale the conflict heard in the opening measure, and thus, cannot be resolved until the introduction material is reintroduced in the coda. Only then does Tcherepnin attempt to resolve the conflict by closing the movement with a unison cadence (pitch classes B-E) attempting to reestablish the movement's tonal center.

Movement II: Vivace

The second movement was the first of its kind in the history of the symphony.²² Scored entirely for un-pitched percussion, Tcherepnin successfully removed pitch as a governing force in a symphonic movement. This, of course, was also one of the reasons behind the audience's uproar at the symphony's premiere on 29 October 1927. Tcherepnin later stated in his autobiography and is quoted in other sources as saying that he had always desired to liberate music from its conventions; more specifically, he wanted to liberate himself from them.²³

Although Tcherepnin's second movement contains many percussion instruments ranging from castanets to tam-tam and transforms the entire string section into a percussion section that must

²¹ Ibid., 68.

²² The following sources have all cited the movement as the first time percussion has been used exclusively in a symphonic movement: Richard Taruskin, *Music of the Early Twentieth-Century*, Vol. 5 of the *Oxford History of Western Music* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 784; Korbalenikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 84; Folkman, *A Compendium*, 257; Malcolm MacDonald, *Varèse: Astronomer in Sound* (London: Kahn and Averill, 2003), 248.

²³ Tcherepnin, "Autobiography (1964)," 16, and Folkman., *A Compendium*, 449.

tap their bows on the backs of their instruments,²⁴ he was not the first composer to begin experimenting more prominently with the percussive sections of the orchestra.

Many other twentieth-century composers began experimenting with percussive sounds, probably in response to the manifestos of the Italian Futurists. For example, Darius Milhaud, in his piece *Choéphores*, began using percussion mixed with speech-like vocals in 1915.

Tcherepnin's colleague, Bohuslav Martinů, a fellow "member" of the École de Paris, composed a quartet for clarinet, horn, violoncello, and side drum in 1924. Edgar Varèse, another composer routinely linked to the Futurist aesthetic, experimented heavily with timbre and the use of percussion in several works: *Ameriques* (1918-21), *Hyperprism* (1923), and *Arcana* (1925-27).

Henry Cowell and George Antheil also made innovative use of percussion. Antheil's *Ballet Mécanique* (1924) contained numerous percussion instruments (both pitched and un-pitched) along with pianolas. Cowell explored the percussive potential of the piano by creating new tone clusters and requiring a plucking or scraping of the strings inside the piano in pieces such as *The Banshee* (1925). Stravinsky and Prokofiev were also linked to the Futurist trend, as is evident in the latter's *Pas d'acier* (1927) and the former's *Les noces* (1921-23).

The choice to entrust an entire movement to soli percussion did not come without extensive consideration. In his letters, Tcherepnin acknowledged that the second movement was not conceptualized until he completed the third movement.²⁵ Even though Tcherepnin considers this movement to be a "link" between the first and third movement [see previous footnote], we must ask two questions when assessing this movement's role in the symphony: (1) Does this

²⁴ The main recording available of this symphony by the Singapore Symphony Orchestra, directed by Lan Shui, does not use the strings as percussion instruments for fear of damaging their instruments.

²⁵ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 84. The symphony was first conceived as a three-movement symphony, with the published symphony's third movement being the second movement. However, Tcherepnin decided that, "Since this thing is now becoming a symphony (!), it seems like it wouldn't be a bad idea to make an intervening link between the first and second movements," hence, the second movement for un-pitched percussion.

liberation of pitch disconnect the movement from the first? (2) By what other means does Tcherepnin attempt to connect this movement with the previous one?

Tcherepnin did maintain that there is a connection between the first and second movements.²⁶ In the absence of pitch, Tcherepnin claims to have established the connection by using the rhythmic characteristics of the first movement's thematic material. However, he does not restate the rhythms of each theme in their entirety. Instead, he reduces the themes' rhythmic content to their "intrinsic rhythmic value."²⁷ Tcherepnin had experimented with this method of reduction in two previous works—in the piano work *Message*, Op. 39 (1926) and in the orchestral work *Magna Mater*, Op. 41 (1926-27). Tcherepnin concludes *Message* by having the pianist tap out the main theme's rhythm be tapped out on the wood of the piano. He concludes *Magna Mater* with a rhythmic reduction of the main thematic material played by un-pitched percussion. One might then suggest that Tcherepnin was making a natural progression from two brief instances in the two smaller works to this moment in his First Symphony when he would create an entire movement for un-pitched percussion. Although Tcherepnin may have been moving towards this point, what we are most concerned with is whether or not a percussion-only movement fits within the symphonic criteria suggested by our previous chapter's commentators.

A look at the form and instrumentation can begin the examination of this movement's unification and dualistic properties. We already know that the choice in instrumentation can be considered radical. We may also assert that this choice could possibly create a conflict in timbre between the first and second movement. On the other hand, the form of this movement is rather conventional [as demonstrated in Table 2], which possibly helps to compensate for the radical

²⁶ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 263. Tcherepnin states, "In a way this movement complements the first movement."

²⁷ Ibid.

choice of instrumentation. However, the main problem that presents itself in this movement is whether or not Tchernepnin's claim of unification between the first and second movement can be confirmed. Is he successful? Can the audience truly hear the intrinsic rhythmic elements of the first movement's thematic material, so as to make the connection between the two movements in question?

The latter question can be easily answered by comparing the two movement's tempos, noting that the quicker tempo of the second movement does not allow for an easy connection to be heard. However, this alone does not resolve the matter. As Benjamin Folkman points out, the tempo of the second movement does not provide the listener any easy cues to the connection between the first and second movement because the first movement's tempo is *Allegro Risoluto* and the second movement's tempo is *Vivace*.²⁸ Since the connection cannot be easily detected by this means, we must examine the actual rhythmic material that Tchernepnin employs. Fortunately, Enrique Alberto Arias has already provided the second movement's rhythmic motives and their variants in his article on Tchernepnin's four symphonies.²⁹ Unfortunately, he does not attempt to connect them to the first movement. Benjamin Folkman also describes the connections between the second movement's motivic material and the first movement's themes, but he does not provide an example of how we can understand this connection.³⁰ What I will attempt to do now is provide suggestions for how we can relate the rhythmic patterns of the second movement back to the rhythmic patterns of the first movement. Ultimately, this is an attempt to justify Tchernepnin's own words that the second movement's rhythmic patterns are a reduction of the first movement's thematic material.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Arias, "The Symphonies," 24.

³⁰ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 263.

Examples 7a and 7b below demonstrate how one can interpret the material of the second movement, provided by Arias, as diminutions of the first theme's thematic material. The two eighth notes followed by a quarter note found in the A section of the scherzo clearly exhibit the feature of the first theme's closing measures which contain the same rhythmic figure. Arias's variant of that, six successive eighth notes, refers to the first measure of the first theme.

The Trio contains material that may not be fully recognizable when compared with the first movement's second theme, but once can attempt to connect the two. The use of triplet figures does not link up with the actual second theme of the first movement because it is in duple meter. However, remembering that the second theme is a derivative of the opening introduction in movement one, the use of the triplet could be better explained. The 7/8 meter in the second measure of the first movement's introduction provides the "triplet-like" pattern expressed in the second movement's Trio. The following measure (in 4/4) from the introduction has three eighth notes followed by two tied eighth notes ending on a single eighth note. This portion of the introduction could be condensed to provide the remaining portion of the Trio's motivic content.

The image displays two musical staves. The top staff is in 2/4 time and contains two measures: the first is labeled 'A Section Theme' and consists of two eighth notes followed by a quarter note; the second is labeled 'Variation of A Section Theme' and consists of six eighth notes. The bottom staff is also in 2/4 time and contains three measures: the first is labeled 'Variation' and consists of six eighth notes; the second and third are both labeled 'Theme' and each consists of two eighth notes followed by a quarter note.

Ex. 7a: Section A Motive, 2nd Movement. This illustrates the connection between the first movement's theme 1 and the reduced version of that theme's rhythm used in the second movement.

Ex. 7b: Section B Motive, 2nd Movement. This illustrates the connection between the first movement's opening introduction (mm.1-4) and the B section's theme from the second movement.

As aforementioned, the rhythmic correspondences between the passages in the first and second movements shown above are attempts to establish a direct relationship between the two. The most perceptible connection is between the first movement's thematic material and the second movement's rhythms in the A section [See Ex. 7a]. However, the connection between the second movement's rhythms from the Trio section and the first movement's second thematic subject is still problematic. Nevertheless, if we can accept these connections for the moment, Tcherepnin's reduction of the first movement's thematic content to its intrinsic value presents the very essence, or the inherent germ, of that content. It also lends itself to be developed further, demonstrating the inherent capability of the original germinal motive to be transformed into new material that will appear later in the work. The unity described between these two movements strengthens the argument that this symphony contains particular symphonic qualities that conform to the criteria presented in the previous chapter.

Movement III: Andante

During the symphony's initial stages of composition, Tcherepnin conceptualized the Andante third movement as the middle movement of what was supposed to be a three-

movement symphony.³¹ Tcherepnin also stated in his letters that the scherzo (the second movement that he had composed after the eventual third movement) was intended to serve as an “interlude” between the first movement and the third movement in order to “deepen the content” of the latter.³² This last statement attests to the profundity of the third movement. This movement can also be considered the most compositionally sophisticated of the four, since every aspect of it was the outgrowth of his system’s most distinctive traits.

The reinstatement of his compositional method created both reprieve and conflict. The nine-note scale used in the first movement was brought back for the third, and thus reinstated pitch as a fundamental structure in the symphony. This reinstatement, however, did not come without consequence. To maintain the radical nature of the symphony left by the previous percussion movement, Tcherepnin created three oddly scored duets, used to begin each main section of the movement. The first of these, labeled duet A, is a vertically interpunctal line between the trumpet and horn [See Ex. 8a]; the second, labeled duet B, again uses vertical interpoint, but this time between the clarinet and timpani alternating triplet figures, or faster moving notes, with longer, slower moving notes [See Ex. 8b]; and the third, labeled C [See Ex. 8c], is a registral exploration between solo violin and solo contrabass.

³¹ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 84.

³² Ibid. Although Tcherepnin uses the term “interlude,” it is clear that the second movement does function as a structural movement of the overall symphony. This is especially true when we consider the discussion of the unifying yet conflicting elements between the first and second movements.

Ex. 8a: Duet A. Horn in F (Solo) and Trumpet in C (Solo) in the third movement (mm. 1-4).

The score shows two staves. The top staff is for Horn in F (Solo) in 4/4 time, starting with a *p dolce* dynamic. The bottom staff is for Trumpet in C (Solo) in 4/4 time, starting with a *p espressivo, cantabile* dynamic. Both instruments play a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes.

Ex. 8a: Duet A. Horn solo and trumpet solo in the third movement (mm. 1-4).

Ex. 8b: Duet B. Clarinet in A (Solo) and Timpani in the third movement (mm. 21-24).

The score shows two staves. The top staff is for Clarinet in A (Solo) in 4/4 time, starting with a *f en dehors* dynamic. The bottom staff is for Timpani in 4/4 time, starting with a *p ma marcato* dynamic. The Clarinet plays a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the Timpani plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Ex. 8b: Duet B. Clarinet solo and timpani in the third movement (mm. 21-24).

Ex. 8c: Duet C. Violin solo and Contrabass solo in the third movement (mm. 51-54).

The score shows two staves. The top staff is for Violin (Solo) in 4/4 time, starting with a *p cantabile e molto express.* dynamic. The bottom staff is for Contrabass (Solo) in 4/4 time, starting with a *p ma feroce* dynamic. The Violin plays a melodic line with eighth and quarter notes, while the Contrabass plays a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes.

Ex. 8c: Duet C. Violin solo and contrabass solo in the third movement (mm. 51-54)

The pitch content of each duet's themes is derived from the nine-note scale. Each duet's statement is immediately followed by a brief development of the duet's thematic content, which is played by the other instruments of the orchestra. After the conclusion of the third duet's development the developmental material from duets A and B returns. The bassoons begin the A developmental material passing it on later to the horns. The B duet's developmental material is played in the violins. Immediately after this, the actual themes from both duets A and B are played simultaneously. Trombones play the A theme and the violoncellos and contrabasses play the B theme. Just before the climax, Tcherepnin briefly restates duet theme B followed by duet

theme A. This leads directly into the climax where each duet returns in its original instrumentation, albeit with each duet now superimposed on top of the other, so that each is played simultaneously with the other [See Ex. 8d]. This creates a six-voice polyphonic complex that the composer labeled as “Formula.”³³

Clarinet in A (Solo)
p (tojours aussi *p* que possible)

Horn in F (Solo)
sempre p dolce

Trumpet in C (Solo)
sempre p espress. cantabile

Timpani
sempre p ma marcato

Violin (Solo)
espress. cantabile non troppo f toujours en dehors

Contrabass (Solo)
fp toujours en dehors martellato

Mus Ex. 8d: “Formula” 3rd Movement (mm. 111-114). Illustrates the combination of all three duets [A+B+C].

The superimposition of each duet on top of each other also illustrates the inherent conflict at play throughout this movement. From the opening duet, conflict was present and continued to be present in each statement of the duets. Tchernin stated as much in a letter to his father in the context of discussing the movement’s initial draft: “[I’ve] finally established a plan: three paired counterpoints, counter-pointing among themselves, and each pair containing the largest possible

³³ Folkman, *A Compendium*, 264.

distance between voices...consonant among itself in its disagreement.”³⁴ The musical “disagreement” mentioned in the last statement summarizes well the inherent conflict in this movement. Since Tchernin explores registral extremes in each duet, thereby creating conflict within each duet, there is a “consonance” or unification between all the duets, since each presents the same type of conflict. Finally, the “Formula” that concludes the movement reinforces both conflict and unity at the same time, thereby synthesizing our two main symphonic qualities.

Movement IV: Allegretto con Anima-Presto

Tchernin’s finale to his first attempt at a symphony provides some of the most evident aspects of unification. As he was drafting the last movement, a process that coincided with the drafting of the second movement, Tchernin expressed concern over how the last movement (and the second) would relate to the first movement. As he put it, “So as not to rush, and thus risk infusing the [second] movement with temperamental rhythmic filler when the music ought to be no less thoughtful than the adjacent material, I started simultaneously working on the fourth movement.”³⁵ To start the fourth movement simultaneously with the second so as to enhance the profundity of the second undoubtedly creates a causal relationship of unification between the fourth and second movement. Moreover, taking into account the description of the unifying motivic material between the first and second movements, this relationship between the second and fourth movements indubitably creates a unifying relationship between the first and fourth movements.

³⁴ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tchernin*, 82.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 85.

The form of the fourth movement, a seven-part rondo [See Table 4], is another example of Tcherepnin's use of common symphonic forms in his symphony. His placement of the rondo in the finale position, in conjunction with previous movement choices, establishes a clear link with symphonic tradition. Since Tcherepnin's first movement can be explained in terms of sonata form, albeit slightly "deformed," and the second movement contains a common formal structure of a scherzo, this rondo-form finale brings traditional structural unity to the work as a whole. But this is not the only means by which Tcherepnin unified his symphony.

The musical score for Violins I and II and Strings (Viola, Cello, and Contrabasses) shows the opening theme of the 4th movement. The Violins I and II part is written on a treble clef staff, and the Strings part is written on a bass clef staff. The score is in 6/8 time and consists of five measures. Brackets connect the first and second measures of the Violins I and II part to the first and second measures of the Strings part, indicating a connection to the second movement's reduction of the first theme and second theme of the first movement represented in musical examples 7a and 7b.

Ex. 9: 4th Movement, Theme (mm. 1-5). The brackets indicate the connection to the second movement's reduction of the first theme and second theme of the first movement represented in musical examples 7a and 7b.

The fourth movement's opening theme [See Ex. 9] shows a clear connection with the first movement and the second movement. However, given that the second and fourth movements were composed simultaneously, their connection is much more obvious. The main rhythmic motive in the A section of the second movement clearly corresponds with the opening motivic material of the finale's rondo theme. A similar connection can be found between movements

four and one, given that the second movement is derived from thematic content in the first movement. Example 10 illustrates the opening movement's first theme, now reduced to its intrinsic rhythmic value, which explicitly relates to both the second movement's primary motive and the fourth movement's rondo theme.

The musical score for Example 10 is arranged in five staves, labeled on the left: Violin I, Violin II, Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass. The time signature is 2/4, and the key signature has one sharp (F#). The score is divided into two systems of six measures each. In the first system, Violin I and Violin II play a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes and quarter notes, while the Viola, Violoncello, and Double Bass play a similar pattern. In the second system, the Violoncello and Double Bass parts show some variations, including longer notes and rests, while the Violin I and Violin II parts continue with the rhythmic pattern.

Ex. 10: 1st Movement, mm. 294-99. Symphony No. 1 in E, Op. 42.

Tcherepnin's episodic material, specifically the third and final episode—the return of the first episode's theme—in the rondo finale, reveals another connection between the symphony's outer movements. It is in this episode that Tcherepnin reintroduces the retrograding of thematic material to provide variety within the time-honored four-movement symphonic cycle [See both

Ex. 11 and Table 4]. Although the use of this compositional device in the return of previous episodic material may not bring about such a shock as it did in the first movement's sonata, it does briefly fracture the repetitive nature expected in a rondo. However, Tcherenpina follows the retrograde statement of the first episode's theme with a statement of the theme in original form. Some might consider these to be two separate episodes, and not a repetition of any previous episodic material, but the fact that Tcherenpina immediately follows the retrograded theme with the original statement of the theme clearly indicates that both are part of the same episode. Thus, the form can still be explained as a slight variant of the seven-part rondo, due to the interruption of the retrograde material.

The image displays two staves of musical notation. The top staff is for the Trombone, written in a bass clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 3/4. It begins with a whole note F#4, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F#4. A slur covers the last four notes (B4, C5, B4, A4). The bottom staff is for the Flute, written in a treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a time signature of 3/4. It begins with a whole note F#4, followed by a half note G4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, a quarter note C5, a quarter note B4, a quarter note A4, a quarter note G4, and a quarter note F#4. A slur covers the last four notes (B4, C5, B4, A4). The notation illustrates the retrograde of the Trombone theme in the Flute part.

Ex. 11: 4th Movement, Trombone Theme and its Retrograde.

The presentation of retrograde material in both the first movement and finale illustrates Ballantine's concept of outer-movement structural unity through conflict found in twentieth-century symphonic practice. Ballantine suggested that if the opening movement contains some

unorthodox practice of form, then the finale must also contain a similar formal practice.³⁶ This reaffirms the structural innovation or conflicting element presented in the opening movement and thus creates a unification of the conflicting element by presenting it in the outer movements of the symphony.

Hrn and Tpt.

Violins and Violas

Violoncello and Contrabass

Example 12: 4th Movement, m. 332. Symphony No. 1, Op. 42

A final element of unification that is evident in the fourth movement occurs in the final chord [See Ex. 12]. This final chord, an E major/minor triad, brings final resolution to the opening movement's strange attempt at a cadence, but with a "cadence" that is not any less peculiar. The fact that Tchernin concludes the entire piece with this particular triad, however, does not necessarily signify an unresolved conflict. However, if we look closer at the two chords in Example 12, one will notice that the downbeat of this final measure contains a C major/minor

³⁶ Ballantine, *Twentieth Century Symphony*, 130.

triad. Referring back to the discussion of the symmetrical quality of the nine-note scale on pp. 35-38, we know that a nine-note scale contains three possible tonal centers (or starting pitch classes). In the E nine-note scale, the other two equivalent tonal centers would be C and G sharp. Therefore, Tcherepnin has provided us with the second of the three possible starting pitches within this particular scale. If we look at the penultimate measure we will also find the timpani and tuba playing a G sharp at a fortissimo level on the third beat. Thus, Tcherepnin ends the entire piece by providing the listener with the three equivalent tonal centers of the entire scale, resolving the inherent conflict that resides in the scale.

Conclusion

Throughout this discussion, I have highlighted a number of elements in Tcherepnin's Symphony No. 1 that satisfy the criteria for symphonic composition, when designed to account for the many innovations of the twentieth-century symphony. Each movement contains elements of unity, dualism, and conflict both within a particular movement and among several movements. To summarize, the sonata-form first movement contains an element of conflict and dualism through Tcherepnin's employment of the retrograde recapitulation. Although this creates conflict structurally, it can still be explained in sonata form with the help of James Hepokoski's "breakthrough deformation." The second movement is logically connected to the first movement because Tcherepnin created its primary motivic material by reducing down the themes from the first movement into their intrinsic rhythmic motives. The third movement contains the element of conflict because of Tcherepnin's timbral exploration in each of the three duets. Nevertheless, he also unifies each conflicting element by employing his "Formula." Externally, there is also unification with the first movement by Tcherepnin's reinstatement of pitch. Finally, the fourth movement contains motivic and thematic unity with the first and second movements. Tcherepnin

also employs retrograded thematic material in this movement and thus creates an element of conflict, but this use of a compositional device found in the first movement unifies both the first and fourth movement because of this structural correspondence.

Already in the preliminary phase of sketching the symphony, Tcherepnin was reluctant to designate the work a symphony:

From its chaotic appearance, the symphony is starting to take on musical outlines... I am convinced the label “symphony” hardly fits here. Even if the scope is symphonic, the material is insufficiently deep; or more precisely, operates on a plane different from that of a normal “symphony.” So I am thinking of calling: “Concerto for Orchestra”... [that will] save me from the instinctive fright of publishers and conductors!! Also, true sonata-allegro form doesn’t exist in this work. Ideologically this piece is more connected to the Chamber Concerto than to any symphonic tendency.³⁷

Even though Tcherepnin’s concern was valid at the time, I have attempted to respond to his concerns. True enough, this symphony clearly operates on a different plane than that of a Beethoven symphony, but Tcherepnin still incorporates the symphonic qualities of unity, dualism, and conflict that would be found in a Beethoven symphony. Even though he did not consider the first movement to be in sonata form, I have shown that the form of this movement can be related to sonata form, under James Hepokoski’s broader interpretation. Tcherepnin clearly considered sonata form to be an essential component of symphonic works. While he did not employ a “true sonata-allegro” form as he understood it, the movement he composed relates to it nevertheless.

By now the discussion has covered nearly every facet of compositional and structural innovation employed by Tcherepnin. The question remains: Can we confirm that the symphony satisfies the criteria necessary to call this piece a symphony? I posit that Tcherepnin did in fact

³⁷ Korabelnikova, *Alexander Tcherepnin*, 88.

satisfy the criteria of unity, dualism, and conflict throughout the symphony and thus, did create a symphony. He achieved symphonic unity internally through the distribution of thematic material to the most important structural movements (first, second, and fourth), and through the conflict of timbre. Tcherpenin also achieved symphonic dualism through his use of innovated classical forms and of retrograde in the first movement's sonata and in the finale's rondo.

Despite his unique compositional method and exploration of timbre, this symphony is consistent with the exploratory methods of his twentieth-century contemporaries. Not only was Tcherpnin a worthy contemporary of these pioneering composers, he was also a forerunner in his concept of liberating his scherzo for percussion from pitch. The music of Tcherpnin deserves far more scholarly attention than it has received to date. Tcherpnin's First Symphony is the perfect case study to examine his compositional method and his compositional ideology in the context of the provocative trends of the 1920s. For the reasons explained above, Tcherpnin's Symphony No.1, Op. 42 belongs in the canon of 1920s symphonic compositions and deserves to be considered on par with the better-known symphonies of Prokofiev, Shostakovich, Nielsen, and Sibelius.

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APPENDIX

FORMAL ANALYSES

Table 1: Formal Analysis of Movement I

Sonata Form:

	Slow intro.	Theme 1	transition	Theme 2	trans.	Closing Theme
Exposition:	mm. 1-3	mm. 4-15	mm. 16-51	mm. 52-61	mm. 62-93	mm. 94-109
	E nine-note	B-nine-note		E nine-note		(T2 + T1 fragments)

Development: mm. 110-134

Imitative polyphony of T1 superimposed with augmented forms of T2 and their imitations are displaced by horizontal interpoint

	Theme 1	trans.	Theme 2	trans.	Closing Theme	Coda
Recapitulation:	mm. 135-146	mm. 147-194	mm. 195-211	mm. 212-239	mm. 240-299	mm. 300-330
	(retrograde)		(retrograde) Also T1 frag. from mm. 207-211			
	B-flat Nine-note					E nine-note

Table 2: Formal Analysis of Movement II

Scherzo

A: mm. 1-98

B (Trio): mm. 99-165

A': mm. 166-237

Table 3: Formal Analysis of Movement III

A → **dev.** → **B** → **dev.** → **C** → **C (dev.)** → **B (dev.) + A (dev.)** → **B+A** → **B** → **A** → **A+B+C**

*Each duet is labeled as A (Horn and Trumpet), B (Clarinet and Timpani), or C (Solo Violin and Contrabass).

Table 4: Formal Analysis of Movement IV

Seven-Part Rondo

Theme		Episode 1		Theme		Ep. 2		Theme		Ep. 3a		3b	Theme	Coda
A	(dev.)	B	(dev.)	A'	(dev.)	C	elision	A''	(dev.)	B'		B	A'''	
mm. 1-55		mm. 56-92		mm. 93-132		mm. 133-168		mm. 169-181		mm. 182-199		mm. 200-220	mm. 221-302	mm. 302-332